

Committee: Executive
Date: Monday 2 February 2009
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

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

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 - 15)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 1st December 2008 and 12th January 2009.

Strategy and Policy

6. Forward Plan (Pages 16 - 28)

6.35pm

Report of Leader of the Council

Summary

To review the Leader's Forward Plan of the key decisions which will be taken by the Executive over the next four months.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To resolve to note the Leader's Forward Plan for the next four months.

7. Shenington and Alkerton Conservation Area Appraisal (Pages 29 - 70)

6.40pm

Report of Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy

Summary

To report on the outcome of the public consultation on the draft conservation area appraisal and to recommend that a conservation area be designated at Shenington with Alkerton

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the outcome of the public consultation on the draft appraisal and proposed conservation area boundary
- (2) To approve the changes it is recommended be made to proposed boundary in response to comments received
- (3) To designate, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, a conservation area as proposed in the revised appraisal and as at Fig 1 appended to this report with immediate effect.

8. Cherwell Rural Strategy (Pages 71 - 114)

7.10pm

Report of Head of Urban and Rural Services

Summary

To consider the final draft Rural Strategy and Delivery Plan, and to consider appointing a Rural Champion. To commend the Rural Strategy and Delivery Plan to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) To recommend to Council the approval of the final draft Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009-2014 and the Delivery Plan.
- (2) Approve the appointment of the Executive Member for Urban and Rural Services to lead the delivery of the Strategy as Cherwell District Council's "Rural Champion".
- (3) Commend the final draft Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009-2014 and the Delivery Plan to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership.

9. **Oxfordshire 2030 - A Sustainable Community Strategy for Oxfordshire**

(Pages 115 - 224)

7.20pm

Report of Chief Executive

Summary

To adopt Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Recommend to Council for adoption Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, as a key strategic document for Cherwell District Council.

10. **Consultation and Engagement Strategy and the Duty to Involve**

(Pages 225 - 252)

7.25pm

Report of Chief Executive and Community and Corporate Planning Manager

Summary

This report presents a final version of a consultation and engagement strategy and action plan for Cherwell District Council and outlines the steps the council needs to take to meet the requirements of new legislation in this policy area.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To identify any additional actions or initiatives to be included in the strategy and action plan.
- (2) To recommend to Council the adoption of the consultation and engagement strategy and action plan as council policy and the preferred approach to improving consultation and community engagement, to delivering our commitment to be an Accessible, Value for Money Council and to meeting the statutory requirements of the Duty to Involve in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- (3) To request an annual progress review of the strategy and action plan to be received by the Executive.

Value for Money and Performance

Report of Strategic Director Customer Service and Resources and Chief Accountant

****Please note the appendices to this report are to follow****

Summary

The Council is required to produce a balanced budget for 2009/10 as the basis for calculating its level of Council Tax. It has to base that budget on its plans for service delivery during the year, recognising any changes in service demand that may arise in future years. The first draft was reported to the December 1st 2008 Executive meeting and a second draft to the January 12 2009 Executive meeting. The information has now been updated to reflect changes since then and, subject to any further changes Members may wish to include tonight, this final draft will be presented to full Council on 23 February 2009.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1) to approve the changes to the draft budget since 12 January 2009 and consider the draft revenue budget (detailed in Appendix 1) in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities;
- 2) to agree the approach to the overall capital programme and 09/10 expenditure profile (detailed in Appendix 2);
- 3) to note the latest MTFs financial forecast (detailed in Appendix 3);
- 4) request officers to produce the formal 09/10 budget booklet on the basis of Appendices 1-3;
- 5) recommend ,subject to any further changes Members may wish to include tonight, the updated draft budget for adoption by the Council on 23 February 2009 (as a key decision);
- 6) recommend that the draft service plans be endorsed;

Report of Chief Executive and Head of Improvement

Summary

To report the Council's performance against the Performance Management Framework for the period October – December 2008.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1) To note the progress made on delivering against the Corporate Scorecard and the other performance frameworks appended to this report.
- 2) To note the responses to the issues raised in the 2nd quarter report and to seek further information in the next quarterly Performance Management Framework report if required.

- 3) To agree that in the next quarterly report there will be an update on the impact of the economic downturn on:
 - a) The Council's ability to deliver the 2008/09 corporate targets of 400 new homes and the creation of 200 gross new jobs and the impact on our targets in these areas for 2009/10.
 - b) The income received through building control, planning applications and land charges during 2008/09, the projections for 2009/10 and the proposals for responding to a sustained drop in income as embodied in the 2009/10 budget. .
 - c) The progress of key development projects such as Banbury Canalside, Bicester Town Centre and South West Bicester.
- 4) To agree that in the next quarterly report there will be an update on the following:
 - a) The target for reducing acquisitive crime by 5% is unlikely to be met and current projections suggest a 2% reduction will be achieved. (Note: The Performance Scrutiny Working Group has identified this as an area of concern and are proposing it should be subject to review through the scrutiny process. The progress of this work will be reported as part of this update).
 - b) The increase in recorded violent crime (although involving a small number of incidents this has risen by 25% over the last quarter).
 - c) The amount of waste sent to landfill. This is expected to be reduced by a minimum of 1400 tonnes but with the real possibility of further improvement to achieve the annual target of 1500 tonnes.
 - d) The worsening performance on flytipping and prosecutions.
 - e) The time taken to process minor and other planning applications. These met 59% and 71% of the respective performance targets and are rated Red and there has been a slight deterioration in the performance of both since the last quarter. (Note: The Performance Scrutiny Working Group has identified this as an area of concern and are proposing it should be subject to review through the scrutiny process. The progress of this will be reported as part of this update).
 - f) The delay in introducing the Food Waste Recycling Service. . It is now likely to be Autumn 2009 before the delayed local food waste processing facility is built by the County Council.
 - g) The increase in the number of days lost through sickness from 3.58 per full time employee a year to 6.31.

Other Matters

13. **Authorisation of Staff - Safer Communities and Community Development**
(Pages 309 - 311)

8.35pm

Urgent Business

14. Items of Urgent Business

Any other items which the Chairman has decided is urgent.

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following reports contain exempt information as defined in the following paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972.

3– Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Members are reminded that whilst the following items have been marked as exempt, it is for the meeting to decide whether or not to consider each of them in private or in public. In making the decision, members should balance the interests of individuals or the Council itself in having access to the information. In considering their discretion members should also be mindful of the advice of Council Officers.

Should Members decide not to make a decision in public, they are recommended to pass the following recommendation:

“That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.”

Strategy and Policy

16. Bicester Hospital

8.40pm

Report of Strategic Director - Environment and Community (to follow)

Value for Money and Performance

17. Internal Audit Procurement (Pages 312 - 315)

8.55pm

Report of Strategic Director Customer Service and Resources

Summary

To consider the granting of delegated powers to award to the Strategic Director Customer Services and Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and the Chairman of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee, for a contract for the Supply of Internal Audit Services.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) To note the progress made to date in the appointment of an external provider for the Supply of Internal Audit Services.
- (2) Approve the granting of delegated powers to award to the Portfolio Holder for Resources and the Chairman of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee, in consultation with the Strategic Director Customer Services and Resources, for a contract for the Supply of Internal Audit Services, commencing on 1st April 2009 for a period of 3 years with the option, purely at the discretion of the Council, to extend the contract by up to 2 years.

(Meeting scheduled to close at 9.00pm)

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 Friday 23 January 2009

Agenda Item 5

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 1 December 2008 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)

Councillor G A Reynolds
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Also present: Councillor Andrew Fulljames
Councillor Mrs Catherine Fulljames

Apologies for absence: Councillor Kieron Mallon

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
Julie Evans, Strategic Director - Customer Service & Resources
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Phil O'Dell, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Jo Smith, Communications Manager
James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager

130 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors declared interest with regard to the following agenda items:

7. Eco-Town: Update on Current Position and Next Steps.
Councillor G A Reynolds, Personal, Due to being a County Councillor and the County Council holding a land interest at Gowells Farm, Bicester.

7. Eco-Town: Update on Current Position and Next Steps.
Councillor Nicholas Turner, Personal, Due to being a County Councillor and the County Council holding a land interest at Gowells Farm, Bicester.

7. Eco-Town: Update on Current Position and Next Steps.
Councillor Norman Bolster, Personal, Due to being a County Councillor and the County Council holding a land interest at Gowells Farm, Bicester.

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

The Chairman announced Councillor Fulljames, Councillor Mrs Fulljames and John Kightley (on behalf of Bucknell Parish Council) had requested to speak on agenda item 7: Eco-Town: Update on Current Position and Next Steps and that he had agreed that they should be heard at the start of that item of business.

132 **Urgent Business**

The Chairman stated that he had agreed to admit one item of urgent business to the agenda on the impact of the economy on the Housing Benefit function of the Council, on the grounds that the Council needed to be able to deal with the increased volume of housing benefit claimants resulting from the economic crisis.

133 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 3rd and 17th November were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed accordingly.

134 **Forward Plan**

The Chief Executive submitted the Leader's Forward Plan of key Executive decisions to be taken over the next four months.

Resolved, that the Forward Plan for the next four months be noted.

Reasons – to create a Forward Plan for the Council as required by the Local Government Act 2000.

135 **Eco-Town: Update on Current Position and Next Steps**

The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy submitted a report to consider the next steps on the concept of an alternative Eco Development at North West Bicester. It was noted that supplementary information had been published with regard to this agenda item, which contained revised recommendations.

Councillor Fulljames, Councillor Mrs Fulljames and John Kightley (on behalf of Bucknell Parish Council) addressed the meeting on the issue of an alternative Eco Development at North West Bicester. The Leader of the Council responded to the issues which were raised.

Resolved

(1) That Officers be instructed to undertake an initial 'Concept Study' of the potential alternative eco-development at NW Bicester (in accordance with the Brief and Timetable as set out in the report attached as Annex 1 to the minutes (as set out in the minute book).

(2) That it be agreed that consultancy support be commissioned for this work.

Reasons – The Executive requested a further report on the next steps to be taken in preparing for a formal response to the Government's consultation in February.

136 **Bullington Immigration Removal Centre at site A DSDC Bicester**

At the request of Members the Head of Development Control and Major Developments submitted a report to advise members of the proposed Bullington Immigration Removal Centre for the UK Border Agency. A secure Category C (5.2m Continuous security fence) 800 bed secure facility based on prison designs where detainees (illegal immigrants and failed asylum seekers) are held awaiting deportation.

Resolved

That the proposals for an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) at Bullingdon near Bicester be noted, in particular the positive effect this could have on the local economy.

Reasons - It is Planning Committee's role to consider and determine the eventual planning application, but Executive can identify community issues that need to be considered more generally by the Council.

137 **Informal Development Principles Bryan House, Bicester**

The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy submitted a report to seek approval for the publication, following public consultation, of Informal Development Principles to guide the redevelopment of the site at Bryan House, Bicester.

Resolved

That the publication of an Informal Development Principles document, which has been amended in response to public consultation, for the redevelopment of Bryan House, Chapel Street, Bicester be approved.

Reasons - Bryan House, Chapel Street is owned and managed by Sanctuary Housing Association. It falls short of current standards of accommodation and the Housing Association intends to redevelop it with affordable housing to meet local needs. The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy accordingly prepared draft Informal Development Principles setting out how this could be achieved.

138 **Annual Review of Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits Discretionary Powers**

The Head of Exchequer submitted a report to review the reliefs currently awarded under the discretionary powers the Council has in relation to council tax, business rates and housing and council tax benefits and decide whether any changes should be made to take effect from 1 April 2009.

Resolved

- (1) That the Head of Exchequer's decision to offer 4 dates for payment by direct debit to council tax and business rate payers; the dates being 1st, 9th, 18th and 25th of each month from 1 April 2009 be noted.
- (2) That it be resolved to continue with the discretionary awards that it resolved to give on 3 December 2007, which are:
 - a) Not to offer any reduction for early lump sum payments, as provided for by Regulation 25 of the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992.
 - b) Not to offer any reductions to encourage taxpayers to use particular methods of payment, as provided for by Regulation 26 of the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992.
 - c) To continue the local scheme disregarding the whole of any War Widows Pension or War Disablement Pension when calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.
 - d) To continue with the practice established in 2004/05 of reducing the Council Tax discount for second homes from 50% to 10%, except for annexes that are not otherwise exempt and are occupied by families as

part of their main residence, which from 1 April 2008 have been excluded from this provision.

- e) To continue with the practice established in 2004/05 of reducing the Council Tax discount for long-term empty properties to nil.
- f) To continue with the present practice of awarding 100% rate relief to charity shops; village halls; community centres and premises used for scouting and other youth groups.
- g) To retain the existing levels of discretionary rural rate relief.

Reasons - As a billing authority the Council has various discretionary powers that it is required to consider in relation to Council Tax, Council Tax and Housing Benefits and Business Rates. It is good practice to review the effects of the previous decisions made in relation to the exercise of these discretionary powers on a regular basis. This ensures that the discounts and reliefs previously approved are still effective and provides the opportunity for Members to consider any representations received for variations to the existing discretionary schemes.

139

Draft Budget 1 and Service Plans 2009 - 2010

The Strategic Director Customer Service and Resources submitted a report that advised the Executive regarding the first draft budget and service plans for 2009-2010. The report was the first of three opportunities for the Executive had to shape and refine the interaction between service plans and financial matters before the final budget is presented to the Council on the 23rd February 2009.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft budget and service plans in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities be noted;
- (2) That the proposed service priorities detailed in Annex 2, to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be endorsed;
- (3) That the approach to the overall capital programme and 09/10 expenditure profile in Annex 3, to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be agreed;
- (4) That there should be no growth in 2009/2010 budget unless funding had been agreed;
- (5) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy be made available for Executive in January;
- (6) That the draft budget and service plans as the basis for consultation be endorsed;
- (7) That the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board be invited to consider the draft budgets and service plans, service priorities and service growth bids at their meeting on December 9th 2008 and submit their comments to the Executive meeting to be held on 12 January 2009. That all recommendations of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board as set out in Annex 1 to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be adopted;
- (8) That the Council does not participate in the Government's free swimming programme due to the fact that the Government grant is insufficient to cover the cost arising;

- (9) To approve a supplementary capital estimate of £250,000 for the provision of disabled facility grants in the financial year ended 31st March 2009.

Reasons - The budget will form the financial expression of the Council's service delivery plans for 2009/10; the allocation of resources against agreed service priorities is necessary in order to achieve its strategic priorities.

140 **Annual Monitoring Report**

The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy submitted a report to consider the progress made on the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) in terms of meeting milestones in the Local Development Scheme and to consider monitoring information on business development, housing, biodiversity, open space, transport, and local services for the monitoring year April 2007 to March 2008.

Resolved

- (1) That the report for submission to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2008 be endorsed and the Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy be delegated to make any minor presentational changes in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing;
- (2) That the housing delivery position described in the report noted;
- (3) That it be agreed that the Council continues to bring forward proposals for the delivery of sites identified for residential development in the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011, which was approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes on 13 December 2004, and that officers continue to work with the development industry, local communities and other interested parties in order to do this in the interests of sustaining housing delivery (including the provision of affordable housing) to meet the requirements of the adopted Oxfordshire Structure Plan and, upon adoption, the South East Plan.

Reasons - The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 require the Council to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Upon approval by the Executive, the AMR will form part of the District's Local Development Framework (LDF).

141 **The Impact of the Economy on the Housing Benefits Function**

The Head of Exchequer submitted a report to advise the Executive on the impact of the current economic climate on the current and future delivery of the Housing and Council Tax benefit function. It was noted that this issue had not been included in the Forward Plan for January to May and had been considered in accordance with the Special Urgency provisions of the constitution and would be reported to Council accordingly.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report and the increased workloads in processing housing and council tax benefit applications be noted.
- (2) That a supplementary estimate of £14,000 to ensure that the backlog in processing housing and council tax benefit applications is eliminated which will ensure a robust service to the public and residents of the district during this period of economic uncertainty be approved.

- (3) That a further supplementary estimate of up to £16,000 to ensure that the increased workload of claims can be dealt with efficiently and ensure that claimants receive a timely response be approved.
- (4) That officers be asked to identify actions to secure up to £30,000 of savings to offset the supplementary estimates.
- (5) That an update be given on the number of additional claims relating to the economic climate at the January Executive and options for the future delivery of the service discussed.

Reasons - The current economic climate has seen a sharp rise in the number residents claiming benefit and the Government has predicted a 50% increase in the number of unemployed in the next 12 -18 months. The predicted rise would increase the benefits caseload by 2,387 (31%) to just over 10,000 claims.

142

Exclusion of Public and Press

Resolved, that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 Schedule 12A of that Act.

EXEMPT

143 **The Impact of the Economy on the Housing Benefits Function - Exempt Appendix**

Resolved, that the exempt appendix be noted.

144 **Dry Recyclables Collection and Disposal**

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report on dry recyclables collection and disposal. It was noted that this issue had not been included in the Forward Plan for January to May and had been considered in accordance with the Special Urgency provisions of the constitution and would be reported to Council accordingly.

Resolved

That the recommendations as set out in the exempt minute be agreed.

Reasons – With the recent changes to the world economy have resulted in recent market changes in the recycling sector and possible financial and operational implications to the collection services arising from the severe reduction in values of recycled materials.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm

Chairman:

Date:

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 12 January 2009 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)

Councillor G A Reynolds
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Also present: Councillor George Parish
Councillor Leslie F Sibley

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
Julie Evans, Strategic Director - Customer Service & Resources
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement
Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Phil O'Dell, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Jo Smith, Communications Manager
Karen Curtin, Chief Accountant
Gillian Greaves, Head of Housing Services
David Marriott, Head of Economic Developments & Estates
Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Ed Potter, Head of Environmental Services

Resolutions

145 **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

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

The Chairman reported that he had received two requests to address the meeting:

Councillor Parish for agenda item 7, GP Led Health Centre in Banbury. The Leader indicated that he would also allow Councillor Parish to ask questions on this item.

Councillor Sibley for agenda item 8, Sustainable Communities Act 2007.

147 **Urgent Business**

There was none.

148 **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were not available for signature.

149 **Forward Plan**

The Chief Executive submitted the Leader's Forward Plan of key Executive decisions to be taken over the next four months. The Executive noted that there were a number of errors, duplications and some omissions in the document. The Chief Executive explained that this was due to the migration of data to the committee management system and assured the Executive that before the Forward Plan was re-issued these problems would be corrected. The Leader of the Council requested that the Chief Executive bring forward a report on the re-organisation of the Council at an appropriate date.

Resolved, that the Forward Plan for the next four months be noted and that the items detailed above be added to the Forward Plan.

Reasons – to create a Forward Plan for the Council as required by the Local Government Act 2000.

150 **GP Led Health Centre in Banbury**

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report which set out the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust's (PCT) proposals for a new GP led health centre in Banbury. The Executive also received a presentation from representatives of the Oxfordshire PCT and in response to questioning the following points were made:

The proposal related only to GP led primary care services and as such would not impact on diagnostic and other services provided by the Horton Hospital. Where possible the PCT would seek to integrate this proposal with the recommendations of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel but ultimately they were two independent work streams.

The PCT would let the contract for five years and it would be subject to regular monitoring with regard to value-for-money, patient satisfaction and statistical analysis of service delivery and patient numbers. It was recognised that the recruitment and supply of medical staff would be a challenge to those tendering for the contract but the presence of a GP for 12 hours per day, 365 days per year was a key requirement of the contract.

The contract would contain a "nil detriment" clause to ensure that the GP led health centre would not have a minimal impact on other GP practices in Banbury but that the ultimate measure of this will be the public's satisfaction with the overall health services they receive.

The catchment area for registered patients would be a five mile radius from Banbury Cross. It was recognised that a proportion of "walk-in" patients were likely to be commuters from outside the district but this was an accepted part of the national model. The point was also made that Cherwell residents would be able to "walk-in" to clinics elsewhere in the country.

The core range of services that would be available to "walk-in" patients would be tightly regulated and subject to strict protocols on prescriptions.

Resolved

- (1) That the Oxfordshire PCT's proposals for the new GP led health centre in Banbury be noted and the PCT be thanked for their presentation;
- (2) That the Council welcomes the Oxfordshire PCT's reassurance that the new GP led health centre in Banbury will not impact on the services at the Horton Hospital and the limited impact on the existing GP surgeries in Banbury will be minimised.

Reasons – further investment in the healthcare services in Banbury is welcomed as this extends patient choice and access to primary healthcare services.

151 **Sustainable Communities Act 2007**

The Chief Executive submitted a report to provide the Executive with information on this Act and the timetable for the submission of first round proposals.

Resolved

- (1) That the purpose of the Sustainable Communities Act and the timetable associated with the first bidding round be noted.
- (2) That officers be requested to continue to work on this issue and to come back with firm proposals.

Reasons – the first proposal round is open and the deadline for submission is 31 July 2009. There is still uncertainty about some of the definitions and practical details of the Act and more detailed guidance on the proposal process is awaited. It is timely to commission early work from officers to identify potential fruitful areas, either independently or in collaboration with others, and with the focus on the "economic well-being" element.

152 **Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment**

The Head of Economic Development and Estates submitted a report to update the Executive on progress made on the Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment scheme, and to consider the request that the Developer be granted a further Exclusivity Agreement. The Executive noted that the work would start in 2009 and end in 2011 and would provide a net increase of 760 jobs.

Resolved

- (1) That the changes being made to the ownership of Town Centre Retail (Bicester) Ltd, the Council's development partner be noted.
- (2) That the grant of an Exclusivity Agreement to Town Centre Retail (Bicester) Ltd, for a period expiring on 31 December 2009 be approved.

Reasons – Town Centre Retail has already invested substantial sums in professional fees and in acquiring properties affected by the scheme, but currently no formal development agreement exists. As further expenditure is required to take these proposals forward, it is appropriate to grant the developer a further period of Exclusivity. The alternative would be to delay progress until a formal Development Agreement has been completed, and this is likely to take some months.

Affordable Housing Issues Paper

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report to provide the Executive with information on the delivery of affordable housing within the context of a recession, and propose a way forward that maximises opportunities for increasing the number and range of affordable housing units available for our community. The Executive noted that the Council was still on track to meet its affordable housing targets for 2008/09.

Resolved

- (1) That the current position on affordable housing policy, Corporate Plan targets and delivery be noted;
- (2) That, in the context of the 2009/10 budget process, options for extending local initiatives to maintain affordable housing delivery be noted.

Reasons - there is a clear commitment by the Council to deliver affordable housing in the District. Any significant increase in local homelessness will result in considerable financial consequences for the Council. Recession seriously threatens the methods of providing new affordable housing (planning system related) used over recent years. This is beginning to impact on Cherwell in the planning and delivery of affordable housing. To mitigate against this position and risk, requires flexibility to research and test new ways of working.

Service Plans and Budget

The Strategic Director for Customer Service and Resources and the Chief Accountant submitted a joint report setting out a second analysis of the Council's draft 2009/2010 Revenue and Capital Budget and presenting two items from the work of scrutiny in relation to fees and charges and concessionary fares.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft revenue budget 2 in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities be noted;
- (2) That the approach to the overall capital programme and 09/10 expenditure profile (as set out in Annex 1 to the minutes, as set out in the minute book) be agreed;
- (3) That the draft MTFS position be noted;
- (4) That Officers be requested to review the current Treasury Management Strategy in light of the current economic climate and present their recommendations at the 2 February Executive;
- (5) That the recommendations of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board from their meeting of 9 December 2008 (as set out below) be noted:

To note the workshop conclusions from the meeting on 9 December 2009 and to consider them as part of their final discussions on the draft budget; and

To note the request that officers ensure that in 2009 the process for scrutiny of the budgets involves members at an earlier stage and provides additional detail.

- (6) That the recommendations of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board in relation to concessionary fares (as set out below) be agreed:

Not to change the current arrangements for the Concessionary Fares Travel Scheme at the present time but that the situation should be reviewed again in six months

Reasons – the budget forms the financial expression of the Council's service delivery plans for 2009/10, and the allocation of resources against agreed service priorities is necessary in order to achieve its strategic priorities. There is also a statutory requirement that the Council sets a balanced budget by 11 March 2009, and the draft budget is part of that process.

155 **Council Tax Base for 2009/2010**

The Head of Exchequer submitted a report which referred to the statutory requirement to determine the Council Tax Base for 2009/2010, and which set out in detail the calculation as to how this should be achieved.

Resolved

- (1) That the report of the Head of Exchequer, made pursuant to the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, and the calculations referred to therein for the purposes of the Regulations be approved;
- (2) That, in accordance with the Regulations, as amended, the amount calculated by the Cherwell District Council as its council tax base for the year 2009/2010 shall be 49,923; and
- (3) That the tax base for parts of the area be in accordance with the figures (shown in column 13 of Annex 2 to the minutes, as set out in the minute book)

Reasons – in accordance with statutory requirements. Failure to set a council tax base for 2009/2010 would result in the Council being unable to set its council tax for 2009/2010.

156 **Meeting Dates 2009/10**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report requesting the Executive to consider a draft calendar of meetings for 2009/2010, and to recommend the Council accordingly.

Recommended, that, subject to the inclusion of the issues as set out below, the Council approve the draft calendar of meetings for 2009/2010 as now submitted;

- a) Executive: confirm all meeting dates and remove "reserve" designation.
- b) Planning Committee: delete 12 March 2010; insert 11 March 2010.
- c) Personnel & General Committee: delete 11 March 2010; insert 10 March 2010.
- d) Overview & Scrutiny Committee: delete 5 October 2010.

- e) Accounts, Audit & Risk: confirm meetings on 20 January and 14 April 2010. Insert additional meeting on 26 October 2009. Note need for Annual Governance panel meetings in April/May 2010.

Reasons – in order to transact business efficiently the Council needs to agree a calendar of meetings.

157

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved, that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

EXEMPT

158 Town Centre Offices

The Head of Economic Development and Estates submitted an exempt report that set out the progress being made towards the disposal of the Council's Banbury Town Centre offices at 58 Bridge Street, Banbury.

Resolved, in principle to proceed with the letting of 58 Bridge St, Banbury , on the terms to be approved by the Economic Development and Estates Portfolio Holder, and to amend the proposed refurbishment scheme to incorporate the specific fitting out requirements requested.

Reasons - the opportunity to secure a letting of the property removes the risk of the building remaining vacant for a significant period, at substantial cost to the Council.

159 Dry Recycling - Gate Fees

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report inviting the Executive to approve a change in gate fee and the increased cost in the processing of co-mingled dry recyclables following the severe reduction in values of recycled materials.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of this report be noted;
- (2) That the revised gate fee be approved;
- (3) That officers continue to explore future recycling outlet opportunities and joint solutions with other waste collection authorities ahead of making any longer term procurement decisions.

Reasons - There is a need to ensure that the Council can continue to dispose of collected recycled material appropriately.

The meeting ended at 9.07 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Agenda Item 6

Executive

Forward Plan

2 February 2009

Report of Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To review the Forward Plan of the key Executive decisions which will be taken over the next four months. These are the key decisions of which the Council's Executive is currently aware.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To resolve to note the Forward Plan for the period referred to next four months.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Forward Plan is updated and rolled forward on a monthly basis. As this takes place, the programme is adjusted with further key decisions being added and others rescheduled or removed. The covering introductory note identifies the Members of the Executive by name and title, as required by the Regulations.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 is a schedule of changes to the Forward Plan since the last publication and the plan itself.

Proposals

- 1.3 The proposals is to note the Forward Plan as attached.

Conclusion

- 1.4 Acceptance of these recommendations creates a Forward Plan for the Council as required by the Local Government Act 2000.

Background Information

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 require that a forward plan be prepared by the Leader of the Council. The Forward Plan sets out the planned key Executive decisions which will be taken on behalf of the Council over the next four months.
- 2.2 The definition of what constitutes a key Executive decision can be found in Article 13 of the Council's Constitution which has guided the compilation of the attached Forward Plan. In particular, determination of whether a decision is "key" has been assessed with regard to its financial significance, the impact on local people and the degree of discretion that can be exercised. The content of the Forward Plan is prescribed in the Regulations and reflected in the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution.
- 2.3 The Forward Plan has to be updated and rolled forward on a monthly basis, and a new forward plan produced at least 14 days prior to the first day on which it comes into effect. Any outstanding matters from the previous plan will be rolled forward into latest plan.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The Council must by law publish a Forward Plan. Acceptance of these recommendations creates a Forward Plan for the Council as required by the Local Government Act 2000.

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

- Option One** To adopt the recommendation. The Council must by law publish a Forward Plan. The only options concern its contents.
- Option Two** To propose amendments to the Forward Plan.

Consultations

All Chief Officers The plan has been updated in light of responses received.

Implications

- Financial:** None arising directly from this report.
Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Chief Accountant 01295 221564
- Legal:** The Council must by law publish a Forward Plan.
Comments checked by James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager 01295 221587
- Risk Management:** Risk assessment - No significant risk implications have

been identified in connection with this report other than the consequences of not complying with the legal requirement to publish a Forward Plan. Each report to the Executive on the items in the Forward Plan will carry its own risk assessment.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Chief Accountant
01295 221564

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

The Forward Plan provides a framework for consideration of Council policies over the next four months.

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader of the Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Forward Plan
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager
Contact Information	01295 221587 james.doble@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Forward Plan Summary

March 2009 to June 2009

Cherwell District Council

Summary of the Forward Plan

This summary of the Forward Plan, (produced by officers on behalf of the Leader of the Council) sets out the key Executive decisions which will be taken at Cherwell District Council over the next four months. These are the key decisions of which the Council's Executive is currently aware. The Forward Plan will be updated and rolled forward on a monthly basis. As this takes place, the programme will be adjusted: further key decisions may be added, or anticipated ones may be rescheduled or removed. The summary shows the decisions programmed to be taken during each month. A likely date of decision is shown, but it is possible that a decision may be rescheduled to a later month. The full Forward Plan, including the latest position on prospective decisions is available on the council website at www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk, using the link to Council meetings.

This summary sets out the key decisions by month and says whether they will be taken by the Full Executive or by one of its individual Members, or portfolio holders as they are known (see below for details of the membership of the Executive). While key decisions may be taken by officers exercising authority delegated by the Executive, it is the Council's intention that this will very much be the exception.

Key decisions are those which are financially significant (in terms of spending or savings) for the service or function concerned or which will have a significant impact on communities, usually in two or more wards in the District. For the purposes of compiling its Forward Plan the Council has decided that a decision will be financially significant

- if it is equivalent in value to more than 10% of the annual gross budget for the unit concerned or £50,000 whichever is the lesser. If the figure is below £50,000 regard will be had to the impact on communities in deciding whether the decision is key.
- If it involves an individual capital projects with a value greater than £250,000.

In assessing impact on local people (including businesses and organisations) the following factors will be borne in mind:

- The number of users of the service in the wards affected
- Whether the impact will be short term or will last for a number of years, or be permanent.
- The nature of the impact on communities in terms of economic, social and environmental well-being.

For a decision to be key there must be a significant degree of discretion to be exercised by the decision-maker.

The Forward Plan lists documents which are currently available to decision makers. Generally these are also available to the public but some may have restrictions on the information given in them. Copies of public documents listed may be obtained on request from

James Doble,
Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager
Cherwell District Council,
Bodicote House,
Bodicote,
Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4AA (e-mail: democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk).

There will be a copying charge for each document. Comments on the matters for decision may be made to the relevant contact officer up to the date of the meeting, unless otherwise specified in the consultation details.

Cherwell District Council – Executive Members

<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>Member</u>
Communications and Public Relations (with Special Responsibility for Climate Change)	Councillor Mallon
Community, Health and Environment	Councillor Reynolds
Customer Service and ICT	Councillor Turner
Economic Development and Estates	Councillor Bolster
Organisational Development and Improvement	Councillor Miss Pickford
Planning and Housing	Councillor Gibbard
Policy and Community Planning	Councillor Wood
Resources	Councillor Macnamara
Urban and Rural Services	Councillor Morris

Cherwell District Council Forward Plan

Key decisions to be taken by the full Executive

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
Likely date of decision: March 2009				
Parsons Street Pedestrianisation Scheme Traffic Regulation Order To consider a report to the Council from the Inspector appointed to hold a public inquiry into the Council's proposed traffic regulation order, and recommended amendments to that order.		Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Estates	David Marriott Tel: 01295 221603	None.
Revenues and Benefits Service Delivery Options Appraisal To consider the options for the delivery of revenues and benefits.		Portfolio Holder for Resources	Julie Evans Tel: 01295 221595	None.
Treasury Management Strategy To consider the Council's Treasury Management Strategy		Portfolio Holder for Resources	Karen Curtin Tel: 01295 221551	None.
Response to Department of Communities and Local Government Consultation on Eco-Towns: Weston Otmoor Response to draft Planning Policy Statement and proposal for an Eco-Town at Weston Otmoor		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Philip Clarke Tel: 01295 221840	None.

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
Response to Department of Communities and Local Government Consultation on Eco-Towns: North West Bicester Response to the proposal for an Eco-Town at North West Bicester		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Philip Clarke Tel: 01295 221840	None.
Choice Based Lettings Scheme - Allocations Policy To consider amendments to Cherwell's Allocations Policy to facilitate the implementation of a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme in partnership with Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Gillian Greaves, Marianne North Tel: 01295 221654, Tel: 01295 227946	None.
Older Persons Housing Policy To consider and adopt and Older Persons Housing Strategy		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Gillian Greaves Tel: 01295 221654	None.
A sustainable community strategy for Cherwell <i>To consider an update regarding the progress of the new sustainable community strategy for Cherwell. To endorse the next steps of the project.</i>	The strategy will be subject to extensive consultation with members, partners and the public.	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community Planning	Claire Taylor Tel: 01295 221563	None.

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
Integrated Parking Strategy , Residents Parking and Parking Enforcement <i>To consider proposals on the above issues</i>		Portfolio Holder for Urban and Rural Services	Chris Rothwell Tel: 01295 221712	None.
Customer Services Strategy To consider a Customer Services Strategy for Cherwell District Council		Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and ICT	Pat Simpson Tel: 01295 227069	None.
Service Delivery in Kidlington To consider options for delivering partners' services with our own services in Kidlington. Options derived from discussions with potential service delivery partners including County and Parish Councils, voluntary groups, Police and Health.		Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and ICT	Pat Simpson Tel: 01295 227069	None.
Partnership Working Framework To consider an update on the Partnership Working Framework since it was last reported to Executive on 3 March.		Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community Planning	Helen Couperthwaite Tel: 01295 221751	None.
Addressing Health Inequalities in Cherwell To consider the current position and progress.		Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment	Ian Davies Tel: 01295 221698	None.

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
<p>Pitt Review into Summer 2007 Floods - Further Implications following the Government's Response to the Report Recommendations</p> <p>To consider further implications arising from the Government's response to the Pitt Report.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment</p>	<p>Tony Brummell Tel: 01295 221524</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Management Information Strategy</p> <p>The audit commission have highlighted the council's need to improve its data quality arrangements. New national criteria for good data quality (under the Use of Resources Key Lines of Enquiry) set the standards we are required to reach</p> <p>The report includes a draft strategy for how the council plans to improve its management information over the next three years, taking into account the new criteria for data quality.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Improvement</p>	<p>Neil Lawrence Tel: 01295 221801</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Land Charges Value for Money Review</p> <p>To consider the outcomes of the review and approve an improvement plan to achieve greater value for money in the service.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Resources</p>	<p>Neil Lawrence Tel: 01295 221801</p>	<p>None.</p>

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
Likely date of decision: April 2009				
Asset Management Plan To consider the 2009/10 Asset Management Plan		Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Estates	David Marriott Tel: 01295 221603	None.
Review of Organisational Restructure To consider a report on the results following the re-structure of the Council		Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community Planning, Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Improvement	Mary Harpley Tel: 01295 221573	None.
Support Costs Allocation Policies To consider revisions to the current policies.		Portfolio Holder for Resources	Phil O'Dell Tel: 01295 227098	None.
Information Management Strategy To consider an information management strategy for the Council.		Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Improvement	Neil Lawrence Tel: 01295 221801	None.
Kidlington Area Appraisal Programme To consider responses to the appraisal draft and approval of final appraisal.		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Linda Rand Tel: 01295 221845	None.
Juniper Hill Conservation Area Appraisal To consider responses to the appraisal draft and approval of final appraisal.		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Linda Rand Tel: 01295 221845	None.

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
Environmental Crime Enforcement To consider activity to date and proposals for improvement.		Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment	Ed Potter Tel: 01295 221902	None.
Sports Centre Modernisation To consider progress to date and opening arrangements.		Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment	Paul Marston-Weston Tel: 01295 227095	None.
Annual Review of Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy To consider the Annual Review of Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy.		Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment	Grahame Helm Tel: 01295 221615	None.
Likely date of decision: May 2009				
Conservation Area Appraisal Programme Subject of further reports to be specified as programme progresses To consider responses to the consultation draft and approval of final appraisal.		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Linda Rand Tel: 01295 221845	None.
Banbury Residents Parking Scheme To consider proposals for the scheme.		Portfolio Holder for Urban and Rural Services	Chris Rothwell Tel: 01295 221712	None.

Subject for Decision	External Consultees/ method of consultation	Executive Portfolio	Contact Officer(s)	Documents submitted to decision-maker
Banbury Cultural Quarter To consider proposals for the development of a cultural quarter.		Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment	Ian Davies Tel: 01295 221698	None.
Likely date of decision: June 2009				
Conservation Area Appraisal Programme Subject of further reports to be specified as programme progresses To consider responses to the consultation draft and approval of final appraisal.		Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing	Linda Rand Tel: 01295 221845	None.

Executive

Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area

2 February 2009

Report of Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report on the outcome of the public consultation on the draft conservation area appraisal and to recommend that a conservation area be designated at Shenington with Alkerton

This report is public

The conservation area appraisal has been circulated separately with the agenda for Executive members.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the outcome of the public consultation on the draft appraisal and proposed conservation area boundary
- (2) To approve the changes it is recommended be made to proposed boundary in response to comments received
- (3) To designate, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, a conservation area as proposed in the revised appraisal and as at Fig 1 appended to this report with immediate effect.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the history with respect to proposals for conservation area designation in Shenington and Alkerton, the process followed to date, the consultation exercise and the comments received on the draft appraisal and proposed boundary. It recommends the changes that should be made to the proposed boundary in response to consultation and that a conservation area is designated with immediate effect.

Proposals

- 1.1 To approve the Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area Appraisal, amended in response to public consultation.
- 1.2 To designate a Conservation Area with immediate effect, having regard to comments received in response to public consultation.

Conclusion

- 1.3 To approve Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area appraisal and to designate a conservation area to cover both villages including their historic landscape backdrop, as indicated on Fig1.

Background Information

The Council's duty

- 2.1 This report is in accordance with Paragraph 9.48 of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2001 and paragraph 9.89 of the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011, which state that the Council will from time to time propose new or review existing Conservation Areas.
- 2.2 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate those areas as Conservation Areas.
- 2.3 The Act does not require local planning authorities to undertake public consultation prior to designation but paragraph 4.7 of PPG 15 states that it will be highly desirable that there should be consultation with local residents, businesses and other local interests over both the identification of areas and the definition of their boundaries. It also requires Conservation Areas to be reviewed from time to time and for proposals for preservation and enhancement to be submitted to a public meeting.
- 2.4 This Council considers consultation to be good practice and always holds a public exhibition, a public meeting and publicises the draft appraisal through the media.
- 2.5 Prior to considering designating a new conservation area and undertaking an appraisal the Planning and Affordable Housing Manager seeks the views of the Parish Council on the principle of designation. In the past, partly because of workload pressures, the Council has operated on the basis of an informal approach, whereby it will prioritise conservation area designations in locations where the Parish Council is supportive. The views of the Parish Council have been taken to be representative of residents as a whole.

The process followed at Shenington with Alkerton

- 2.6 There is no doubt that the villages of Shenington and Alkerton exhibit a special architectural or historic interest that justifies conservation area designation and officers' opinion has been endorsed by English Heritage.
- 2.7 In 1995 officers were invited to attend a Parish Council meeting to explain the implications of designation and received a hostile response.
- 2.8 In September 2005 officers were invited to attend a Parish Council meeting to outline the implications of designation and explained that the first step towards conservation area designation was to seek an in principle support from the Parish Council for the appraisal to be undertaken. In April 2006 the Parish Council organised a referendum on the matter. This resulted in 58 votes for designation and 141 against designation. Documentation circulated by members of the Parish Council

with the ballot forms, later sent to the Council for information, contained some factual errors regarding the implications of designation.

- 2.9 Opinions continued to run high in the villages, with strongly held views both for and against designation. In November 2007 the Council received a letter signed by 123 local residents asking the Council to designate a Conservation Area.
- 2.10 On 20 March 2008 the Parish Council voted to ask the Council to undertake an appraisal with a view to designation.
- 2.11 On 7 April 2008 the Council invited the Parish Council to contribute to the preparation of an appraisal and later informally shared early copies for comment.
- 2.12 On 25 September 2008 the Council published a Draft Conservation Area Appraisal for consultation purposes. Copies were sent to each Parish Councillor and the Clerk, to the County Council and English Heritage.
- 2.13 Copies were available to view at the Village Hall, the Primary School, the Church of St Michael in Alkerton, Holy Trinity Church in Shenington, the village pub, as well as Bodicote House, the North Area mobile library, Banbury library in Marlborough House and The Oxfordshire Studies Library. Twelve additional copies were made available to residents on request. The document was also available to download from the Councils web site and 149 people viewed it this way, although the number of these who were local residents is not known.
- 2.14 A press release was issued, resulting in a small article in the Banbury Guardian and an item on Radio Oxford.
- 2.15 A staffed public exhibition was held in Shenington Village Hall on the afternoon of 2 October, which was very well attended, where residents asked questions of general interest. This was followed by a Powerpoint presentation and public meeting in the Primary School in the evening, which was attended by approximately 65 people, where opinions both for and against designation were expressed.
- 2.16 Informative leaflets and questionnaires (attached at Appendix A and B) with reply-paid envelopes were distributed to all addresses within the villages, totalling 187, irrespective of whether or not they were located within the proposed boundary.

The consultation responses

- 2.17 Eighty four written responses were received. Responses are reported verbatim in full at Appendix C and, as many respondents also or alternatively sent a fuller written response by attached letter or report, a précis of this is also provided adjacent in italic. Full copies of all originals are filed in the Members' Room for perusal.
- 2.18 Fifty four responses (64.3%) were fully supportive of the proposal to designate a conservation area. Eight (9.5%) were neutral or expressed reservations and twenty two (26.2%) did not support designation in principle.

- 2.19 Those who supported designation generally did so with enthusiasm. Several responses included lengthy letters requesting additional areas for inclusion. Of those who supported designation, a clear majority considered that a greater area should be covered, again citing multiple areas for inclusion. 31.5% sought the inclusion of more general landscape context; 25.9% sought the inclusion of all of both villages; and, of specific areas sought for inclusion Rattlecombe Road (22.2%), Anderton's Barns (20.3%), The Lynchetts (16.6%) and Stocking Lane and Mill Lane (12.9% each) were the most frequently cited. The location of these areas is illustrated at Appendix D.
- 2.20 Those who did not support designation cited a variety of reasons (most with multiple reasons) including:
- There is no need / Already adequately protected by listing of buildings / Village has looked after itself without designation (40.9%)
 - Waste of public money /More bureaucracy /Need to give notice of works to trees (40.9%)
 - Already voted in Parish Poll (32%).
 - Divisive in the community (18.2%)
 - Two felt it should be bigger, in an unspecified way and one that it should be smaller in an unspecified way and one that it should exclude specific land at Alkerton.
- 2.21 Some of the stated reasons for objection appeared to be based upon a partial or a misunderstanding of the law relating to conservation areas and, in particular, in relation to the requirement for advance Notification to be given to the Council of the intention to fell, top or lop trees over a certain size within the designated area and the process and costs associated with this. For clarification members' attention is also drawn to the following:
- The legislation only covers trees with a trunk diameter of over 75mm measured at a height of 1.5m.
 - Certain trees, such as fruit trees in orchards are excluded.
 - The legislation allows for up to 2 years work to be catered for in a single Notification. Where work to a small wooded area is required this procedure would allow for a single approval of a programme or scheme of works for a group of trees. This would avoid the need for multiple applications.
 - The internal Council procedure has recently been streamlined, with the introduction of a simplified form and with the Street Scene and Landscape Service handling the notifications direct to speed up the response rate.
 - The vast majority of such applications are approved. In 2008 only 4 TPOs were served as result of 216 advance notices.
 - There are no exceptions or abbreviated procedures available in law to avoid the need to Notify the Council of intended works to such trees.
 - There are no areas of woodland within the proposed Conservation Area boundary that would qualify for woodland management under the Forestry Commission woodland management procedures, which, in any case, are quite onerous as they require a Woodland Management Plan to be drawn up and agreed by the Forestry Commission.

A further area of confusion is the extent of protection afforded by virtue of the number of statutorily listed buildings. Whilst there are a total of 35 listed buildings within the two villages, this only amounts to about one third of the total properties (excluding ancillary buildings) several of which are identified in the appraisal as making a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area and yet neither these nor their boundary walls are currently afforded any protection from demolition in the absence of conservation area designation.

- 2.22 Officers have given careful consideration to all responses, both for additional areas to be included in the proposed conservation area and for areas to be excluded.

Response to additional areas suggested for inclusion

2.23 **A, Rattlecombe Road**

Twelve requests were received to the effect that both sides of Rattlecombe Road and all buildings except Hill Top and West End should be included on the following grounds

- They are Ironstone rubble workers cottages predating 1732 map
- The strong building line creates a prominent feature at the entrance to the village
- The former Post Office and shop/garage is an important part of the social history of the village. The post office has a vaulted cellar
- High-Fields has a magnificent porch and is possibly the site of the inn shown on early maps.
- Rattlecombe House is shown on the 1875 map and, although brick, is believed to date from the early 1800s, with two early OS levelling benchmarks, making it contemporary with Tanner's Cottage and Rattlecombe Hollow.
- Rattlecombe Hollow stands on the site of the old quarry and the quarry face is still evident from the sunken garden
- Cedar Wood is a local stone built bungalow.
- Other modern bungalows on the western approach could be considered neutral but their walls and vegetation contribute positively.
- These properties line the road creating a narrow outlook, characteristic of the village.
- Ironstone walls are of historic interest: on the south side a well maintained wall has a Millennium plaque; on the north side boundary wall of High-Fields; retaining wall in front of Green Acre; lost retaining wall opposite The Level where a sympathetic replacement would be supported.
- A water pillar identical to that noted on the Green is located on Rattlecombe Road.
- Green Acre has a fine stone boundary wall.
- The vegetation within gardens and the hedgerow along Top Farm field contribute to the rural character, including the trees in highway land at Long Acre.
- The inclusion of the ugly substation would enable improvements to the fencing to be made.
- Designation could lend support to on going discussions with Central Networks regarding removal of overhead cables.
- The d'Arcy Dalton Way and Macmillan Way footpath would benefit from improvement.

Officers' response is as follows:

The bungalow at **The Leys** (A1) was originally excluded because, in itself, it is not of historic interest. However, the plot is evident on early maps, first as an orchard or similar. Although the plot is not shown on maps dating from the early 20th century, the existing boundaries appear to approximately respect the historic alignment. The plot is bounded by an attractive ironstone wall and is prominently located. Although the property is of mid 20th century construction, the plot in its entirety does make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

The terrace of properties comprising **The Lynchetts, Middlecote and The Old Post Office** (A2) are ironstone properties clearly of historic origin, probably squatters' or labourers' cottages, albeit their appearance is much altered. They are visually related to the rest of the village in that the Green at the centre of the village is visible when standing in front of them. There is a clear break of slope immediately west of the terrace, with the land falling away to the west.

High Fields (A3), the first house when approaching the village from the west, also appears on the first OS maps, but others between here and the village, although pleasant, do not display sufficient special architectural or historic interest to justify designation. There are some boundary walls of value and some incidental features, but these alone are not considered to justify designation.

The remains of the **boundary wall** (A4) along the north west boundary of Top Farm field does make a valuable contribution in enclosing the street scene and this, together with the bank behind, effectively contains views along the street.

It is therefore recommended that the proposed boundary of the conservation area be extended to include the terrace of properties on the south east side of Rattlecombe Road and the adjacent vacant plot, which has permission for a detached dwelling. The proposed amendment to the boundary would run along the rear boundary of these properties, cross the road and run back into the village along the top of the bank just within the boundary of Top Farm field and include the plot of The Leys.

2.24 **B, Stocking Lane**

Seven requests were received to the effect that most or all of Stocking Lane should be included on the following grounds:

- Formerly Stockin Way, this was the principal route through the village until it was stopped up to enable the development of RAF Edgehill. The whole road should be included as it has characteristics in common with other roads that are included within the boundary, such as stone walls, vegetation and an informal character.
- The boundary walls to Orchard House and Oakworth (B1) contribute positively.
- The boundary wall to The Garters (B2) is impressive and noted on the 1875 and 1882 OS maps.

- The hedge between The Garters and the school marks the built edge of the village. The open area is part of the setting of the village and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance.
- The school has a prominent stone rotunda.
- The Jitty (B3) (a private lane running between Stocking Lane and The Green) is a delightful cutting worthy of preservation.
- The former Council houses here and on Mill Lane are part of the historic development of the village; their gardens are prominent. Council houses in Drayton and Wroxton are included.
- The five houses constructed recently within the garden of Long Acre make a neutral contribution and make the case for designation, but at least are in local stone and have a stone boundary wall and trees in the verge. They are prominent in the wider landscape.
- The Doctor's Surgery site may face future changes. It marks the end of the built up area and is therefore sensitive. The Surgery is located on a sensitive site close to the Scheduled Ancient Monument and designation could help protect its stone walls.

Officers' response is as follows:

The tall stone boundary wall to The Garters is a prominent feature in the townscape, effectively marking the entrance to the historic core of the village and is shown on the 1875 OS map. The properties along the north east side of Stocking Lane are suburban in character and only the boundary wall, which commences at Dingles Copse, I Stocking Lane, exhibits any special character. The Jitty is a delightful historic route, now gated and a shared private drive, and is already included within the proposed boundary for most of its length. To include the remainder would require the inclusion also of Oakworth and Orchard House, pleasant but undistinguished late 20th century dwellings in artificial stone. These and other dwellings along Stocking Lane do not display any special character and to include these would suggest that other areas of relatively ordinary development should also be included and this cannot be justified and would devalue the designation.

It is therefore recommended that the proposed boundary of the conservation area be extended to include the undeveloped plot immediately north west of Top Farm and The Garters and that the boundary should cross the road to include the whole of the front boundary wall of Dingles Copse, but not the plot itself, then rejoin the original draft boundary.

2.25 **C, Mill Lane**

Seven requests were also received to the effect that more of Mill Lane should be included on the following grounds:

- Sycamore House, Minerva House and Orchard Cottage (C1) are good examples of contemporary additions paying heed to local building materials.
- Mill Farm House and Dairy Cottage (C2) are two agricultural dwellings located to the south of Mill Lane, faced in local stone and are prominent in local and middle distance views.
- The stone walls, hedgerows and trees bring harmony to the street scene as with Stocking Lane.

- The allotments (C3) are part of the social history of the village, as are the ex public sector houses.
- Views east and south from the end of Mill Lane provide open views of countryside.

Officers' response is as follows:

The recent infill referred to above is of sympathetic design using local materials. However, it does not exhibit a special character or appearance worthy of designation, nor do Mill Farm House or Dairy Cottage, which are also separated from the rest of the village by pleasant but unremarkable suburban housing.

It is therefore recommended that no amendment to the proposed boundary can be justified on Mill Lane.

2.26 **D, Top Farm field**

Six requests were received to the effect that Top Farm field should be included for the following reasons:

- Formerly two fields, the boundaries have not changed for centuries, being defined by two historic routes.
- The boundary hedge to Stocking Lane and the demolished wall to Rattlecombe Road are characteristic features worthy of protection / reinstatement.
- The area is popular with walkers and provides glimpses through to the village.
- Whilst not a public space this makes a positive contribution to the rural character and appearance of the area and creates the setting of the village.

Officers' response is as follows:

Although the field itself makes very little contribution to the area as, for the most part, it is not seen from the public domain, its Rattlecombe Road boundary does make a positive contribution and the small plot off Stocking Lane also is bounded by an historic ironstone wall.

It is therefore recommended that the boundary should be extended to include the small plot and The Garters.

2.27 **E, The Lynchetts**

Nine requests were received to the effect that the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) known as the Lynchetts to the north of Shenington should be included for the following reasons:

- SAM status has not protected the views from the Lynchetts
- The public footpath affords fine views, particularly from the stile back towards Rectory Farm Barns and the Church of St Michael in Alkerton.
- The whole of the valley between the villages should be included.

Officers' response is as follows:

The designation of a scheduled ancient monument (SAM) provides greater protection to the designated area than Conservation Area designation would. However, there is no provision in the Act for views

from SAMs to be protected, and in law a SAM does not have setting, unlike a listed building or a conservation area. However, even if the SAM is not included within the designated area, it would constitute the setting of the conservation area and in that respect views to and from it would be afforded protection under paragraph 4.14 of PPG15.

It is recommended that there is nothing to be gained from including the SAM in the conservation area.

2.28 **F, Alkerton / Anderton's barns**

Eleven requests were received to the effect that the farm complex known as Alkerton or Anderton's Barns at the eastern entrance to Alkerton should be included for the following reasons:

- They are noted on historic maps of 1833
- They are magnificent barns with ashlar stone work and fine pointing
- They dominate the entrance to Alkerton
- Stone wall and roadside trees link them to Alkerton.
- They are currently for sale
- They have no protection from demolition
- The boundary walls mark the entrance to the village and contain a stone plaque donated by the village.

Officers' response is as follows:

This is a fine complex in a prominent location. However, it is too far from the rest of Alkerton to justify an extension of the boundary along the road and including agricultural land of no special quality. Officers requested that English Heritage add these barns to the Statutory List, but this was declined. However, they are worthy of addition to a Local List and the Heritage Protection Bill, expected to become law in 2010, will require Local Planning Authorities to draw up a Local List for their area, backed up by a policy in the LDF. Whilst this will not afford much protection in the interim, officers intend to prepare Informal Development Guidance, setting out matters that should be considered in any scheme to convert these to alternative uses.

It is therefore recommended that the boundary should not be extended to include these barns.

2.29 **G, Wider Setting**

Seventeen requests were received to the effect that the wider setting of the villages should be included on the grounds that:

- The setting of Drayton and Wroxton has been included, so there is a need for consistency.
- The valley to the west of the village includes an additional Lynchetts site on the field beyond The Level.
- The valley to the north to protect views from Balscote Road
- The valley to the east of The Lynchetts is an integral part of the setting of both villages, with good views of the elements of both villages.
- The parish allotments are part of the social history of the village
- In particular the view from the Balscote Road towards Mill Farm and the Church.

- Public rights of Way, including Percy D'Alton Way and Macmillan Way cross the area and afford a great number of positive vistas.
- Positive vistas from the Green , The Level and Rattlecombe Road incorporating Top Farm fields towards the airfield is an important open space bounded by stone walls and hedgerows.
- Land between Alkerton Barns and Alkerton is heavily treed and acts as part of the positive setting of the village.
- Views of the villages, particularly of the churches, from the surrounding area are worthy of protection.
- Designation would avoid more inappropriate development.
- Designation would avoid the extension of Alkerton tip, which is visible from the Lynchcetts.

Officers' response is as follows:

It is true that both Drayton and Wroxton boundaries include surrounding farm land, but these designations pre-dated the EH guidance. In the case of Wroxton, much of this is landscape constitutes historic park and garden. In the case of Drayton, land to the east was included in the 1977 designation, probably to provide a buffer between the village and the westward expansion of Banbury, but this would not be the approach taken if the conservation area were to be designated today. Both PPG15 and the English Heritage guidance is quite clear that conservation area designation is an inappropriate means of protecting the wider landscape. However, it does allow for the immediate setting to be included where this is desirable and justified or where it constitutes the landscape backdrop of a small rural settlement.

Shenington, by virtue of its plateau top location, cannot be said to have a landscape backdrop. Although there are pleasing views out of the village to the west and south, the EH guidance recommends that general planning policies should be used to protect this open countryside. The landscape surrounding the boundary also constitutes the setting of the conservation area and paragraph 4.14 requires LPAs to have regard to the setting and views in and out of the conservation area in determining development proposals.

Views towards Alkerton include the Sor Valley and this was included in the boundary. However, following representations, this has now been carefully re-examined it is now considered that some of the lower slopes to the north of the village do not make a positive contribution to views from Shenington as they are degraded, do not in themselves make a positive contribution and are not worthy of inclusion. The southern slopes however are an intrinsic part of the vistas between the two villages and are included. The rising land to the east of Alkerton was also included in the draft appraisal as constituting the landscape backdrop. However, following representations, this was carefully examined, and it was agreed that it is the trees and the bank immediately east of the road that provide the backdrop; the field beyond does not make a significant contribution. The same applies to a small pocket of farm land south of Ash Hill Cottage at the entrance to Alkerton from the east and so this also is no longer proposed for inclusion.

It is therefore recommended that some of the lower slopes to the north and east of Alkerton be excluded from the boundary but that the landscape back drop remains included elsewhere where this is justified.

2.30 **The whole of both villages**

Fourteen requests were received to the effect that the whole of the two villages should be included on the grounds that:

- At Drayton and Wroxton, the entire villages have been included.
- Including only part of the village is socially divisive.
- It is the mix of character that makes up the village.

Officers' response is as follows:

The entire village of Alkerton is proposed for inclusion, but only the historic parts of Shenington. Drayton and Wroxton Conservation Areas were designated prior to the publication of the EH guidance and, as referred to above, the same approach would not have been taken today. The recent review of Drayton Conservation Area Appraisal did contemplate the de-designation of some areas, but concluded that no harm was done by maintaining the status quo. Conservation Area designation is concerned with the physical fabric of a place and consideration of social issues is restricted to historical associations not community relations. It is heartening that residents are keen to see their property afforded the protection that designation brings but it is important to ensure that paragraph 4.4 of PPG15 is complied with in ensuring that the concept is not devalued by designating areas lacking any special interest. Where the area demonstrates special architectural or historic interest it is proposed for inclusion.

It is therefore recommended that it is inappropriate for the entire village of Shenington to be included.

The proposed changes to the draft boundary included within the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal are illustrated on Fig 1 below.

Response to areas suggested for exclusion

2.31 **Area 1: East of the main road at the entrance to Alkerton**

This land was proposed for inclusion on the grounds that *"The tall overhanging vegetation beside the main road is a key feature, as are the trees in the church yard. In particular, the line of trees by the war memorial; provides an important backdrop for the main village crossroads and separates the village from the fields beyond, clearly defining the village boundary"*. The line of trees along the eastern side of the road is identified on the Visual Analysis Plan Fig 11 as Key vegetation or trees.

Representations on behalf of the landowner assert that:

- The land is not identified in the appraisal as being an area of prominent open space, nor does it identify any significant view, nor do the historic maps associate the land with any aspect of historic interest.
- The field is not a strong visual and / or natural boundary
- The land is significantly higher than the road and therefore has no visual connection with the rest of the area.

- Protection of the trees would be better achieved by TPOs.
- The boundary should be drawn along the line of trees

Officers' response is as follows:

The special interest is provided by the line of trees and the embankment, not the field to the east.

It is therefore recommended that the boundary should be amended to include the trees and the bank but exclude the higher land to the east.

2.32 Area 2: Valley slope north of Alkerton

This land was proposed for inclusion on the grounds that it contributes to the open valley between the two villages, with magnificent views, and is a key element to the appreciation of both villages. Positive views are identified in the Visual Analysis Fig 11 south west across this land from Hill Barn in the north east, from the edge of the Manor Farm courtyard looking north and north west. There is a group of trees in the north west corner identified as being Key Vegetation.

Representations on behalf of the landowner assert that:

- The land is described in the appraisal as lying fallow with few buildings and therefore has little architectural or historic value of the built environment beyond The Barns Character Area and so does not form an integral part of the historic built environment.
- Hill Barn also fails to meet the test of being an integral part of the historic built environment as it is far removed from the existing settlement.
- It does not constitute historic gardens or parkland.
- Such open countryside is provided wider policy protection through Local Plan policies.
- Its designation cannot be justified on the grounds of setting. The setting of a conservation area is a material consideration in determining development proposals.
- The northern boundary does not have a strong/visual and/or natural boundary, whereas the southern field boundary comprises an old stone boundary wall.
- The land should be excluded from the conservation area.

Officer's response is as follows:

The land itself has been substantially degraded by its current use as grazing, with the loss of historic field boundaries, the re-grading of the valley slope to create a flat ménage area and the introduction of modern means of enclosure. Whilst the views across the valley are significant, they are over this land rather than of it. It is considered that it therefore constitutes the setting of the area of special interest, rather than displaying special interest in itself.

It is therefore recommended that this land should be excluded from the conservation area. The boundary should be redrawn to run along the Manor Farm complex boundary and then due north along the line of the former field boundary (which is just discernable on the ground) to include Mill Barn, a prominent unlisted building.

2.33 Area 3: Land north of the Church of St Michael

This land was proposed for inclusion on the grounds that the field pattern has not substantially changed since the mid 18th century and the land is also heavily vegetated and provides the setting to the Church of St Michael.

Representations on behalf of the landowner assert that:

- This land already has the benefit of planning permission for a garage and has been refused consent for a dwelling on appeal due to the proximity to the Grade 1 listed church.
- It lies outside the line of the historic stone walls, being bounded only by a post and wire fence, which enables views through to the north.
- It has no architectural or historic interest.
- Although there is much vegetation at present, this could be trimmed without consent, even within a conservation area, and therefore the character of the land is open on account of the limited built form.
- The land is protected by virtue of constituting the setting of the area of special interest and constituting the setting of the church.
- It should be excluded from the Conservation Area.

Officers' response is as follows:

The field boundaries have remained unchanged since the earliest OS maps and the land is closely associated with the group of buildings in the locality, contains vegetation that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and its preservation is important in relation to the setting of the Grade 1 listed church.

It is therefore recommended that the land should remain within the proposed conservation area.

2.34 Second round of consultation

Following this reconsideration in the light of representations received, Officers wrote to the Parish Council and all residents who would be affected by the proposed amendment to the consultation Draft, seeking views on the proposed change in a second round of consultation.

As a result:

- Three letters of support were received from residents of Rattlecombe Road and The Level (two continuing to seek additional areas for inclusion)
- A further letter from a planning consultant continuing to make a case for the exclusion of land immediately north of the Church of St Michael, Alkerton, based upon the assertion that the boundary has changed over time. However, close inspection reveals the boundary to be entirely consistent in all OS maps from 1875 to the present day and this has been explained to the consultant. A further response has been received, which makes reference to the right of the landowner to pursue Judicial Review.
- A letter from the same planning consultant on behalf of another resident / land owner challenging the inclusion of The Leys, the boundary wall to Top Farm field and the terrace on Rattlecombe

Road. The reasons for inclusion have been re-iterated to the consultant.

Officers gave further careful consideration to these suggestions but concluded, with the agreement of the Port Folio Holder for Planning and Housing, that there was no evidence to support further changes.

If further representations are received on the second round of consultation these will be reported verbally at the Executive Meeting.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The matter of whether to designate a conservation area has already been taken in principle by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, on the basis of the request from the Parish Council that the Council prepare the Conservation Area Appraisal with the intention of determining which areas are worthy of inclusion.
- 3.2 The matter to be decided is how much of the villages and their landscape backdrop should be included within the conservation area.

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

- Option One** Approve the Conservation Area Appraisal as a material consideration and to designate the area identified at Figure 1, which includes and excludes specific areas following public consultation.
- Option Two** Approve the Conservation Area Appraisal as a material consideration and to designate the area identified at Figure 1, without the addition and exclusion of specific areas following consultation.
- Option Three** Designate an alternative boundary as members see fit.

Consultations

- Shenington with Alkerton Parish Council** Responded that all the individual comments from parishioners to be considered fully and for the DCD officers to come to a professional conclusion of those findings. A majority of the Parish Council would like to see the Conservation Area boundary increased (no specific area indicated).
- English Heritage** Responded, *inter alia*, that “it is very clear that the two settlements are of considerable historic interest and distinctive character and English Heritage therefore strongly supports the principle of designation as a conservation area in this case. We are generally content with the boundaries, although the exact position and

extent will of course be decided following the results of consultation and the need to ensure that they are logical and related to obvious features or land ownership on the ground.”

Results of Public Consultation

Questionnaire responses are reported verbatim in full at Appendix C, together with a précis of any longer letters or reports also submitted. Full copies of all responses received are filed in the Members’ Room for perusal.

Implications

Financial:

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The costs of preparing the Appraisal and the public consultation are met from the approved revenue budget and the Council does not operate any grant aid scheme that would be triggered by the Appraisal.

Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Accountant 01295 221552

Legal:

The Council has a duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to identify the parts of its area that are worthy of designation as a conservation area and to designate them as such. English Heritage has confirmed that the area is worthy of designation. The Council is complying with its statutory duty in this respect.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Assistant Solicitor 01295 221687

Risk Management:

The Conservation Area Appraisal analyses the special character and appearance of the designated area and sets out proposals for the management of the area. Having been publicly consulted upon, the Appraisal will become a material consideration in the determining of planning applications within the designated area and will be used by Inspectors in considering appeals.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 2215660

Wards Affected

Sibford

Corporate Plan Themes

Greener Cleaner Cherwell

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix A	Leaflet distributed to all properties within the two villages, informing of implications of designation
Appendix B	Questionnaire distributed to every property within the two villages.
Appendix C	Consultation responses received to the Draft Appraisal and Draft Conservation Area boundary
Appendix D	Location of additional areas sought for inclusion and exclusion
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Linda Rand, Design and Conservation Team Leader
Contact Information	01295 221845 Linda.Rand@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

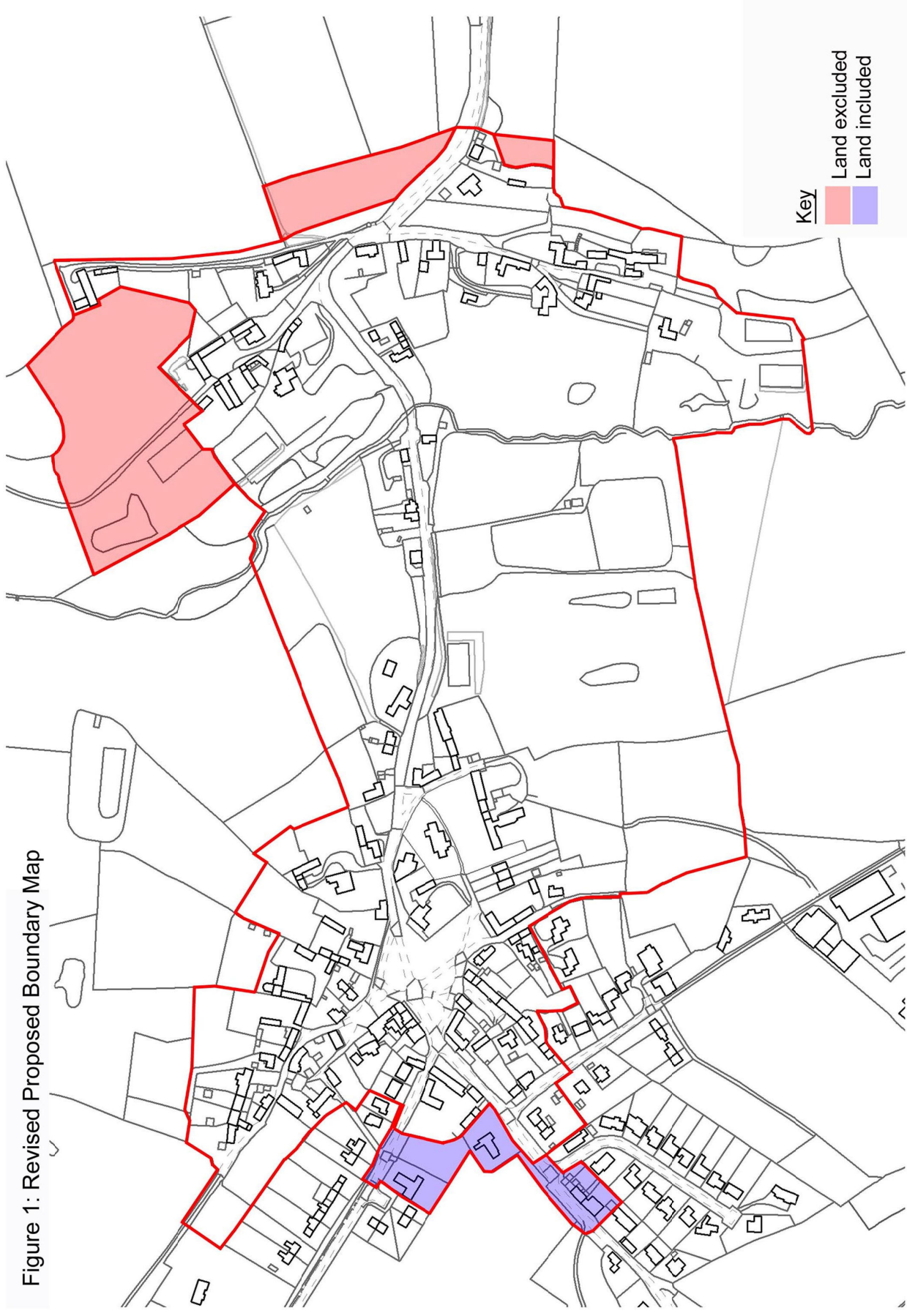


Figure 1: Revised Proposed Boundary Map

Appendix A

What is Special about Shenington and Alkerton?

The villages of Shenington and Alkerton exemplify the picturesque settlements of the North Oxfordshire Ironstone Downs: historic cottages and houses in vernacular style, constructed from the golden-red local stone, iconic medieval churches and a settlement pattern that has changed little over the last few centuries.

Both Shenington and Alkerton originated as Anglo-Saxon settlements and over time have developed so that the pattern of buildings closely reflects their landscape topography. Alkerton is a linear settlement across the steep valley sides, and Shenington a nucleated village around a hill top green. The intensive farming of the Medieval period is visible in the terraced cultivation of the valley slopes to the north and in the Medieval fish ponds to the south.

There are a large number of high quality unlisted vernacular buildings within the proposed Conservation Area, the majority dating from the 17th century - a wealthy period for the District due to the boom in the wool trade.

The medieval churches of St Michael in Alkerton and the Holy Trinity in Shenington are true gems and reflect medieval prosperity, with fine medieval carving the product of local stonemasons.



Cherwell District Council is seeking comments on the Proposed Conservation Area boundary and on the appraisal

The draft appraisal can be viewed at:

**Bodicote House, Banbury
Banbury Library
The North Area Mobile Library
The Bell Public House**

**The Village Hall
Shenington Cof E School
The Churches of St Michael and
Holy Trinity**

On the Council's website at:
<http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/>
or by request from

01295 221883

The Council is inviting comments on the proposed Conservation Area boundary and the draft appraisal by 24 October.

Why a Conservation Area Appraisal?

The planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon local planning authorities to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas.

A Conservation Area is "An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance".

An appraisal identifies what is special about the area.

Proposed Shenington and Alkerton Conservation Area



A PUBLIC EXHIBITION

**3-6 p.m. Thursday 2nd October
Shenington Village Hall**

A PUBLIC MEETING

**7-9 p.m. Thursday 2nd October
Shenington C of E Primary School**



What are the effects of designation?

The aim of designating a Conservation Area is not to prevent change or to stop new development, but to **preserve and enhance** the best of the past while allowing sympathetic development in the future and ensure a high standard of any new development.

Some examples of the implications include:

- Owners are encouraged to maintain and repair their buildings: repair of traditional features such as windows is usually preferable to replacement.
- Where they are necessary, replacements should use local traditional styles, methods and materials appropriate to the building.
- **P**roposed Conservation Area Consent is required for some works that do not require consent outside a conservation area, such as erecting satellite dishes on front elevations, cladding of front elevations and insertion of dormer windows.
- Conservation Area Consent is required for demolition of some buildings over 115 cubic metres in volume.
- Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of boundary walls over 1m facing a highway and over 2m elsewhere.
- Advance notice needs to be given of works to trees over 15cm girth (except orchards) to give the Council time to assess their significance to the character and appearance of the area.
- In determining planning applications for new development, the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting has to be taken into account.

Myths of Conservation Area Designation

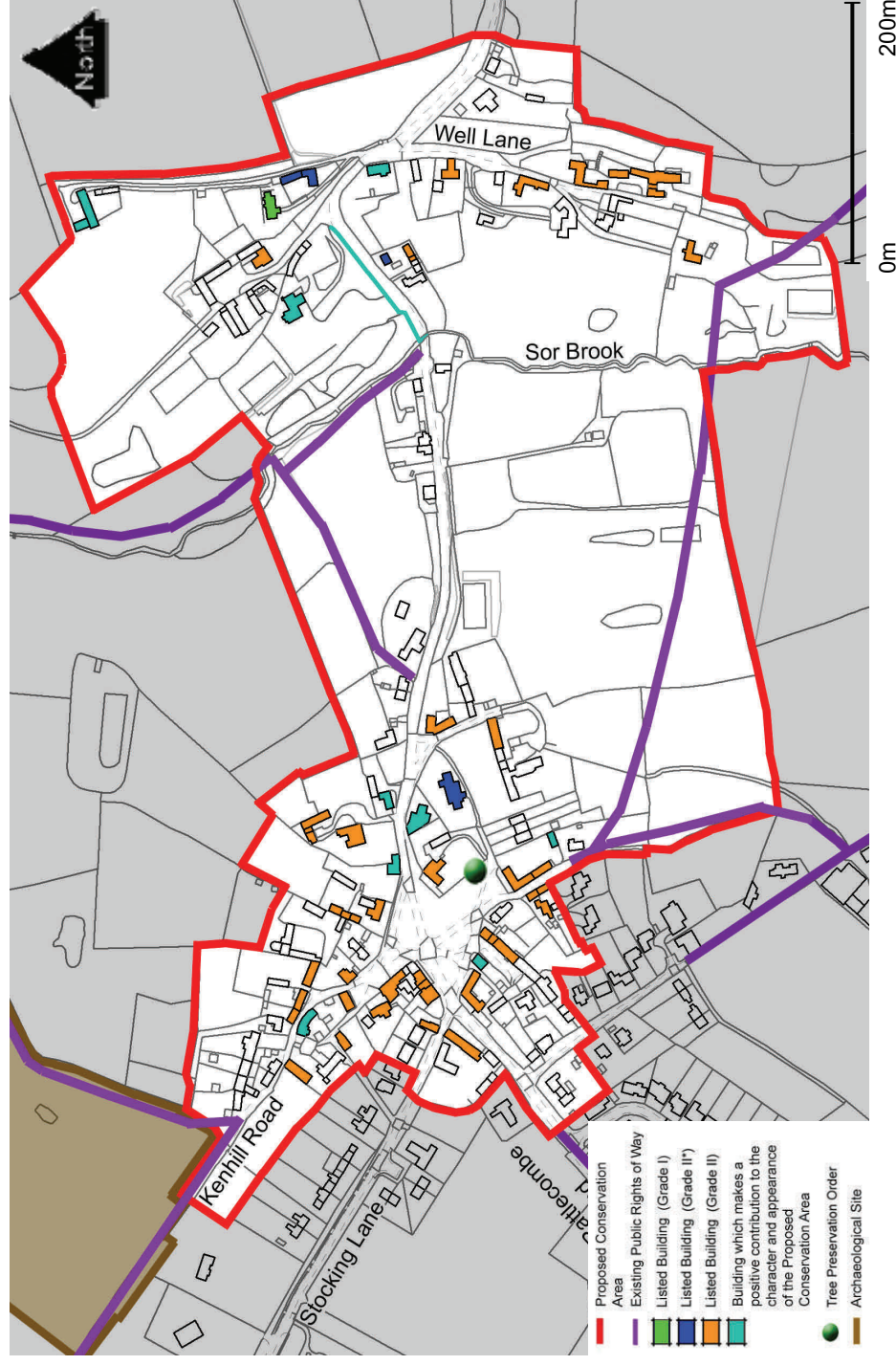
Fears that are ungrounded:

- 'I will have to ask permission to do anything'*
- 'My Council Tax will go up'*
- 'I won't be able to cut my hedge or prune my trees without consent'*
- 'The Conservation Area will prevent change and development'*
- 'Designation will prevent the building of affordable housing'*
- 'I won't be able to extend my house'*
- 'I won't be able to paint my windows without consent'*

Designation does **NONE** of these.

Why Shenington and Alkerton?

The significance of the architecture, the historic layout of the settlements, the streetscapes, the open spaces within the villages and the continuity of historic field patterns, all mark out the villages of Shenington and Alkerton as an area of special interest deserving of Conservation Area designation.



Appendix B
Shenington with Alkerton
Proposed Conservation Area
and Draft Appraisal



QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you have any comments on the proposed Conservation Area boundary?

2. Do you have any comments on the content of the draft Conservation Area Appraisal?

3. Did you attend the exhibition on 2nd October 2008 3-6 at the village Hall? YES / NO

4. Did you attend the public meeting on 2nd October 2008 7-9 in the Primary School? YES / NO

5. Have you seen the draft Conservation Area Appraisal? YES / NO
If so, where?

- Councils Website
- Library
- Requested Copy
- Pub
- Village Hall
- School
- Other

6. Do you live within the proposed Conservation Area boundary? YES / NO

7. Please rate the services provided by the Design and Conservation Team?

- Very Poor
- Poor
- Below Average
- Above Average
- Good
- Very Good

Please return using the pre-paid envelope provided, attaching an additional sheet if required.

Appendix B

The closing date for comments is **24th October**. Comments will be reported to the Council's Executive.

Appendix C

comments on proposed boundary?	comments on content of draft appraisal?	additional comments	Pieces of letter attached
<p>PARISH COUNCIL: A majority of the Parish Council members would like to see the Conservation boundary increased</p>	<p>The general structure of the document is clear in providing a definition of the special interest as recommended by national guidance and it is well illustrated. However I suggest that a few of the paragraphs could be re-ordered to assist with the logic of the analysis. My major recommendations are that the detailed architectural descriptions within Section 6, both for listed and unlisted buildings could usefully be an appendix to the rear of the document. This information is detailed and an overview of the architectural history as relevant to special character is really all that is needed.</p>	<p>The Parish Council would also like to ask for all the individual comments from Parishioners to be considered fully and for the CDC officers to come to a professional conclusion of those findings.</p>	
<p>ENGLISH HERITAGE: It is very clear that these two settlements are of considerable historic interest and distinctive character and English Heritage therefore strongly supports the principle of designation as a conservation area in this case. We are generally content with the proposed boundaries, although the exact position and extent will of course be decided following the results of public consultation and the need to ensure that they are logical and related to obvious features or land ownership on the ground.</p>	<p>I also suggest that because of the distinctive topography of the settlements the analysis of views should be more detailed, cross referenced to the text and a summary of the significance of each view to special character should be provided. This could follow the methodology set out in the latest English Heritage Guidance "Seeing the History in the View: A method for assessing heritage significance within views" by establishing the viewing points, describing the type of view (eg panorama, glimpsed, formal, or townscape) and what it reveals about the character of the settlement. This would then assist both applicants developing proposals and the local authority when assessing them as to what is the important characteristic of a view that requires preservation or enhancement.</p>		
	<p>It is an interesting report which highlights the case for the area to be a Conservation Area. I amazed myself by enjoying reading the report.</p>		
	<p>Apart from one or two minor errors (which I reported to one of your officers at the exhibition) I think you have done an excellent job. I particularly liked the inclusion of views from various points in the parish.</p>	<p>I have now reconsidered my opinion and am in favour of the Conservation Area proposal for the following reasons: 1- Assurances given in the leaflet, and by the Chairman of the meeting, as to the effects of CA designation. 2- The number and placing of unlisted but congenial buildings in the proposed Conservation Area, coupled with the difficulty of securing further listings.</p>	
	<p>I appreciate the concerns of residents within the area but I feel I would like the central older part of the village conserved. It is all a matter of balance.</p>		

	Thought the general content was excellent but just a few mistakes - very interesting and well worth preserving for future generations, despite present residents keeping it up very well, but in the future?	I would like to thank the entire panel of Design and Conservation team- An excellent presentation - very well handled. I support the proposed Conservation of Shenington and Alkerton.	
Generally fine	Excellent document. Very well put together. Excellent presentation from the team at the meeting held at the school.		
My property is on Mill Lane in the proposed area my house is out but my garage is in. Can I have a property which is half in and half out?	All the stone walls that run through the village within the boundary should be included also the verges.		
Would it be difficult to include the whole village entity in a conservation area?		I was already in favour of Shenington becoming a conservation village prior to attending the meeting on 2nd October. My house is at the end of a small group of houses. It has views to the west of rolling country, and hills. To the east there are views of valleys in winter, screened in summer by tall birches and other trees in full leaf.	
We are very pleased with the proposal	We live at the 'Old Bakery' and it was mislabeled as 'The Orchard'		
It should embrace the land behind Rattlecombe Lane towards the school.	thorough		
We believe in the inclusion of Anderton's Barn at the crossroads into Alkerton from Banbury. 1. This building originally was part of the working farm to our house and only ceased in 1935. 2. As it is currently on the market, there is a potential threat to its use, preservation and possible development.	Yes - public footpaths incorrectly marked - please see attached corrected plan of Oxfordshire County Council maps	We would greatly welcome the extension of the conservation boundaries to prevent further expansion of the recycling centre and any other potential spoiling of the area around the two villages	
	Commend you on the depth of research and presentation which sets out an overwhelmingly compelling case.	As a retired professional planner and Shenington property owner since 1989 I have always found it quite amazing that the villages have remained undesignated since the inception of Conservation Areas in 1968. I sincerely hope that the proposition will be accepted by your Council as Planning Authority without further delay.	
		I have read your draft Conservation Area Appraisal and feel that, on balance, the village would benefit from the protection of such status and would therefore ask that your proposals are accepted.	

<p>Could be extended in many directions</p>	<p>Particularly appreciated Appendix 1 outlining the relevant policies which guided your work.</p>	<p>Outlines positive vistas, buildings, characteristic boundary walls, trees and green spaces which are currently not included. Support the areas listed for Enhancement and suggest a wider, more comprehensive CA would incorporate more for future projects. Inclusion for Stocking Lane, Mill Lane & The Level supported as a unifying measure. Comparisons drawn to Drayton and Wroxton.</p>	<p>Inclusion of Stocking Lane, Mill Lane and The Level suggested as being relevant due to inclusion of Drayton & Wroxton's areas of 'low quality' housing and proximity to village green.</p>
<p>The proposed boundary is far too tightly drawn. CA status should be designated for the whole of Sherington with Alkerton and its rural setting. The need to unify the village by this action cannot be stressed too much.</p>	<p>appreciate the work carried out</p>	<p>Drayton and Wroxton provide a precedent. The 1970 designations cover the whole of these villages and the CA status of Drayton has recently been reviewed and the area of its setting included in the designation has been increased</p>	
<p>Yes, it should also take in the fields bounded by Rattlecombe Road and Stocking Lane, and should include the old stone wall along the north side of Rattlecombe Road. These are beautiful when viewed from Rattlecombe Road. Yes it is adequate</p>	<p>Excellent, and very thorough</p>	<p>Please act quickly, to prevent any further demolition of historic features before the Conservation Area comes into effect. Your proposals have our full support.</p>	
	<p>No</p>		

		<p>On the north east side, the proposed boundary line does not extend to Alkerton Barn Farm which I feel is an integral part of the village. This property is currently on the market for sale, and without the protection of conservation any subsequent redevelopment may not be in keeping with the rest of the village. The barns of this property, I would have thought were of architectural interest and deserve protection accordingly. Further areas on the west side of the village i.e. Stocking Lane, Mill Lane, The Level & Rattlecombe Road, have also been excluded from the proposed conservation area, and these too I would consider to be a vital part of the village. Any applications for development here would have an impact on the character and appearance of the village as a whole. I would propose that the above-mentioned areas are included within the boundary line of the conservation area. These areas are the most likely to be developed, and need the protection afforded by being within a conservation area.</p>	
	<p>Fascinating and well researched</p>		<p>Appraisal as it stands is stark contrast to others. e.g. Wroxton & Drayton, which appear to regard setting more highly. 3 areas proposed for inclusion: Anderton Barns, Lynchetts & valley, and Rattlecombe Road. Concerns for views in and from village periphery. Areas which are most under threat from inappropriate development e.g. Stocking Lane town houses. Essential to protect entrances to villages.</p>
<p>Additions - see letter</p>	<p>Thank the team for their effort in producing the document</p>		<p>Detailed letter outlining several areas for inclusion, particularly the extremities. Reminds the council of their responsibility to designate under the Act. Weighting of opinions should be given consideration.</p>

<p>Cannot understand why the area is not larger</p>	<p>Thanks for the hard work and enthusiasm</p>		<p>The boundary as currently drawn encompasses significant open agricultural land to the south of the village. Popular walking routes pass through the area & afford good views in all directions. Mill Lane appears modern but is old route to southern mill with defining walls, hedges & trees. Good view towards Shutford. Rattlecombe Road also worthy of inclusion. Need to prevent wilful demolition.</p>
<p>Extend further down Rattlecombe Road to protect vista - boundary drawn far too conservatively</p>	<p>Most excellent document</p>		<p>9 points listed to support inclusion of Rattlecombe Road and western entrance into the village. If the whole village was included, this would be supported.</p>
<p>Extend in two areas.</p>			<p>Conserve the open spaces, which are actually on all sides of the villages. Attention drawn to Anderton Barns and northern valley (Macmillan Way). Inclusion of whole village supported.</p>
<p>Boundary is far too tightly drawn</p>	<p>First rate</p>		<p>Protection of setting is essential, whole villages plus immediate surrounding land needs to be included. Will also stop divisions within the villages. Fail to see justification for not including whole villages. Anderton barns particularly mentioned.</p>
<p>We believe it should be extended</p>	<p>Excellent piece of work. We Support the villages becoming a conservation area</p>	<p>Thankyou for the excellent document, the team have a real passion for their work, and I support the CA designation. Request the boundary be extended down Rattlecombe Road to protect the vista from the west. There are more lynchests at the west end, the first property at the west village entrance is positive (High Fields). Properties there stand on the old quarry site. The boundary has been drawn far too conservatively, and if the whole village were included, I would support this.</p>	

<p>I do not believe the designation is shown sufficiently wide enough. The setting of the villages is much wider than shown in the draft.</p>		<p>The valleys and lynchets to the north are just as important as the valley to the south. Many historic and contemporary stone buildings and boundary walls have been excluded in Mill Lane, Stocking Lane and Rattlecombe Road and should be included. The 'setting of the villages is much larger than shown in the draft and I suggest it should reasonable be extended to cover both villages in their entirety. The barns (Andertons Barns) at the crossroads to the east of the village should be included. The lynchets should be included. Views into an out of the villages and between them are important - the designation should therefore pick up much more of the wider setting and open spaces, including the frontages to Top Farm Field (Stocking Lane and Rattlecombe Road) and the open space that is Top Farm Field. This affords views across from different parts of the village and is part of the historic rural character of the villages.</p>	
<p>The proposed Conservation Area boundary should take in the whole of the village, including Top Farm Fields. The boundary is drawn far too narrowly. The whole village should be included as well as some of the surrounding fields etc. The whole village merits conservation area status and by designating the whole village the Council will be doing its (overdue) duty.</p>	<p>The draft Conservation Area Appraisal was well thought out and I approve the content Excellent and interesting document. Many thanks to those who put in all the hard work</p>	<p>I am very much in favour of conservation area status for Shenington and Alkerton. As members of the public at the meeting said, the whole village should be designated. The villages taken together are (to use the words of Dr Todd at the meeting) 'gems'. It is important that an opportunity is not missed in restricting the area to be designated. As the Council is only too aware, there is opposition within the village (albeit a small & vocal minority) and I think that this would be most effectively dealt with by designating the whole village. Once this is done people will recognise and accept the benefits and wonder what all the fuss was about.</p>	

<p>I would like to see the boundary extended in the following areas: Lynchetts to SW of village beyond The Level; Views into the village from the approach from the west & the local view along western Rattlecombe; Top Farm Field - views from rattlecombe Road/Stocking Lane; Western Shenington - workers cottages on Rattlecombe Road because of their age/social history; Views from Old Mill Lane; barns on entrance into Alkerton - superb ashlar stone barns with fine pointing; Trees & stone wall to Long Acre site - fine feature; Lynchetts & land to east linking thru with Alkerton - part of the setting of the villages & have shaped them from a historical perspective</p>	<p>No. Very good document</p>	<p>Overall - I would like to point out the precedents set in Drayton and Wroxton for total village inclusion & ideally I would like the same applied to Shenington with Alkerton. This is a consistent message from many parishioners, who either do or don't support this activity in principle.</p>	
<p>Boundary should be extended to included the entire area of the villages</p>			<p>Detailed letter including photographs, outlining 7 particular areas to the north, west and east of the proposed boundary. Possible extension map included with positive vistas. Includes Stocking Lane, Rattlecombe Road, Mill Lane and Anderton Barns.</p>
<p>The boundary should extend further west along Rattlecombe Road. Also further WNW along Kenhill Rd to include the allotments & rear plots of Stocking Lane development - the view should be protected. We both wholeheartedly support the proposal for a conservation area and the proposed boundary and rely on the duty placed by the Act to formally make the designation.</p>	<p>Apart from minor detail (re: dates of certain buildings) - a thorough, objective and well produced report. We support the aims of the assessment</p> <p>Well produced and well researched document of invaluable interest to those of us living here and to visitors too.</p>		
		<p>The Level may well be of architectural interest too as an example of the era in which it was built? Walls should be maintained. We may own houses currently but we hold them, in essence, in trust for future generations. We would certainly like the non-listed buildings to be altered in sympathy with the overall ambience; walls to be protected as boundaries and maintained as a feature and would with the overall features to be maintained and the landscape.</p>	

<p>Boundary should be extended to encompass the whole village - any changes/development affect us all and it seems unfair to weigh one opinion over another just because they come from inside or outside the boundary</p> <p>Fairer if both villages were included in their entirety, particularly Rattlecombe Road</p>	<p>Just surprised that such a beautiful village is not already covered by a conservation area. Inappropriate design and removal of important features has already been allowed to happen, and a conservation area is crucial to prevent further adverse impact.</p> <p>Well executed, informative document, presenting strong case for CA designation</p>		<p><i>Western end of village should be included, various features of interest noted incl. water pillar and views. Buildings along Mill Lane are of merit, Anderton Barns are impressive landmark. Strongly support designation, particularly whole of settlement area.</i></p>
<p>Why isn't the area proposed much larger? The boundary as shown currently includes significant areas of open agricultural land to the south of the village. I feel that similar areas to north, east and west of the village should also be included. Views out of the village and into, from the public footpaths are very important</p>	<p>I have inspected the draft document and have been most impressed by the work that has clearly gone into its preparation</p>	<p>I would like to express my strong support for the designation of a Conservation Area. The area should also be extended to the west to include the beautiful valley, immediately to the west on leaving the village which must surely be protected.</p>	
<p>I don't understand why its not larger? it's too small - it would be better for everyone to include all of the villages and the fields around them Should be larger to include all of the two villages</p>	<p>Well written</p>		<p><i>Suggest boundary to be enlarged - areas to north and west of the village. Rattlecombe Road in urgent need of protection. High landscape value of the open space mentioned in recently refused planning application. Precedent set by Drayton and Wroxtton to include whole village in CA.</i></p>

I think a larger area should be included, specifically the fields bordering Rattlecombe Road and Stocking Lane up to the edge of the western speed limit sign. Also along Mill Lane.	I thought it was very thorough. Well done.			
I grew up in the villages and would like to see them protected as beautiful places. I think that a wider circle around the villages would help to protect the fantastic views and pretty valleys. I know that we are threatened by mining and the tip at the moment.	Yes - a lovely pictorial representation			
Yes. I think the area should be extended to include the whole village.		Other areas are worthy of protection & social inclusion of all villages would be good psychological factor. Particularly concerned that Rattlecombe Road be included & the Lynchetts.		
I think it is an excellent idea. It is essential to have something like this to preserve our village character. The boundary seems fine although I would like to see it spread further out to prevent the Alkerton tip taking more space.	None really, other than we need to implement this to stop developers ruining our village			
See attached sheets	This was an excellent and highly informative document. What a great pity it was not produced more than 30 years ago.			Concerns raised regarding recent developments within the village. Greater area of CA needed, unify not divide village. Rural setting is paramount, suggest Lynchetts, western entrance, Mill Lane, Anderton Barns, Lynchett areas not covered by SAM
I think it should be extended	An excellent read!			
none	well presented			
it should include the whole village not just the main central area	It seems to allow scope for major housing development at the contentious 'top farm' site off stocking lane. Is this proposal a 'bribe' so that we cannot oppose a housing development at top farm which the village does not need - despite the pressure being put on all of us by a manifestly corrupt parish council many of whom have a vested interest in seeing that development proceed.		it would have been helpful if the council had sent us this information and notification of meetings/exhibitions etc. somewhat sooner than one week beforehand!	

<p>The boundary should at least be increased to include the entrances to Shenington and Alkerton, as these areas set the scene for the rest of the villages. Extension of the conservation boundary to include the villages as a whole should be considered.</p>	<p>No comment on current contents. See attached for additional buildings, wall and features of special interest that could be included</p>	<p>Arguments for full inclusion of villages: 1 - maintain & manage developments around villages. 2 - preserve settings of villages. 3 - preserve features of interest not already included. Have CDC investigated airfield buildings? Wills dating back to 1504 on national archives have links to Shenington.</p>
<p>The boundary seems to be just about right in that it excludes from the CA properties/trees etc that have no particular merit, but takes care of the rest</p>	<p>To suggest that young trees with a girth of over 15cm should come within the jurisdiction of the LA is unrealistic and calls for review. Do you seriously think that if I plant a sampling in my garden I need permission to move it when its girth reaches 15 cm+</p>	
<p>As it affects the whole village I think the whole village should be a conservation area</p>	<p>The appraisal was over-egged - too simplified, telling us things we already knew or didn't want to know. Too much money was spent and too many councillors etc. involved. Obviously conservation is a done deal because of excessive time and money spent by D&C Team</p>	
<p>The proposed boundary has been drawn far too tightly. I request that the whole of Shenington with Alkerton and as much of the rural setting as legislation permits should be included</p>	<p>The historical analysis and the Character Area Analysis clearly show that we need CA status and we need it now. It is incomprehensible that Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and yet 41 years later Shenington with Alkerton does not have CA status</p>	<p>I understand that Drayton and Wroxton which were given CA status in the 1970s have designations encompassing the whole of the villages and a significant amount of their rural setting in most directions. Moreover, I understand that Drayton has recently been reviewed and CA status designated for an increased area of the setting. There is thus a precedent for my request. Drayton and Wroxton also include significant areas of ex-public sector housing and "low quality" housing in terms of character and appearance. There is no case therefore for excluding Stocking Lane, Mill Lane, and The Level. Given the deplorable level of verbal and physical abuse directed at residents who desire CA status, the village needs unifying by a comprehensive CA, not dividing by a CA boundary line through the village.</p>
<p>Neutral Response TONY BALDRY MP:</p>		<p>Past experience shows that such events can divide a community. Suggests a further poll before a final decision is taken (Letter dated 1 October, prior to CDC undertaking public consultation 2 - 24 October).</p>

<p>1 - Rattlecombe Road, its C17 workers' cottages and the positive vistas over Top Farm Field should be included. 2 - The lynchets and the views across it should be included. Scheduled Ancient Monument status is clearly not protecting its setting, and should not be allowed to deteriorate. 3 - The barn at the top of Alkerton should be included.</p>	<p>If only the boundary was extended I would. You are missing some important and unprotected buildings! Compare the recently extended Conservation Area of Drayton!</p>	<p>The views seem to have been assessed from communal land only, eg p.33 col.3 "views are restricted". Surely, views from private houses should be considered? The view from a house is a factor in its value. The impressive views north and east from properties along the N side of the main road seem to have been ignored here on p. 33 and, more crucially, from the overall aims of the Conservation Area. The Appraisal document is a very valuable and useful collection of material which should be of great interest to all who live in the two villages. However, it contains a number of detailed errors [of spelling, punctuation, grammar and fact] and would benefit from their correction.</p>	
<p>If a conservation area is to be established it would be desirable and appropriate to extend the boundary to include all the existing housing and a "green" buffer around it (as in the eastern part of the area) to give additional protection to the "core" character areas from excessive and insensitive future development and to preserve the open vistas which, although less striking than elsewhere, area a valuable asset to the village.</p>	<p>The question of a conservation area has created serious divisions within the village community. For example the then Chairman of the Parish Council distributed a memorandum a few months ago noting that there were three types of person living in Sherington: those who lived in stone houses; those who lived in Council houses and "the rest". Creation of a conservation area that appears to confirm this division will exacerbate this newly arisen "caste system" of "them" and "us", to the detriment of the community.</p>	<p>1. Previously anti CA, we are now being told that the houses up Stocking Lane would not have been built that way if CA status had existed. If this is the case, fine. I would be interested to know if the houses had been outside the CA, the designs would be different i.e. less intrusive. 2. As a hilltop village, in the past insufficient attention has been given to the skyline when new builds are proposed, and not considered all round. i.e. from all 4 sides. This has resulted in a row of houses which intrude into the skyline and can be seen for miles around. If CA status would ensure this did not happen we would be in favour.</p>	
<p>no</p>	<p>The Lynchetts should be included. Too much jargon - whatever does nucleate mean?!</p>	<p>Presentation team would have been easier to hear if they had had a microphone/amp system. It is sad to see that government sees fit to impose conservation area on two villages which one member of the team admitted he had walked round and could not understand why it was not a C.A. already. Perhaps self rule since Doomsday shows that self regulation works without outside interference, works.</p>	
<p>no</p>	<p>no</p>		

<p>Generally well thought out, although the open field to the north of Alkerton does not appear to be very relevant. Also extending to the west of Shenington would devalue the conservation area concept.</p>	<p>Quite a lot of inaccuracies on dating of buildings and speculation on historical facts hopefully to be corrected by local input.</p>	<p>We and many other villagers are concerned more about further developments on the outside of the proposed conservation area than we/they are about those within the area. This is because planning decisions to date outside the area have failed to recognise that the settings is as important as the 'jewel' within. Examples are the awful school design and the 5 town houses in Stocking Lane. The approach to the conservation area from the north and the west is as imprtant as that from the south and the east and is being marred by unsympathetic design and materials foreign to the area. One would like to think that the award of 'conservation area' status would have a design influence on development surrounding the area but there seems little confidence in the community that this is likely. One solution might be to include the whole of the two villages envelope within a conservation area then the same standards would have to apply throughout. Please note for future reference that the acoustics in the school hall are not good enough for your type of Q&A presentation.</p>	<p>Three areas of land included within the proposed CA are challenged as areas which require more justification for inclusion. An alternative boundary is suggested which eliminates these identified areas.</p>
<p>See attached representations</p>	<p>See attached representations</p>	<p>Representations made on behalf of Mr Dowdeswell by Oliver Taylor of Pegasus Planning Group</p>	<p>Three areas of land included within the proposed CA are challenged as areas which require more justification for inclusion. An alternative boundary is suggested which eliminates these identified areas.</p>
<p>Negative Response</p>			

no	no	<p>Excellent presentation by the chairman - far less so by other officers. Views expressed at the meeting were generally by a vociferous minority based not on conservation but on personal vendetta. Many old/inform inhabitants were unable/find it to difficult to attend the meeting - therefore as i expressed to the chairman of the meeting opinion and decision should be made and weighted towards those persons who dwell in the proposed zone and less to those like myself dwelling outside it. It seems to me that an someone with no real view as to pro/con conservation area - those who spoke loudest for it were those who dwell outside the designated area and in many cases have altered their properties, felled trees and demolished outbuildings as infinitum. I was staggered by the sheer number of 'advisors' planners present at the school meeting and am concerned therefore about the cost involved in the whole exercise.</p>	
<p>If a conservation area is to be imposed it should include a wider area. It is inevitable that a conservation area can be demanded by those who will not be subject to the resulting costs and restrictions.</p>	Comprehensive document	<p>I am opposed to the imposition of CA status without a ballot restricted to residents who are within any imposed boundary and the results of the ballot being in favour of a CA. I am appalled that the issue of CA status has been raised again so soon after the ballot in 2006 resulted in a vote against CA status of almost 2.5:1. Having been born in Shenington and lived here for 50 years I see little evidence of the need for CA status and little evidence of inappropriate development that CA status would have prevented. If CA status conferred some presumption against future development in the parish as a whole then I could see merit in CA status, but it clearly provides no such protection. The imposition of CA status without a further ballot would result in much ill feeling against the individuals who repeatedly raise this issue, despite the clear result from 2006.</p>	
<p>Given that 32 houses/buildings are already listed and only 11 are not, I do not see the point of this exercise. The village is splendid as it is. I see this as yet more bureaucracy and quite unnecessary</p>	It seems to be slanted for a "yes" vote.		

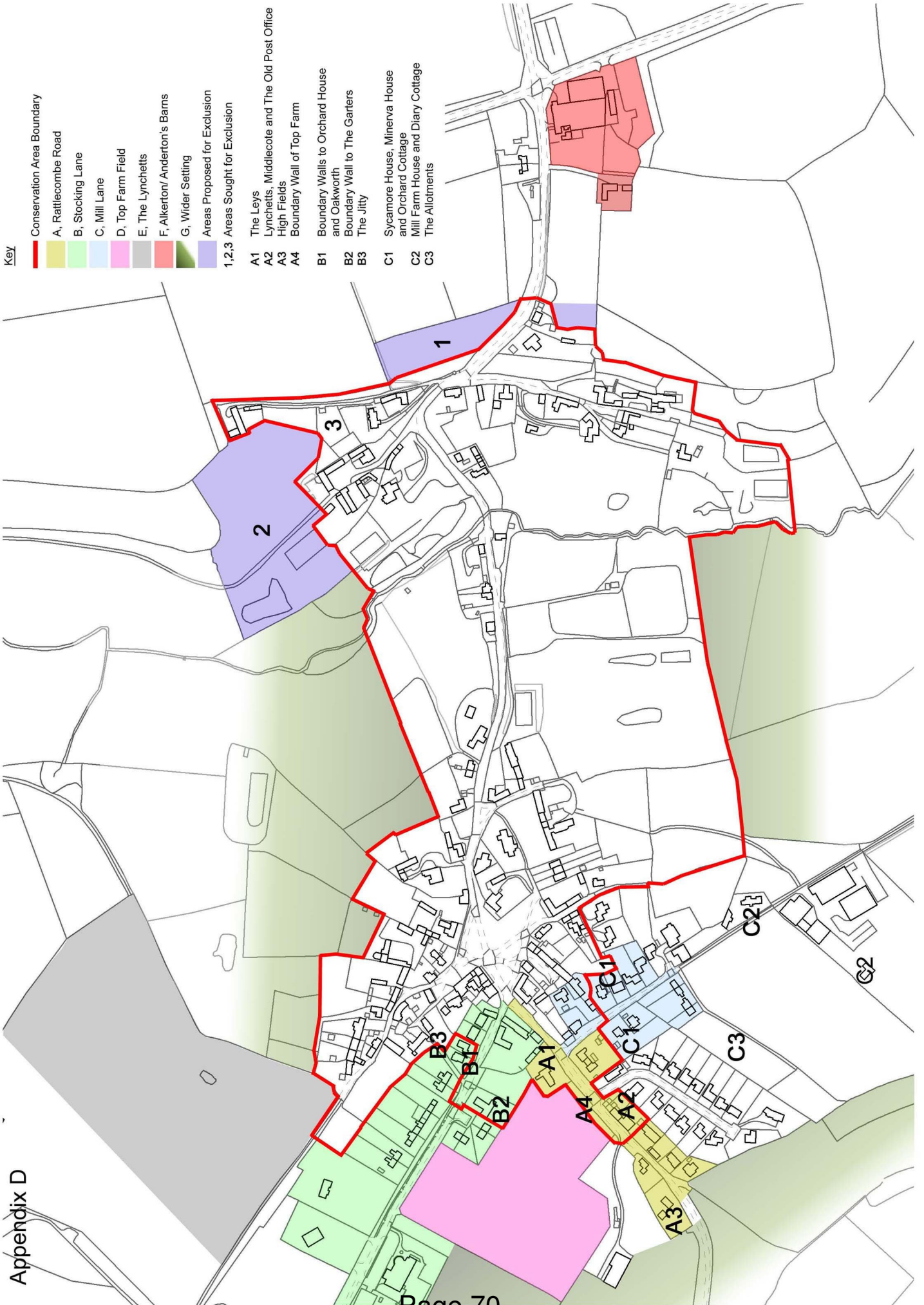
<p>I am against CA status being imposed on Shenington/Alkerton. Our community has maintained a very high standard (apart from the horse trough/flower bath on the green) and we do not need another level of bureaucracy telling us how to look after our villages.</p>	<p>I only had a chance to look at some pretty pictures in the draft at the village hall.</p>		
<p>no</p> <p>Please see additional comment</p>	<p>We are not in favour of conservation and can see no justification for this proposal as above</p>	<p>I have lived in Shenington all my life and am very strongly against the conservation area. The village has remained relatively unchanged over the last 100 years without the need for a conservation area. There is no reason why this wouldn't continue. Our family live in a grade II listed house already and resent further restrictions being imposed on our daily life. Surely the money spent producing the appraisal and policing this policy could be better spent elsewhere.</p>	
	<p>We manage to look after our very pretty villages quite well without (<i>triple underlined</i>) the need for conservation area status. Why more regulations and bureaucracy? Use your resources where they are needed.</p>	<p>This is such a waste of public money when resources should be used elsewhere where abuse of the landscape and amenity is taking place. Why is everything having to be wrapped up in red tape? We have managed to evolve quite nicely since Anglo-Saxon times without (<i>triple underlined</i>) conservation area status.</p>	
<p>I am very much against the conservation area in any form, people who are all for it live in an area of the village which is not in the proposed area, which I feel is very unfair.</p>	<p>The outcome of the last referendum in 2006 should be considered more. 315 eligible to vote. 199 against it. 52 for it. Surely this says something.</p>		

<p>We shouldn't be having a conservation area at all. Your representatives at the meeting congratulated the village on how well it has been kept. Therefore we can look after our village, as we have for hundreds of years without the need for council controls. Not one of your people could pinpoint what the threat to our village is. If you control people and property because of a so called future threat if new people move into the village then why hasn't it happened in the past? You can't ban buses because someone might get run over.</p>		<p>As a gardener of a property within the proposed conservation area with over 40 trees to look after why should I have to apply for permission every time I need to prune them. They have been well looked after in the past and will continue to be looked after. As for the draft appraisal, I'm sure the council and tax payer's money could be put to better use. This is another example of the nanny state. Don't forget you might be able to fine people for not complying with the rules but if a building is demolished or a tree cut down it is still lost forever. As Councillor Gibbard said after the meeting. Once the appraisal goes to the executive not one has been turned down so contrary to his comments during the meeting it is a fait-accomplis.</p>	
	<p>My answer to the conservation area is a definite NO. I was born in the village eighty seven years ago and am living in a listed cottage which gives ample protection and the beauty of our village.</p>		
<p>The proposed boundary is physically and equally importantly socially divisive, imposing restrictions on the old part of the villages but permitting less regulated development of the rest of the settlement. More recent building should also be included, not for its particular merit, but to preserve and develop the physical and social entity of the villages. The inclusion of the fields to the south of shenington is discriminatory. Fields to the north and west remain open to uncontrolled development. They have an equal value in terms of view or aspect. Either all surrounding fields should be included or all omitted.</p>	<p>Conservation area designation has been resisted in the villages because owners of property in the proposed area have acted and continue to act responsibly. People who live here are the best judges of the value of the asset in which they live: most of them neither need nor want the protection of conservation. Designation implies increased cost and trouble to residents in making and implementing applications. It implies increased cost to CDC in bureaucratic work and supervision and ultimately increase and unnecessary cost to Council Tax payers.</p>	<p>I do not want it to be a conservation area</p>	
<p>As we aren't in the proposed conservation area we live in the outskirts of shenington and talking to a lot of residents that are. I can't see a need for it every one in the village cares about it.</p>		<p>We voted against conservation twice in the past and can't see what's changed I can't see any new building happening in the area covered and the area's that aren't covered already have one development that doesn't look like village houses at all more like town houses.</p>	

<p>It is divisive and unnecessary</p>	<p>Shenington is a lovely village and has remained so without the need for a formal Conservation Area status. Whilst the extra cost and inconveniences involved may or may not be marginal but why risk unintended consequences when the change is clearly not needed.</p>	<p>1. Many question whether this is a self serving activity for CDC and therefore whether it is objective. 2. Our understanding is that CDC were asked by the Parish Council to undertake an appraisal only. Para 2.1.3 on page 5 of the Appraisal document suggests that the PC also asked CDC to "designate" a Conservation Area. We therefore believe that CDC has deliberately overstepped its brief. 3 In these austere days no public body should be undertaking any unnecessary work to ensure all funds are allocated to priority tasks. Making Shenington/Alkerton a Conservation Area is a misuse of public funds as its an entirely unnecessary exercise. Such a use of scarce funds would not withstand any audit or investigation.</p>	
<p>Certainly does not need extending</p>	<p>Poorly researched in some areas</p>		<p>Aware of the duty placed upon the council but feel that the situation is currently satisfactory. Appraisal has been divisive within the village and would be better for community if the designation does not take place.</p>
<p>The boundary encompasses too large an area. I do not understand why this CA appraisal has been undertaken. I voted against in 2006 in a ballot organised via CDC. I do not think CDC should be in charge of conserving this beautiful village. All the inappropriate development here has been sanctioned through the planning process by CDC.</p>	<p>Full of errors, very intrusive. I believe an Englishman's home is his castle. What business is it of CDC of one's wall is damp? Or that foliage may damage a wall. MYOB</p>	<p>Like the majority of residents I voted against a conservation area in 2006: in a democratic vote, and object to having a CA forced upon us by a minority who chervell are paying lip service to.</p>	
<p>NB. We do not wish to have a Conservation Area in the villages of Shenington and Alkerton!</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>We are against any "Conservation Area" in the village. It has been turned down in the past, the present proposal is causing "bad feelings" in the village too. We feel the villages are very well protected by the care and attention paid by the local residents at present.</p>	
<p>Both my husband & I wish to oppose the creation of a conservation area in Shenington</p>			

<p>Why are houses that CDC have given planning for in the last 5 years not within the boundary?</p> <p>Why have you placed the fields in between the two villages within the boundary, that cannot be seen from the road at least a few hundred trees? Why have you left out the historic lynchets and then put in totally flat land with no historic interest? Why not put a conservation area around houses that CDC have been responsible for the 60s/70s tat and recent town houses?</p>	<p>Where are the photos of the Level? Or Long Acre? Or the village trough on the village green?</p>	<p>Nice to see Democracy taking place. There has been one fair ballot in this village and the result was 7.1% against a CA. FACT!! You received an unfair ballot in which people were bullied into signing and when members who signed asked for their names to be taken off were ignored. CDC over stated signatures on the petition. Learn to result when it doesn't go your way. Why should we sit back and let pen punching bureaucrats impose laws on how residents look after their gardens. With the prospect of high council tax to rub salt in the wounds. Bravo. Viva La Revolution. Also it is always standard practice to go behind the back of Parish Councils? If so what is the point in them. Surely you could employ a few thousand more people, after all the country is in such a financially sound position. But oh no it doesn't matter to you as you all work for the state. Job for life. Is that ok for a comment</p>	
<p>I am not sure that a CA is necessary, and hence object to its creation. I believe that with listings of buildings and TPOs the controls are in place to preserve the village. If the CA is to go ahead I think it is too large and shouldn't include the valley land between Shenington and Alkerton. Or the allotments at the end of Kenhill Road.</p>	<p>I think it should give more guidance to people living in the conservation area - a before and after would be good with some FAQs - e.g. I am thinking of taking down an internal wall upstairs, my house isn't listed but I am now in a conservation area. Before 'no need to apply', after 'permission needed, please pay £X and wait for 8-13 weeks.</p>		
<p>I question whether some of the green fields are necessary?</p>	<p>Yes. It is appaulingly crass and inaccurate. If this is what CDC does, God help villages under a CA</p>		





Executive

Cherwell Rural Strategy

2 February 2009

Report of Head of Urban and Rural Services

Purpose of Report

To consider the final draft Rural Strategy and Delivery Plan, and to consider appointing a Rural Champion. To commend the Rural Strategy and Delivery Plan to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) To recommend to Council the approval of the final draft Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009-2014 and the Delivery Plan.
- (2) Approve the appointment of the Executive Member for Urban and Rural Services to lead the delivery of the Strategy as Cherwell District Council's "Rural Champion".
- (3) Commend the final draft Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009-2014 and the Delivery Plan to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The need for a Rural Strategy for Cherwell stems from the fact that Cherwell is predominantly rural in character and one third of the District's people live in its 73 rural parishes.

Proposal

- 1.2 It is proposed that the Rural Strategy is agreed by the Council and the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership to provide a framework for improvement and support across Cherwell's rural communities and countryside. Whilst many of the actions will be led by this Council, it is a Cherwell area plan. It flows from the Cherwell Community Plan (Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy) and as such is owned by the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership.

Conclusion

The Rural Strategy 2009-2014 and the Delivery Plan, which sets out detailed actions, will be part of the strategic framework that helps deliver the rural themes in Cherwell's Community Plan.

Background Information

- 2.1 The Council's restructure and the establishment of a small Rural and Countryside Team (2 full time equivalent staff) within Urban and Rural Services has enabled the profile of this area of service to be raised and for the Team to be the catalyst to start effecting change. However, this is only one part of the Team's work with other key priority areas placing demands on the Team's time which will limit capacity to deliver the actions that are set out in the Rural Strategy.
- 2.2 This limited level of resource is one of the reasons why extensive consultation has been undertaken and why it is so important that the new Strategy is adopted by the wide range of organisations (including those represented on Cherwell Community Planning Partnership) that have an interest in rural life and the countryside of Cherwell. It will only be successful through the combined actions of all partners.
- 2.3 The previous Cherwell Rural Strategy covered the period 2002-2006. Since the 2002-2006 Strategy was written, national rural policies and delivery mechanisms have changed significantly. The Council has also undergone considerable change with a refocus on key Strategic Priorities and a restructure into new Service Teams.
- 2.4 During 2007 and early 2008, research was commissioned and a series of preliminary consultations were undertaken with key partners, agencies and individuals. Based on this evidence, principles, themes and issues were identified and a draft Strategy was written.
- 2.5 In July 2008, the draft of an updated Rural Strategy was put out for public consultation (via the Council's website). Draft strategies and response forms were sent to all Cherwell parish councils, Cherwell councillors, all organisations belonging to the Cherwell Voluntary Organisations Forum and several other targeted groups and individuals. This consultation process came to an end in mid October 2008.

Feedback and Strategy Development

- 2.6 Executive received a report and draft of the Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009-2014 at its December 2008 meeting, where the early emerging issues from consultation were reported.
- 2.7 Since this report the consultation feedback has been collated, analysed and reviewed and the final draft Strategy presents the themes, issues, objectives and aims that have emerged from this and from the review of other strategies that impact on rural communities. Overall the consultation results strongly endorsed the vision, underpinning principles and objectives of the draft Strategy. However several issues were raised that have led to adjustments in the final draft and influenced actions set out in the Delivery Plan.

- 2.8 The overall Vision of the Strategy is to work towards “Inclusive, sustainable rural communities in an inclusive, sustainable countryside”. The first draft of the Strategy did not explain or define this Vision, and some consultees commented that it was not meaningful. The final draft Strategy defines an inclusive, sustainable rural community as an active community where everyone has the opportunity to participate and can access the services and facilities they need. It defines an inclusive, sustainable countryside as a productive, economically viable countryside, where the needs of farming, conservation and development are appropriately balanced and where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy accessible outdoor recreation.
- 2.9 The essential underpinning principle of the Strategy is “Rural Proofing”, a commitment to explicitly consider the rural dimension in all future strategic and service delivery plans. The consultation returned 98% agreement with this principle. In essence, Rural Proofing is ensuring equal opportunity in our rural areas.
- 2.10 Several consultees made comments related to development planning and the Local Development Framework (LDF). In the final draft of the Rural Strategy particular emphasis has been given to explaining the relationship with the LDF, both in the introductory section and within each applicable objective. To provide a better fit with the LDF the issue of sensitive development has moved from Theme C to Theme E, so that landscape and built environments are within the same objective.

Principles and Themes

- 2.11 The Rural Strategy cuts across many service areas, so other strategies and plans may already be addressing related issues. Linked strategies and plans are signposted under each objective set out in the Themes.
- 2.12 The Strategy has five underpinning principles which are:
- 1: Rural Proofing – We will seek to ensure that the rural dimension is explicitly considered in the development of all future strategic and service delivery plans.
 - 2: Locality Based Approach – We will develop a locality based approach, targeting resources at communities by reference to their particular needs.
 - 3: Community Engagement – We will actively engage with and seek the views of rural residents and countryside users.
 - 4: Vulnerable and Disadvantaged People – We will seek to ensure equitable access to services and facilities for vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Where possible we will reduce vulnerability and the effects of disadvantage.
 - 5: Sustainability, Climate Change & Resource Use – We will seek to improve the sustainability of rural communities and the countryside, and to reduce the impact on climate change and natural resources.

2.13 The five main themes of the Strategy are:

- Theme A: Improve Rural Services and Facilities
- Theme B: Develop Thriving, Inclusive Rural Communities
- Theme C: Provide Village Homes and Secure Village Infrastructure
- Theme D: Support a Thriving Rural Economy
- Theme E: Preserve, Enhance & Increase Enjoyment of the Rural Environment.

Delivery Plan and Strategy Review

2.14 The Strategy document (attached to this report) is supported by a detailed Delivery Plan which sets actions with specific, measurable targets over the five year life of the Strategy. Many are unique to the Rural Strategy, but some are carried across from other strategies and “rural proofed.” Input to the detailed Delivery Plan has been made by many organisations and has been considered by the Executive Member for Urban and Rural Services. It is available in the members Room but is not attached to this report due to its size and complexity.

2.15 Each year, performance against the Delivery Plan targets will be assessed, reported to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership (CCPP) and published on the Cherwell District Council Website.

2.16 Development of the Delivery Plan actions will be influenced by feedback from the CCPP, parish input, individual representations and changing circumstances. New actions will be added, or existing ones amended to reflect successes, lessons learned, and new opportunities. Once the Delivery Plan is published it is likely that the proposed actions will spark further suggestions from interested parties, and that these can be considered for inclusion as part of the annual review process.

Following Executive consideration, it is intended to report the Strategy to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership prior to implementation from April 2009.

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 Approve the Final Draft Strategy and Delivery Plan and appointment of the Executive Member for Urban and Rural Services to become the Council’s ‘Rural Champion’. Commend the final draft Strategy & Delivery Plan to the CCPP

Option Two Propose further revisions to the draft and delegate final approval to the Executive Member for Urban and Rural Services.
Propose an alternative Member as the Council’s Rural Champion.

Consultations

Extensive consultation with key agencies and partners has been undertaken (listed at appendix 1 of the Strategy)

Implications

Financial: There are no financial effects arising directly from this report. Delivery of the actions will require commitment from partners. Actions that are the responsibility of the Council will be developed through the 2009/10 and future years Service and Financial Planning process.

Comments checked by Karen Muir, Service Accountant 01295 221545

Legal: There are no issues arising from this report.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services 01295 221686.

Risk Management: There are no significant risks to the Council arising from this report.

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

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

A District of Opportunity
A Cleaner Greener Council
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell
An Accessible, Value for Money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Nigel Morris
Portfolio Holder for Urban and Rural Services

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
Final Draft Rural Strategy 2009-2014 (available in Members room)	
Draft Rural Strategy Delivery Plan 2009 /10	
Report Author	Chris Rothwell, Head of Urban and Rural Services Kevin Larner, Rural Development and Countryside Officer
Contact	01295 221712

Informationchris.rothwell@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

01295 221706

kevin.larner@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

DRAFT Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009 – 2014

February 2009

Final consultation draft

Reader Notes

- The first draft of the Cherwell Rural Strategy was consulted on between July and October 2008. 57 written responses were received and analysed, as well as many discussions with respondents, service delivery and CCPP partners. This final draft of the Rural Strategy is a revised version, taking this feedback into account.
- Aims identified in this strategy are addressed through actions in the accompanying delivery plan (the draft 2009/10 Delivery Plan is appendix II to this document). The delivery plan will be reviewed each year to assess progress and add new actions.
- Please note that wherever Parish Councils are referred to in this strategy, this includes Parish Meetings, unless specified otherwise.

CCPP Partner logos

Cherwell District Council

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

Oxfordshire PCT

Thames Valley Police

Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire Economic Partnership

Faith Forum

Kidlington Parish Council

Banbury & District Council for
Voluntary Service

Oxford & Cherwell Valley College

Banbury Town Council

Bicester Town Council

Banbury & District Chamber of
Commerce

Bicester Chamber of Commerce

Kidlington Voice

Cherwell Community Planning Partnership

Draft Cherwell Rural Strategy – Contents

<u>Foreword</u>	3
<u>Executive Summary</u>	3
<u>Introduction</u>	4
• Rural Cherwell Profile	
• Rural Priorities in Context	
• Community & Spatial Planning	
• Structure and Delivery of the Cherwell Rural Strategy	
<u>Underpinning Principles</u>	7
• Principle 1: Rural Proofing	
• Principle 2: Locality Based Approach	
• Principle 3: Community Engagement	
• Principle 4: Vulnerable & Disadvantaged People	
• Principle 5: Sustainability, Climate Change & Resource Use	
<u>Theme A: Improve Rural Services and Facilities</u>	8
• Objective 1: Retain & Improve Rural Services	
• Objective 2: Retain & Improve Village Facilities	
• Objective 3: Maintain & Improve Rural Transport Options	
<u>Theme B: Develop Thriving, Inclusive Rural Communities</u>	10
• Objective 4: Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy	
• Objective 5: Encourage Parish Planning & Community Engagement	
• Objective 6: Develop Recreational & Cultural Activities	
• Objective 7: Promote Health and Wellbeing	
• Objective 8: Improve Community Safety	
<u>Theme C: Provide Village Homes and Secure Village Infrastructure</u>	14
• Objective 9: Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes	
• Objective 10: Work for Effective Infrastructure and Utility Services	
<u>Theme D: Support a Thriving Rural Economy</u>	16
• Objective 11: Support Rural Jobs & Businesses	
• Objective 12: Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Communities	
<u>Theme E: Protect, Enhance & Increase Enjoyment of The Rural Environment</u>	18
• Objective 13: Protect & Enhance Biodiversity	
• Objective 14: Preserve & Enhance the Landscape and Rural Built Environments	
• Objective 15: Promote Enjoyment & Understanding of the Countryside	
<u>Appendix I – Evidence Sources, Consultations and Background Documents</u>	20
<u>Appendix II – 2009/10 Delivery Plan</u>	25

Foreword

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a framework for improvement and support across Cherwell's rural communities and countryside. The Cherwell Community Planning Partnership's overall vision for rural Cherwell is:

"Inclusive, sustainable rural communities in an inclusive, sustainable countryside".

An inclusive, sustainable rural community is an active community where everyone has the opportunity to participate and can access the services and facilities they need. An inclusive, sustainable countryside is a productive and commercially viable countryside, where the needs of farming, conservation and development are appropriately balanced and where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy accessible outdoor recreation.

This is a strategy for the Cherwell area and whilst Cherwell District Council has a co-ordinating role, many of the specific actions will be taken by or in partnership with others. Substantial elements of "self-help" are included, encouraging rural residents to take steps to improve their own communities.

A Delivery Plan sets out the detailed actions that will contribute to delivering the overall vision up to 2014. It will be updated annually to reflect achievements and new initiatives. Rural communities are partners in delivering this strategy and their views and suggestions will be actively sought as delivery of this strategy progresses.

Mary Harpley, Chair of Cherwell Community Planning Partnership
Cllr. Nigel Morris, CDC Portfolio Holder for Urban & Rural Services

Executive Summary

The need for a Rural Strategy for Cherwell stems from the fact that Cherwell is predominantly rural in character and one third of the District's people live in its 73 rural parishes. In order to keep rural communities and the countryside thriving, their specific needs must be assessed and addressed.

A set of five underpinning principles sets out aims that apply across all parts of the strategy. The most important is "Rural Proofing" which is a commitment to examine and modify district-wide services and targets to ensure they will not unfairly disadvantage rural people or the countryside. The other four are commitments to adopt a locality based approach and maintain community engagement, ensure fairness for vulnerable & disadvantaged people and have regard to the issues of sustainability, climate change and resource use.

The main part of the strategy is arranged in five key themes, they are: A - Improve Rural Services and Facilities, B - Develop Thriving, Inclusive Rural Communities, C - Provide Village Homes and Secure Village Infrastructure, D - Support a Thriving Rural Economy, and E - Protect, Enhance & Increase Enjoyment of The Rural Environment. These themes are divided into 15 objectives, setting out aims to address identified issues.

In addressing issues such as economic development, recreation, community safety and biodiversity, the Rural Strategy shares common ground with other, more specifically focused strategies. The value of this cross-cutting approach is to gather up the broad range of issues affecting rural communities and the countryside, and where necessary to add "rural proofing" actions and targets.

Introduction

Profile – Rural Cherwell

Two thirds of the population live in the urban centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. The remaining third (about 44,000 people) live in Cherwell's 73 rural parishes

The land area of Cherwell is predominately rural in character. Its landscape is varied and of high quality in a mainly agricultural setting. The River Cherwell and its valley form a distinctive central spine to the landscape, through which are routed the Oxford Canal and railway. The M40 motorway also runs through the district from north to south. The landscape has four distinct character areas, the central Cherwell Valley, Ironstone Downs to the west of Banbury, Ploughly Limestone Plateau to the north of Bicester and flat Vale of Otmoor to the south.

Cherwell has around 700 farms. Compared to the rest of Oxfordshire, a higher percentage of land is used for permanent grass compared to arable and woodland. Cherwell has the lowest percentage of woodland in Oxfordshire, which is itself the least wooded county in south-east England.

Rural settlements range in size from the six smallest, totalling under 500 residents between them, to the six largest, with over 2,000 each. Two thirds of Cherwell's villages have populations of less than 500. Unlike other Oxfordshire districts, there are no rural market towns to act as hubs for local rural economies.

Most of rural Cherwell's economically active residents commute to their workplaces. Less than a quarter of them work within 5km of home. However, rural Cherwell also has a relatively high proportion of home-based workers (28% of total rural workers, which is above the county and regional averages). Car ownership overall is high, but the people most likely to be without a car are pensioners.

House prices in rural Cherwell are high in relation to average earnings. In the decade to 2007 there was a trebling in the values of Cherwell's cheapest (lowest quartile) market housing. The house price falls of 2008/09 have done little to improve affordability due to the accompanying economic decline and more cautious lending policies.

Over the next 20 years the proportion of older people living in rural Cherwell is expected to increase significantly. The population group aged 75 and over is expected to grow by 81% over the period. This trend is similar to that expected nationally and is driven by increasing life expectancy and the current age profile of the population.

Rural Priorities in Context

Since the publication of the previous Cherwell Rural Strategy in 2002, national rural policies and delivery mechanisms have changed significantly.

The national *Rural Strategy 2004* had cross-cutting themes of sustainability and of devolving rural responsibilities and delivery closer to rural communities. It set out the Government's three priorities for rural policy as:

1. Economic and Social Regeneration – supporting enterprise across rural England, but targeting greater resources at areas of greatest need.
2. Social Justice for All – tackling rural social exclusion wherever it occurs and providing fair access to services and opportunities for all rural people.
3. Enhancing the Value of our Countryside – protecting the natural environment for this and future generations.

Also published in 2004 was “*Planning Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*” (PPS7). This set out policies to guide regional and local planning authorities in preparation of their Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks.

In 2006 the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act extended to all public bodies and statutory undertakers a duty to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity across all their activities.

In 2006 a partnership of organisations and local authorities began to develop a rural evidence base to inform local priorities in Oxfordshire. The resulting Oxfordshire Rural Framework (ORF) was published in July 2007.

In June 2008 the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) published a pamphlet titled “*Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities*”. It outlined the six key policy issues that the CRC regards as most important to the development of sustainable communities in rural England. These are:

- 1 - The economic potential of rural communities should be promoted and supported much more vigorously at all levels in order to provide a greater range of well paid, secure employment.
- 2- Affordable housing remains a serious problem for rural communities despite decades of research, analysis and policy interventions.
- 3 - Many rural services continue to decline. Although there are great opportunities for IT-based services such as home shopping, or assistive technologies such as computerised health diagnoses, there is a longstanding trend towards the concentration of key facilities in urban areas.
- 4 - Rural transport; there has been no convincing strategic approach to developing a more integrated transport system which links rural areas to wider regional and national networks.
- 5 - Ensure that policies addressing climate change and the carbon challenge do not treat rural areas unfairly, and indeed recognise and promote the contribution which rural areas can make.
- 6 - Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality are at the heart of the Government’s vision for Britain. We must ensure that the policies and processes for realising this vision really work for rural England.

Community & Spatial Planning

The long term vision for the Cherwell area is expressed through the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The SCS is, as its name suggests, primarily a communities plan, identifying objectives that will help residents and businesses to access services, prosper, live healthy lifestyles and be involved in their local communities. The Rural Strategy is one of a series of medium term (5 year) plans which implement the themes and priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The LDF is a spatial plan, identifying (in line with the SCS vision and objectives) the types and amounts of development and infrastructure that will be appropriate in different parts of the district. The LDF identifies five key issues, all of which have a bearing on Rural Strategy objectives.

LDF Key Issue 1: The need to ensure convenient access to services and facilities

LDF Key Issue 2: The need to protect and enhance Cherwell’s built and natural environment

LDF Key Issue 3: The need to promote a prosperous and sustainable economy

LDF Key Issue 4: The need to ensure full and timely provision of housing, including affordable housing

LDF Key Issue 5: The need to promote the role of town centres and local shopping facilities

For the LDF the idea of village clustering has been examined to help understand the relationships between villages that have physical, social and economic linkages with each other. Some of these villages can have common needs and issues that could be jointly addressed in the interests of improving the access to services and facilities. This work is one way the LDF may be able to help deliver objectives in the Rural Strategy.

Structure and Delivery of the Cherwell Rural Strategy

The evidence base for this strategy has been gathered from many sources, including local consultation events, the ORF, census statistics, national rural research evidence, survey data, Parish Plans and, as well as responses to a consultation on the first draft of this strategy. A list of evidence sources, consultations and background documents can be found in appendix I

At the start, a set of five “Underpinning Principles” sets out cross-cutting aims that are addressed throughout the strategy. The rest of the strategy is divided between five themes (A-E), each of which is divided into broad objectives. Aims under each objective address specific issues.

The broad ranging nature of this strategy means that other strategies and plans may already be addressing related issues. Under each objective, strategies and plans with common ground are signposted.

This strategy document is accompanied by a delivery plan which sets actions with specific, measurable targets over the five year life of the strategy. Each year performance against the delivery plan targets will be assessed, reported to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership and published on the Cherwell District Council Website.

Development of the delivery plan actions will be influenced by feedback from the CCPP, Parish input, individual representations and changing circumstances. New actions will be added, or existing ones amended to reflect successes, lessons learned, and new opportunities.

To ensure access to national and regional rural development opportunities, the partnership will continue to engage with the South East Rural Forum and the Oxfordshire Rural Forum.

Underpinning Principles:

Supporting the vision of “**Inclusive, sustainable rural communities in an inclusive, sustainable countryside**” are five principles that run through all themes of the strategy.

Rural Proofing

Aim: We will ensure that the rural dimension is explicitly considered in the development of all future strategic and service delivery plans.

The idea of “Rural Proofing” is to examine and modify services and policies to ensure they will not unfairly disadvantage rural areas. Rural people should have fair access to services, even if they are not as simple or cost effective to deliver as they would be in urban locations. Organisations in the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership have many aims which apply across the district as a whole. Some already take rural delivery into account, for others, interim rural measures are added via this strategy.

Locality Based Approach

Aim: We will target resources at communities and areas by reference to their particular needs.

Different communities in Rural Cherwell have different needs. These will be influenced by many factors including location, population profile, village history and existing facilities. Mapping the location of local services and facilities, as well as the people who might benefit from them, is an important first step to targeting support and action. Several targets in years 1 and 2 of the Delivery Plan are concerned with gathering and collating local information in order to inform subsequent delivery priorities.

Community Engagement

Aim: We will actively engage with and seek the views of rural residents and countryside users.

Each of Cherwell’s rural communities rightly expects to have a role in defining and delivering its own improvement priorities. Similarly the views and aspirations of farmers, countryside users and visitors will be important in developing a thriving, inclusive and sustainable countryside.

Vulnerable and Disadvantaged People

Aim: We will seek to ensure equitable access to services and facilities for vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Where possible we will reduce vulnerability and the effects of disadvantage.

It is difficult to identify and support vulnerable people scattered in small numbers across rural areas; in some areas the lower numbers of people at risk require a more specific and flexible response appropriate to their needs.

Sustainability, Climate Change & Resource Use

Aim: We will seek to improve the sustainability of rural communities and the countryside. We will seek to reduce impact on climate change and natural resources.

Sustainability in rural areas is a balance between potentially conflicting pressures: they include the requirements of current versus future residents, productivity versus “quality of life” and conservation versus development.

Theme A: Improve Rural Services and Facilities

Services and facilities available within villages have environmental benefits (fewer journeys required). They also promote community cohesion and capacity by providing opportunities for social contact and recreational activities.

The smaller a village is, the fewer permanent services and facilities are likely to be economically sustainable within it. For residents of more isolated villages, opportunities to use centralised services and facilities can be severely curtailed if they do not have access to a car. Village services and transport to access centralised services are issues raised in several Parish Plans.

Government planning guidance advises local planning authorities that they should “adopt a positive approach to planning proposals designed to improve the viability, accessibility or community value of existing services and facilities.” Research into the availability of services and facilities in all Cherwell’s villages has been undertaken for the LDF. This is an important factor in determining where development could be located.

- **Objective 1 – Retain & Improve Rural Services**
- **Objective 2 – Retain & Improve Village Facilities**
- **Objective 3 - Maintain & Improve Rural Transport**

Objective 1 – Retain & Improve Rural Services

Some village services might have a permanent location (e.g. village shop, pub, school, GP Surgery) whilst some may visit the village, either on demand (e.g. supermarket delivery services) or from time to time (e.g. Health bus, mobile library, outreach Post Office). Visiting services may be self contained or they may require village facilities to operate from. Financial and information based services are increasingly available online.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
The number of permanent services is declining, especially in smaller villages, but access to specialist business support and advice has helped some village shops to remain viable.	1.1 - Support existing rural services to assist ongoing viability, and encourage the creation of new services.
Older people and disadvantaged people are less likely to own computers, and correspondingly less likely to benefit from web-based online services.	1.2 - Support rural communities in implementing improved ICT access for older and disadvantaged people

Objective 2 – Retain & Improve Village Facilities

Village facilities (e.g. village halls, churches, recreation fields, play and youth activity areas) act as focal points for community activities, formal and informal recreation, and can provide bases for mobile and outreach services. The Cherwell Greenspaces Strategy and the Playing Pitches Strategy identify specific communities where shortfalls in recreation provision have been identified.

In villages where development will take place, developer contributions can go some way to addressing facility shortfalls. The Cherwell Recreation Strategy Action Plan contains several actions for improving specific village facilities.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Recreation Strategy, Cherwell Green Spaces Strategy, Cherwell Playing Pitches Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
Facilities for recreation, leisure and culture- including village halls, playgrounds and sports facilities are key parish plan issues.	2.1 - Support rural communities to provide recreational & cultural buildings that meet local needs and comply with regulatory requirements.
The Cherwell Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies have identified shortfalls in allotments, play areas, courts and pitches in some parishes.	2.2 - Support rural communities to provide outdoor recreation facilities that meet local needs and comply with regulatory requirements.

Objective 3 - Maintain & Improve Rural Transport

Increasing car ownership has brought benefits for many, but reduced the customer base for public transport. For the majority of rural residents the private car is the main means of transport. The minority who don't have regular access to a car (usually those on lower incomes, older people and younger people) often face difficulty gaining access to facilities such as health, education, employment and commercial leisure.

Signpost to related strategies: Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan,

Issues	Aims
<p>In smaller and more isolated villages scheduled public transport can be infrequent or non-existent.</p> <p>Community transport initiatives and voluntary village schemes could help to reduce transport disadvantage in some villages.</p>	3.1 - Support & develop community transport initiatives alongside improvements to local public transport services
Targeted Improvements to public rights of way between villages could improve access to services, facilities and public transport connections.	3.2 - Improve links between villages for walkers, cyclists and equestrians

Theme B: Develop Thriving, Inclusive Rural Communities

A sense of community spirit is one of the most valued aspects of rural life, it is characterised by a concern for ones neighbours, and a willingness to contribute to community life. A busy calendar of cultural, social and sporting events is an important characteristic of a thriving village community.

In rural areas there is a particular reliance on voluntary effort to create opportunities which in towns might be provided by public or commercial organisations.

- **Objective 4 - Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy**
- **Objective 5 – Encourage Parish Planning & Community Engagement**
- **Objective 6 – Develop Recreational & Cultural Activities**
- **Objective 7 – Promote Health & Wellbeing**
- **Objective 8 – Improve Community Safety**

Objective 4 – Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy

Parish Councils are the grassroots tier of local government and have roles to play in almost every theme identified throughout this strategy. An active, engaged and representative Parish Council is a crucial ingredient of an inclusive, empowered and sustainable village community.

Issues	Aims
People are likely to appreciate and engage with their Parish Council if it is seen to be reflective of the community, active in community development and responsive to local concerns.	4.1 - Support Parish Councils to fulfil their statutory functions and be responsive to community needs and aspirations. 4.2 - Encourage people to participate in parish democracy
Many parish councils (especially smaller ones) struggle to adequately assess & respond to the volume of consultations, information and guidance that they receive from principal local authorities and statutory agencies.	4.3 - Work with Parish Councils to reduce the burdens of consultation and “red tape”.

Objective 5 – Encourage Parish Planning & Community Engagement

Creating a Parish Plan helps a whole community to decide what is important to it. The key factor in parish planning is inclusiveness. A real effort is made to involve the whole community. It can help to foster community cohesion and interest in local democracy. Once engaged by involvement with the Parish Plan, people may go on to contribute to other aspects of community life.

Issues	Aims
A completed parish plan lets everyone know what the community's aims and priorities are, and who will be doing what to achieve them.	5.1 - Encourage and assist communities to identify and address local needs through parish plans.
A parish plan can distil and express concerns and aspirations with an unparalleled attention to local evidence. When several Parish plans are analysed they can highlight issues of common concern.	5.2 - Make effective use of parish plan data to inform community planning and the LDF.
People are more likely to become engaged with community life if they can easily find out what is happening in the community.	5.3 Deliver improved community information to rural communities, including through the development of online services

Objective 6 – Develop & Promote Recreational & Cultural Activities

A busy calendar of cultural, social and sporting events is an important characteristic of an inclusive and sustainable village community. The Cherwell Recreation Strategy Action Plan contains many specific actions for sport and recreation developments in Cherwell villages.

Signpost to Related Strategy: Cherwell Recreation Strategy

Issues	Aims
Around 10,700 people in Cherwell are active volunteers giving £5m per annum in voluntary labour Voluntary organisations can be important to the culture and social cohesion of rural communities. They often provide services and opportunities that could not be delivered commercially.	6.1 - Support the voluntary infrastructure and individual voluntary groups in Cherwell's rural communities
The opportunities presented by village organisations (e.g. local history group, morris side, cricket team, scout group, gardening club amateur dramatic society etc.), enable villagers to form and maintain social bonds with one another. Regular participation in sport can help to improve and maintain health	6.2 Provide and support recreational and cultural activities in rural communities. 6.3 Increase participation in community based recreational & cultural activities

Objective 7 – Promote Health & Wellbeing

People who live in rural areas are subject to the same illnesses, conditions and disabilities as urban dwellers. The rural population is relatively thinly spread over a large area though, making access to healthcare and advice more of a challenge for providers and potential recipients. Analysis of unpaid carers by age shows a difference between rural and urban Cherwell, with a higher proportion of older people living in rural areas providing unpaid care to spouses or family members

The Cherwell Joint Public Health Strategy recognises the need to specifically target health outreach services to rural areas

Signpost to Related Strategy: Oxfordshire Joint Public Health Strategy

Issues	Aims
It can be difficult to identify and support vulnerable people scattered in small numbers across rural areas. Where it is not practical to deliver healthcare to a rural location, consideration must be given to how a rural patient might access central facilities and services.	7.1 - Ensure local Health Care and Social Service Provision meets the needs of the local population particularly in relation to local accessibility
Healthy lifestyle choices should be available to all.	7.2 - Promote and support healthy lifestyle choices for Cherwell's rural residents

Objective 8 - Improve Community Safety

Official crime figures show that Cherwell District as a whole experiences low levels of crime compared with similar areas in the Thames Valley and South-East England. Analysis of police data by parish shows that most crime recorded in Cherwell is concentrated in the urban areas.

Most road casualties in Cherwell occur on 'A' class roads in rural areas. Road safety issues are addressed in detail in the Oxfordshire Road Safety Strategy.

Climate change brings an increased risk of extreme weather events. Some of Cherwell's Rural communities may want to consider emergency planning measures in anticipation of flooding or other identified risks.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Community Safety Strategy, Oxfordshire Road Safety Strategy

Issues	Aims
<p>Consultations and Parish Plans consistently show that policing, crime and anti-social behaviour are concerns for residents across rural Cherwell.</p> <p>The perception of crime in rural Cherwell doesn't match the low level of crime recorded</p>	<p>8.2 Reduce crime and fear of crime</p> <p>8.2 Reduce isolation and vulnerability</p>
<p>Parish Plans and Neighbourhood Action Group Priorities show that residents of rural Cherwell are concerned about speeding vehicles and dangerous driving</p>	<p>8.3 - Improve road safety</p>
<p>In rural areas community action may need to be the first response to an emergency situation.</p>	<p>8.4 – Increase community preparedness for potential emergencies</p>

Theme C: Provide Village Homes and Secure Village Infrastructure

Planning Policy Statement 7 advises local Planning Authorities that “The key aim is to offer everyone the opportunity of a decent home. The needs of all in the community should be recognised, including those in need of affordable and accessible, special needs housing in rural areas.” It also states that “All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.” The detailed local application of these principles will be dealt with in the Cherwell LDF.

- **Objective 9 – Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes**
- **Objective 10 – Ensure Effective Infrastructure and Utility Services**

Objective 9 – Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes

In the ten years to 2007 the cheapest (lowest quartile) market housing in Cherwell more than trebled in price. Properties in Rural Cherwell tend to cost more than those in urban areas. Even with a fall in property prices, open-market housing will still be out of reach for many rural families. The house price falls of 2008/09 have done little to improve affordability due to the accompanying economic decline and more cautious lending policies.

Affordable housing includes social-rented and intermediate (e.g. shared ownership) housing provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. On new housing sites in villages a percentage of the new homes will be affordable housing and will be allocated to eligible people who have expressed a preference for a village home. Permission can sometimes be granted for affordable housing on sites that would not otherwise be released for housing. A local need for ‘rural exception sites’ must be demonstrated and arrangements put in place to reserve the housing for local people.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Housing Strategy, Cherwell Homelessness Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
<p>Affordable housing, especially for local families is consistently identified as a priority in Parish Plans and local consultations.</p> <p>A housing needs survey carried out for Cherwell District Council in 2004 recommended that 141 new affordable housing units per year were needed across rural Cherwell.</p>	<p>9.1 - Secure housing growth that meets Government targets and the needs of the District through an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing</p>
<p>In Cherwell it is older homes and homes in villages that are most likely to be unfit. In rural Cherwell there is an ageing population, pointing to an increasing need for adaptations and improvements.</p>	<p>9.2 - Improve the standard of housing, particularly for vulnerable people</p>
<p>People in rural areas can experience accommodation difficulties or homelessness just like urban dwellers, but they may find it more difficult to access the appropriate advice and support</p>	<p>9.3 - Ensure advice and support services to prevent homelessness and help tenancy sustainment.</p>

Objective 10 – Work for Effective Infrastructure & Utility Services

Reliable utilities are important to the wellbeing of residents and the efficiency of local businesses.

Signpost to related Strategies: Cherwell Economic Development Strategy

Issues	Aims
Local consultation has identified utility services as a particular issue for some of Cherwell's rural residents. Certain villages have a perception of suffering unduly from power outages and other problems with utility services.	10.1 - Address local concerns over the reliability of electricity supply
Distance from telephone exchanges can mean that broadband internet access is slow or unavailable in some villages	10.2 Address local concerns over the speed and availability of broadband internet

Theme D: Support a Sustainable Rural Economy

There is a strong interdependence of activities within the countryside - particularly the key relationships between farming, tourism and recreation. Rural Cherwell has a relatively low business density compared with the regional rural average. However, the level of home-based working is above the average for Oxfordshire and the South-East. Local employment and enterprise have social and environmental benefits, reducing car commuting and increasing the potential for community involvement. The need to promote a prosperous and sustainable economy is identified as a key issue in the Cherwell LDF.

- **Objective 11 – Support Rural Jobs & Businesses**
- **Objective 12 – Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Communities**

Objective 11 – Support Rural Jobs & Businesses

Farming employment in Oxfordshire has declined by almost 20% since 1990, however farming remains of vital importance to Cherwell's rural identity. In order to remain viable many farms are diversifying into tourism, recreation, food retail and other types of business.

PPS7 advises that planning authorities should "...be supportive of well-conceived farm diversification schemes for business purposes that contribute to sustainable development objectives and help to sustain the agricultural enterprise, and are consistent in their scale with their rural location." The Cherwell LDF will set out policies which allow and encourage appropriate farm diversification schemes.

As well as land based businesses requiring a countryside location, the Cherwell Economic Development Strategy recognises that, 'light touch' industries, especially in the creative sphere, will continue to be attracted to rural locations, taking advantage of communications connections to remain fully engaged in the economy while enjoying social and environmental advantages.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Economic Development Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
Diversified businesses have a high discontinuation rate, suggesting a need for start-up advice and ongoing support and guidance.	11.1 - Develop and promote initiatives to support farm diversification and the development of the rural economy
Increasing locally grown food will reduce the need for imports and the associated "food miles", and also support local farm businesses.	11.2 – Increase the value of local food and products and develop new markets.
Home working offers potential benefits and opportunities for local rural communities including reduced outward commuting and potentially increased involvement in local community activities and services.	11.3 - Support home-working and encourage home-workers to participate in community life.
Lack of people with the relevant skills can cause recruitment difficulties for employers in rural areas. The role of traditional rural skills is significant in maintaining the natural and historic environments.	11.4 - Improve access to skills development

Objective 12 – Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Rural Communities

Cherwell's rural tourism strengths are its distinctive rural characteristics, the Oxford Canal, and the range of outdoor leisure opportunities. The economic value of tourism to North Oxfordshire in 2006 was estimated at £250 million.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Tourism Plan, Cherwell Economic Development Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
Cherwell's Tourism Plan focuses on balancing the preservation of the local environment against generating tourism trade and economic wealth	12.1 - Encourage sustainable tourism
Local communities are a key resource for tourism employment as they hold valuable information and skills that can create added value during a visitor's stay.	12.2 – Increase tourists' engagement with rural communities and businesses

Theme E - Protect, Enhance and Increase Enjoyment of the Rural Environment

- **Objective 13 - Protect & Enhance Biodiversity**
- **Objective 14 - Preserve & Enhance The Landscape & Rural Built Environment**
- **Objective 15 - Promote Enjoyment & Understanding of the Countryside**

Agricultural production used to be by far the most important factor determining the character of the countryside. Increasingly, biodiversity, landscape conservation and recreation are growing in importance, with the role of farming broadening to encompass them. Development in Cherwell's villages and countryside must strike a balance between potentially conflicting pressures: they include the requirements of current versus future residents, a balanced community versus "quality of life", and conservation versus development. The need to protect and enhance Cherwell's built and natural environment is a key issue for the Cherwell LDF, and it gives detailed consideration to these issues.

Objective 13 - Protect & Enhance Biodiversity & the Natural Environment

In 2006 the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act extended to all public bodies and a duty to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity across all their activities. There has been strong uptake of the Environmental Stewardship scheme, which pays farmers for conservation activities and sustainable practices.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Environmental Strategy, Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan, Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
The Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan identifies actions needed to protect and enhance habitats and species that are particularly important within the district.	13.1 - Work with biodiversity partner organisations to deliver the Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan
Over three quarters of Cherwell's countryside is under agricultural land use, but land owned by Parish Councils, churches, local trusts and individual householders can also have significant biodiversity potential	13.2 - Support farmers, landowners and local communities to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the Cherwell countryside
The effects of climate change on biodiversity and landscape will be most noticeable in rural areas.	13.3 – Support projects that reduce or mitigate the effects of climate change

Objective 14 - Preserve and Enhance the Landscape and Rural Built Environment

Cherwell's combination of diverse landscapes and villages is rich in historic character. It is an economic asset (which helps to attract skills, income, businesses and visitors) and is valued highly by its residents.

Signpost to related strategies: Cherwell Local Development Framework, Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan

Issues	Aims
The need to preserve and enhance a village's historic character is consistently mentioned in Parish Plans.	14.1 – Preserve and enhance Cherwell's rural built environments
Cherwell's countryside is valued by residents and is key to the preservation of biodiversity.	14.2 – Protect and enhance Cherwell's distinctive landscape characteristics and countryside

Objective 15 - Promote Enjoyment and Understanding of the Countryside

Improving access to and understanding of the countryside helps to fulfil aims relating to health and tourism as well as recreation.

Signpost to Related Strategies: Cherwell Greenspaces Strategy, Oxfordshire Joint Public Health Strategy, Cherwell Recreation Strategy, Cherwell Tourism Plan, Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Issues	Aims
The Cherwell Greenspaces Strategy recommends that access to natural and semi-natural greenspace should be increased.	15.1 - Make it easier for people to enjoy healthy recreation in the Cherwell countryside 15.2 – Explore the potential for establishing a country park
Cherwell has over 600 miles of public rights of way; they are the main means by which people get a countryside experience of the district.	15.3 - Improve access to a well maintained, joined up and improved rights of way and countryside network.
Interpretation of features, sites and routes can help to educate and inform users and enhance the user experience.	15.4 - Support & promote initiatives to improve public understanding of biodiversity, landscape and the countryside.

Appendix – I

Consultations, Information Sources and Background Documents

Consultation Events

The list below outlines consultations that contributed to the development of the Cherwell Rural Strategy.

- 19 July 2007 – **Consultation workshop event for Parish Councils** at CDC Bodicote House (32 attendees representing 22 parishes)
- 18 September 2007 – **Consultation workshop event for delivery partner organisations** at Exeter Hall, Kidlington (36 attendees representing 18 partner organisations)
- 18 June 2008 – **Progress briefing and Q&A session** at Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting
- 15 July 2008 – **Launch of public consultation on first draft strategy**, (publication of draft strategy on Cherwell DC website, sent to all Cherwell Parishes, all Cherwell DC Councillors all members of Cherwell Voluntary Organisations Forum, partner organisations and individuals)
- 01 October 2008 – **Close of public consultation on first draft strategy** (56 responses received)
- 03 December 2008 – **Rural Priorities Challenge** – Oxfordshire Rural Forum Steering Group (peer challenge based on CRC policy priorities)

In addition to these events there have been many discussions with service delivery partners, parish representatives and individuals.

Information Sources

The list below outlines data sources used in scoping and writing the strategy.

Title	Description	Source
Consultation responses	Feedback from consultation on the first draft Rural Strategy	Consultation and analysis by CDC
Rural Cherwell – Overview of Statistics 2007	Discussion paper based on national and local statistics	Research commissioned by CDC from MM Consulting
Oxfordshire Rural Framework	Research paper and draft policy framework	Oxfordshire Rural Forum
West Oxfordshire & Cherwell Rural Strategies – a Critique of the Summary of Evidence	Policy based analysis of the statistical overview and Oxfordshire Rural Framework	Research commissioned by CDC from Gloucestershire University
Improving Rural Reach	Report on BME communities in Rural Oxfordshire	Report of research project by ORCC
Community-led Plans in Oxfordshire: their potential contribution to strategic planning	Report of research into Oxfordshire Parish Plans	Research commissioned by Oxfordshire Partnership from Glos. University
Cherwell District Council Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008	Analysis of rural residents' responses to CDC's customer satisfaction survey	Research commissioned by CDC from Oxford Research Agency
West Oxfordshire & Cherwell Partnership Local Development Strategy 2008	Bid document (jointly with WODC) for European rural development funding	Cherwell & West Oxfordshire District Councils
South East Parish Plan Actions Database	A database of all proposed actions from published Parish Plans in south-east England	South East Rural Partnership?
Cherwell Tourism Development Study 2008	Analysis of existing and potential tourism in Cherwell	Research Commissioned by CDC from The Tourism Company
Rural Economies Recession Intelligence 2008	Briefing paper for Minister for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	Commission for Rural Communities
Planning Policy Statement 7	National policy statement on development in rural areas	ODPM

Background Documents

The list below outlines national and regional publications that have provided ideas or helped to set the context for the Cherwell Rural Strategy.

Title	Description	Source
The Taylor Report – Living, Working Countryside July 2008	National Review of Rural Economy & Affordable Housing	Matthew Taylor MP
Planning Policy Statement 7	National policy statement on development in rural areas	ODPM
A Charter for Rural Communities	Final report of the Carnegie Commission for Rural Community development	Carnegie UK Trust
Strong Counties and Vibrant Rural Communities	National report on County service delivery to rural communities	County Councils Network
Rural Challenges, Local Solutions	Report on the DEFRA “Rural Pathfinders” project	DEFRA
Rural Strategy 2004	National Rural Strategy for England	DEFRA
South East Rural Delivery Framework 2006	Regional rural delivery framework for south-east England	South East Rural Partnership
Local Strategic Partnership and Community Strategy Rural Checklist	Rural Proofing checklist for rural Local Strategic Partnerships	The Countryside Agency
Health, Place and Nature	Report into the health benefits of countryside recreation	Sustainable Development Commission
The Potential of England’s Rural Economy	Parliamentary report into the potential of England’s rural economy	House of Commons Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Committee
Thinking About Rural Transport	National Discussion paper	Commission for Rural Communities
Participation Inquiry – Strengthening the role of Local Councillors	Report & recommendations on the role of local councillors in rural areas.	Commission for Rural Communities
Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities – The Big Picture	An assessment of the main policy challenges for rural communities	Commission for Rural Communities

Local Plans and Strategies Related to the Cherwell Rural Strategy

Below are listed strategies and plans published by Cherwell Community Planning Partnership and its partner organisations. Each document has a relationship to the Rural Strategy and is “signposted” under one or more of its objectives.

Title
Cherwell Community Plan (currently being revised into Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy)
Cherwell Local Development Framework (currently under development)
Cherwell Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate 2008 - 2012
Cherwell Green Spaces Strategy 2008 - 2016
Cherwell Playing Pitch Strategy 2008 - 2016
Cherwell Community Safety Strategy 2008 - 2011
Oxfordshire Road Safety Strategy & Plan 2008 - 2009
Cherwell Recreation Strategy 2007 – 2012
Oxfordshire Joint Public Health Strategy 2007 – 2012
Cherwell Economic Development Strategy 2007 - 2011
Cherwell Homelessness Strategy 2007 - 2011
Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006 – 2011
Cherwell Tourism Plan 2006 - 2011
Cherwell Housing Strategy 2005 - 2011
Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan 2005 - 2010

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Appendix II – Delivery Plan 2009/10

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
Theme A - Improve Rural Services & Facilities					
1 - Retain and improve rural services	1.1 Support existing rural services to assist ongoing viability, and encourage the creation of new services	Delivered through ORCC Village shops development worker	Support the retention and development of village shops with professional advice & guidance to rural retailers.	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10 as part of ORCC SLA	ORCC, CDC
		Delivered through ORCC Village shops development worker	Through grant aid, support rural shops to develop their businesses	1 business development p.a. supported	ORCC, CDC
		Current delivery through Rural Access to Services Programme (RASP)	Draw on regional development funding to implement new, improved or replacement services	1 new service in 2009/10	ORCC, CDC
	1.2 Support rural communities in implementing improved ICT access for older and disadvantaged people		Assess patterns of ICT need, investigate best practice & develop targets for delivery subsequent years	Needs assessed & best practice investigated. Delivery target & measure for 2010/11	CDC
2 - Retain and improve village facilities	2.1 Support rural communities to provide recreational and cultural buildings that meet local needs and comply with regulatory requirements.	Through CDC's Community Hall, Recreation & Sports Facilities grant	Support and improve community/village halls through grant aid funding	8 Halls funded in 2009/10	CDC, OCC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
2 - Retain and improve village facilities		Delivered through Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	Provide a professional advice and guidance service to village hall managers (to include accessibility, safety, employment, maintenance, funding)	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10 as part of ORCC SLA	ORCC
	2.2 Support rural communities to provide outdoor recreation that meets local needs and complies with regulatory requirements.	Delivered through Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (OPFA) Community Development Officer	Provide professional advice and guidance to rural communities on the development and maintenance of play and sport facilities	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10 as part of OPFA SLA	OPFA, CDC
		Through CDC's Community Hall, Recreation & Sports Facilities grant	Support and improve village play and multi activity areas through grant aid	7 play/multi activity areas funded in 2009/10	CDC
		Through CDC's Community Hall, Recreation & Sports Facilities grant	Support and improve village sports facilities through grant aid	5 village sports facilities funded in 2009/10	CDC
3 - Maintain & improve rural transport options	3.1 Support & develop community transport initiatives alongside improvements to local public transport services		Investigate the potential, through Practice Based Commissioning, for a volunteer car scheme to access health related services.	Potential investigated and reported on during 2009/10	PCT, CDC
			Work with bus companies to align public transport services with local needs.	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10	OCC, ORCC, CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
3 - Maintain & improve rural transport options	3.1 Support & develop community transport initiatives alongside improvements to local public transport services		Promote information about community transport schemes, targeted at the people and groups most likely to benefit from them	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10	ORCC, CDC
	3.2 Improve links between villages for walkers, cyclists and equestrians	through the OCC/TOE "Places for People" grant scheme	Improve public rights of way routes between villages	two funded improvement projects in 2009/10	OCC, CDC
Theme B - Develop Thriving, Inclusive Village Communities					
4 - Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy	4.1 Support Parish Councils to fulfil their statutory functions and be responsive to community needs and aspirations.		Create and maintain a "Virtual Parish Clerk" web portal to be a central information resource for all Cherwell Parish Councils.	Initial version online & promoted to Parishes by end May 2009. Gather feedback & develop during 09/10	CDC
			Encourage Parish Councils to attain "quality parish" status	Programme & subsequent actions/targets agreed during 2009/10	CDC, OALC, PCs
			Continue to organise the twice yearly Parish Liaison meetings	2 meetings pa. >75% satisfaction rating	CDC
			Provide training opportunities to Parish Councillors and Clerks	6 training courses during 2009/10	OALC, CDC, PCs

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
4 - Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy	4.2 Encourage people to participate in parish democracy		Action begins in 2010/11 (Assess baseline of parish council seats that were contested at their last election)		CDC
	4.3 Work with Parish Councils to reduce the burdens of consultation and "red tape".	2008/09 corporate plan action "Coordinated forward plan web-based consultation with parishes"	Co-ordinate and forward-plan consultations with Parishes. Agree protocols for timescales and formats.	Forward plan published, protocols negotiated and in place by end of March 2010	All CCPP Partners
5 - Encourage Parish Planning and Community Engagement	5.1 Encourage and assist communities to identify and address local needs with Parish Plans.	Provided through Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) Community Development Worker	Provide professional advice and guidance to Parish Plan groups	No. of Parish Plan meetings attended & draft plans assessed. Baseline 2008/09	ORCC
	5.2 Make effective use of Parish Plan data		Analyse and respond to all completed Parish Plans, offering assistance and signposting opportunities as appropriate.	No. submitted, No. responded to	CDC, ORCC, OCC
			Action starts in 2010/2011 (Establish publicly accessible database of parish plan actions, to aid identification of patterns and issues of common concern)		ORCC, OCC, CDC
	5.3 Deliver improved community information to rural communities, including the development of online services	Action & target from Corp Plan.	Support the development of village websites	Four new websites to include Parish Council and local events information	CDC, PCs

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
5 - Encourage Parish Planning and Community Engagement			Encourage Rural recreation & cultural providers to promote their events through CDC's new on-line "What's On?" guide	Establish baseline & determine targets for subsequent years. Measure = No. of events per year.	CDC
6 - Develop & Promote Recreational & Cultural Activities	6.1 Support the voluntary infrastructure and individual voluntary groups in Cherwell's rural communities	Action carried over from 2002/06 Rural Strategy	Increase rural representation on the Voluntary Organisations Forum	Promote the Voluntary Organisations Forum at the November 2009 Parish Liaison Meeting	CDC, BDCVS
	6.2 Provide and support recreational and cultural activities in rural communities.	Corp Plan aim "Provide community facilities & activities to meet local need" refers	Deliver and develop the "Live and Local" programme of rural touring arts events.	30 performances during 2009/10	CDC, PCs
		Corp Plan target. Main delivery through "Energise" sport roadshow holiday schemes.	Provide formal and informal recreation opportunities for rural young people	850 opportunities in 2009/10	CDC, PCs
			Action starts in 2010/2011 (Develop suitable villages as "Rural Sports Hubs")		CDC
	6.3 Increase participation in community based recreational & cultural activities	Corp Plan target 2009/10 is for district as a whole. Same target for 2010/11 & 2011/12.	Increase the numbers of rural older people participating in group activities by 3%	Baseline 2008/09. Measure= No. participating	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
6 - Develop & Promote Recreational & Cultural Activities			Offer support and encouragement for villages entering the Calor Village of the Year competition	Determine the most useful forms of potential support. Develop follow on actions for 2010/11 onwards	CDC, ORCC
7 - Promote Health & Wellbeing	7.1 Ensure local Health Care and Social Service Provision meets the needs of the local population particularly in relation to local accessibility		Take healthcare/support providers to older people, particularly using the Cherwell Health Bus to provide a regular range of services.	Baseline 2008/09. Measure = No. of rural people accessing healthcare via Cherwell Health Bus	PCT, CDC
	7.2 Promote and support healthy lifestyle choices for all Cherwell residents	Corp Plan action under aim "Make it easy for you to lead a healthy & active life through our countryside..." Same target for 2010/11 & 2011/12	Help increase participation in active recreation {among Cherwell's rural residents}	Target 1% increase. Measure= Sport England annual Survey	CDC
		Corp Plan action under aim "Make it easy for you to lead a healthy & active life through our countryside..." Same target for 2010/11 & 2011/12	Increase the number of new walkers participating annually in local rural health walks by 10%	10% increase on 2008/09 baseline	CDC, PCT
8 - Improve Community Safety	8.1 Reduce crime and fear of crime		Narrow the gap between reported crime and perceived crime by improving access to local crime figure information	Publish parish by parish crime statistics on the new "Cherwell CSI" website by July 2009 Facilitate and promote online reporting of minor crimes via the new "Cherwell CSI" website by July 2009	CDC, TVP
			Narrow the gap between reported crime and perceived crime by making crime reporting easier.		CDC, TVP

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
8 - Improve Community Safety	8.1 Reduce crime and fear of crime		Increase awareness of neighbourhood Action Groups and rural community policing - Reports received and action taken.	Neighbourhood policing reports published in 10 Parish Magazines/ websites during 2009/10	CDC, TVP
			Increase the percentage of rural residents who, when asked, say they feel safe at home and in the community	Target=79% Measure =District Survey or Place Survey	CDC, TVP
		Action from Corp Plan refers to district wide target of 10 actions.	Bring forward community safety initiatives arising from Cherwell's rural Neighbourhood Action Groups	3 initiatives in Rural Cherwell	CDC, TVP
			Increase membership and coverage of rural Neighbourhood Watch and Farm Watch schemes	Baseline and target established in 2009/10	CDC, TVP
	8.2 Reduce isolation & vulnerability	Aim from Health Strategy. Suggested action by KL	Action starts in 2010/2011 (Investigate best practise & consider setting up "good neighbour" schemes in Cherwell Villages)		CDC, PCT, PCs
	8.3 Improve road safety	From OCC Road Safety Strategy	Support speed reduction measures at locations where excessive traffic speeds cause community concern	No. requested, No. granted	OCC
		From OCC Road Safety Strategy	Analyse accident records to identify where revised speed limits may be helpful to improve safety, and appropriate given the character of the road.	No. of sites identified, No. of speed limits revised	OCC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
8 - Improve Community Safety	8.4 increase community preparedness for potential emergencies		Establish protocols and templates for Parish Emergency Plans	Best practise investigated. Subsequent actions & measures to follow.	CDC, OCC
			Action starts in 2010/2011 (Encourage Cherwell Parishes to adopt and maintain Emergency Plans)		CDC, OCC, PCs

Theme C - Provide Village Homes & Secure Village Infrastructure

9 - Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes	9.1 Secure housing growth that meets Government targets and the needs of the District through an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing	Aim is from Corp Plan.	Survey housing need in rural communities and bring forward affordable housing schemes.	4 need surveys and 2 schemes during 2009/10	CDC, ORCC
			Increase the number of affordable village homes available to people with a local connection	Review rural exceptions delivery and report to Parish Liaison meeting during 2009. Further actions to follow in subsequent years.	CDC
	9.2 Improve the standard of housing, particularly for vulnerable people.	Aim & action from Corp Plan.	Invest in better quality housing for vulnerable people in rural cherwell	Undertake a private sector stock condition survey in 2009/10. Further actions to follow on in subsequent years	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
9 - Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes	9.3 - Ensure advice and support services to prevent homelessness and help tenancy sustainment.		Deliver home-based housing advice to people who find it difficult to travel to town for appointments.	Measure & target to be established during Yr1	CDC
	10.1 - Address local concerns over the reliability of electricity supply		Investigate the reliability of electricity supply in Rural Cherwell	Monitor outages in 6 rural locations over a six month period	CDC
10 - Work for Effective Infrastructure and Utility Services	10.2 - Address local concerns over the speed and availability of broadband internet		Continue to work on making broadband connectivity universally accessible across the District.	Indicator: Number of communities without broadband quality access to the internet. Target (2011): 0	CDC
			Assess broadband speed across rural Cherwell	Monitor upload and download speed at 6 rural locations at various times of day during 2009/10	CDC
Theme D - Support a Thriving Rural Economy					
11 - Support Rural jobs and Businesses	11.1 - Develop and promote initiatives to support farm diversification and the development of the rural economy		Support farmers and rural businesses with one to one business development advice and guidance on funding options.	10 advice sessions to rural businesses during 2009/10	CDC
			Promote development opportunities to farmers and rural businesses in association with Business Link	20 attendees at Business Link rural business seminars during 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
11 - Support Rural jobs and Businesses	11.2 - Increase the value of local food and products and develop new markets.		Review support for the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Food Group	Support reviewed in 2009/10. Resulting actions to follow in subsequent years.	CDC
			Continue to support and promote the Farmers Markets at Banbury, Bicester & Deddington	Monthly farmer's market held at each location through 2009/10	CDC
			Action in 2010/11 (Investigate establishing a Farmers' Market at Kidlington)		CDC, KPC
	11.3 - Support home-working and encourage home workers to participate in community life	Based on Env Strat target No.73 Scale down & make CDC target for HR?	Action in 2010/11 (Study a number of home-workers to provide case studies of successes and issues relating to implementing rural home-working.)		CDC
	11.4 - Improve access to skills development		Identify the skill needs of employers.	Undertake and analyse county-wide skills survey during 2009/10	CDC, OEP
			Assess the need for specifically rural skills and crafts (e.g. Hedgelaying, stone walling, woodland management)	Identify training providers and the potential market during 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
12 - Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Communities	12.1 - Encourage sustainable Tourism	Based on Tourism plan action	Promote walk & ride routes to increase visitor awareness of the countryside as a resource for leisure activity.	All CDC routes promoted on & downloadable from the "visit North Oxfordshire" website	CDC, OCC
	12.2 – Increase tourists' engagement with rural communities and businesses		Expand and promote the "Eating Out" section of the "Visit North Oxfordshire" website	15 rural pubs / restaurants promoted	CDC
Theme E - Protect, Enhance and Increase Enjoyment of the Rural Environment					
13 - Protect & Enhance Biodiversity	13.1 - Contribute to a net gain in Cherwell's biodiversity	Delivery by TVERC under terms of SLA with CDC	Deliver & Update the Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan	2009/10 Annual Delivery Plan and 2008/09 review published on 01 April 2009	CDC
		Delivery through Local Wildlife Sites Project	Provide sites, species and habitats data to inform planning decisions.	Updated data collated and digitally distributed during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
			Identify new areas of nature conservation value.	1 new area identified in 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
13 - Protect & Enhance Biodiversity		Corp Plan Action	Action in 2011/12 To establish an accessible community woodland on the edge of Bicester		CDC
	13.2 - Support farmers, landowners and local communities to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the Cherwell countryside	10 Surveys target is from Corp Plan. Provided through Local Wildlife Sites Project and Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre	Provide support and advice to owners of designated Local Wildlife Sites	10 surveys & 8 advisory visits during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
			Provide support and advice to local communities on the management of land with existing/potential biodiversity interest	5 community advisory visits undertaken during 2009/10	CDC
		Provided through Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and Oxfordshire Woodland Project respectively.	Provide support and advice to farmers and landowners on the management of land with existing/potential biodiversity interest	12 farm advisory and 5 woodland advisory visits undertaken during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
	13.3 - Support projects that reduce or mitigate the effects of climate change		Action in 2010/11 (Support, where appropriate, local renewable energy production, including wood fuel, wind and solar energy.)		CDC
14 - Preserve & Enhance the Landscape & Rural Built Environments	14.1 - Preserve and enhance Cherwell's rural built environments		Regularly update Conservation Area appraisals to inform planning decisions	7 rural conservation areas appraised during 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
	14.2 – Protect and enhance the distinctive characteristics of Cherwell's landscapes	Part of the Parish of Epwell is within the Cotswold AONB	Protect and enhance the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	Continued support for the Cotswolds Conservation Board during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
15 - Promote Enjoyment & Understanding of the Countryside	15.1 - Make it easier for people to enjoy healthy recreation in the Cherwell countryside		Continue to publish, distribute and keep updated Cherwell District Council's 12 walks booklets and four riding route booklets in printed and electronic form	Wholesale orders fulfilled within 10 days. Amendments & warnings posted on website within two days of notification	CDC
			Monitor and maintain Cherwell District Council's 16 promoted walk and bridleway routes	Each route walked and waymarked at least once during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
			Publish detailed accessibility information for all CDC promoted recreational routes and countryside sites.	Information published on website by March 2010	CDC
		Corp Plan Action	First action is in 2010/11 (Establish & promote new recreational routes)		CDC
	15.2 - Explore the potential for establishing a country park	Suggested by Green Spaces Strat & LDF	First action is in 2010/11 (Identify potential sites and funding sources for a new Country Park. (subject to final LDF)		CDC
	15.3 - Improve access to a well maintained, joined up and improved rights of way and countryside network.		Analyse the public rights of way network to identify missing or poor quality links which could be improved to benefit public access.	Analysis and prioritisation completed in 2009/10. Follow on actions in subsequent years	OCC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
15 - Promote Enjoyment & Understanding of the Countryside		North Oxfordshire Canal Partnership	Assess the need for improvements to the Oxford Canal towpath, which might eventually form a 'spine' for other radial routes.	Assessment completed in 2009/10. Follow on actions in subsequent years	OCC, CDC
			Improve the accessibility of Cherwell's promoted circular walk routes, to enable more people to enjoy the countryside	6 improvements in 2009/10	CDC, OCC
	15.4 - Support & promote initiatives to improve public understanding of biodiversity, landscape and the countryside.		Organise and promote a Countryside forum to discuss issues of interest and concern	Attendance >50, satisfaction rating >75%	CDC
		Delivered through Oxfordshire Rural Education Initiative ("Kids on Farms"), Warriner School Farm and RSPB Otmoor	Support initiatives that educate children about agriculture, biodiversity and rural life	Number of farm and reserve visits per year for Cherwell schools. Baseline and target to be established in 2009/10	CDC

Executive

Oxfordshire 2030

2 February 2009

Report of the Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To adopt Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) To recommend to Council for adoption Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, as a key strategic document for Cherwell District Council

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Oxfordshire 2030, the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy, sets out a strategic vision for Oxfordshire. The themes, priorities, pledges and actions that it contains should be acceptable to Cherwell District Council as it will be responsible for contributing to their delivery. Oxfordshire 2030 is attached as Appendix 1 and the Delivery Plan as Appendix 2.
- 1.2 Oxfordshire 2030 provides a vision for the future of Oxfordshire and consequently will be critical to determining future Local Area Agreements. It has, therefore, potentially significant financial implications.
- 1.3 The Executive considered a draft of Oxfordshire 2030 at its meeting on 1 September 2008. The majority of the comments made then have been incorporated into this final version. The responses to our comments are set out in Appendix 3.

Proposals

- 1.4 Executive Members are asked to adopt Oxfordshire 2030 as one of the key strategic documents for Cherwell District Council.

Conclusion

1.5 Oxfordshire 2030 is a key strategic document for the District.

Background Information

- 2.1 Local authorities have a duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy. The role of the Sustainable Community Strategy is to set out the strategic vision for a place. It provides a vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult cross-cutting issues such as the economic future of an area, social exclusion and climate change. Oxfordshire Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership for Oxfordshire, has developed Oxfordshire 2030
- 2.2 Oxfordshire 2030 is a key strategic document for the whole of Oxfordshire. The new Local Area Agreement is based on it, as will future agreements be.. Local Area Agreements potentially have significant amounts of funding associated with them.
- 2.3 Other key documents created by other public sector agencies in Oxfordshire will need to take account of Oxfordshire 2030, including our new Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell. There is an expectation (and in our case a duty) of all of the key partners within Oxfordshire (the County Council, District Council, Police, Primary Care Trust, Health Authorities, voluntary and community sector, colleges and businesses) to embrace the messages within the Strategy and align themselves to help deliver it.

Oxfordshire 2030 is important to Cherwell because:

- It should reflect the priorities identified in the Cherwell Community Plan, and visa versa
- Evidence for future Local Area Agreements will be based on it
- Our Local Development Framework will need to demonstrate strong links to it
- Cherwell District Council has to 'have regard' to the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy and also has a 'duty to co-operate' to agree relevant targets in the Local Area Agreement
- Cherwell District Council will be one of the partners who will contribute to delivering it

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 Acknowledging that Oxfordshire 2030 is a countywide document and as such can't reflect all of Cherwell's issues, does Oxfordshire 2030 reflect the priorities for the District?

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

Option One To adopt Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy.

Consultations

Cherwell Community Planning Partnership	Considered the consultation document at its meetings on 17 July and 18 September. The views of Executive were reported to the 18 September meeting and agreed.
Executive	Considered the consultation document at its meeting on 1 September. The responses to comments made are included in Appendix 3.

Implications

(Financial, Legal and Risk and other implications e.g. Equalities, Human Resources, Data Quality and Environmental where relevant)

Financial:	<p>Oxfordshire 2030 itself has no financial effects. However, it should be noted that it will be used as the evidence base and set priorities for future Local Area Agreements. If Oxfordshire 2030 does not reflect Cherwell's priorities there is a real danger that they will not be included in future Local Area Agreements and consequently will not get funding. While there is still uncertainty about the level of funding that will be available and how it will be distributed, it is important to note that the sums involved could amount to millions of pounds.</p> <p>Comments checked by Sarah Best, Senior Accountancy Assistant 01295 221736</p>
Legal:	<p>Cherwell District Council is required by law to "have regard" to Oxfordshire 2030. This means that our policies should not be in conflict with it or inconsistent with it. If they were this could be grounds for a successful challenge.</p> <p>Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer 01295 221686</p>
Risk Management:	<p>By not contributing to Oxfordshire 2030 there is a possibility that priorities are set for Oxfordshire that don't reflect priorities in Cherwell. The Strategy could commit the Council to delivering actions that either it may not agree to or it does not consider a priority.</p> <p>Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566</p>
CAA Implications	<p>Under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (which replaces Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)), it is expected that Cherwell's contribution to priorities set within Oxfordshire 2030 will be formally assessed.</p> <p>Comments checked by Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement 01295 227959</p>

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Wood
Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community

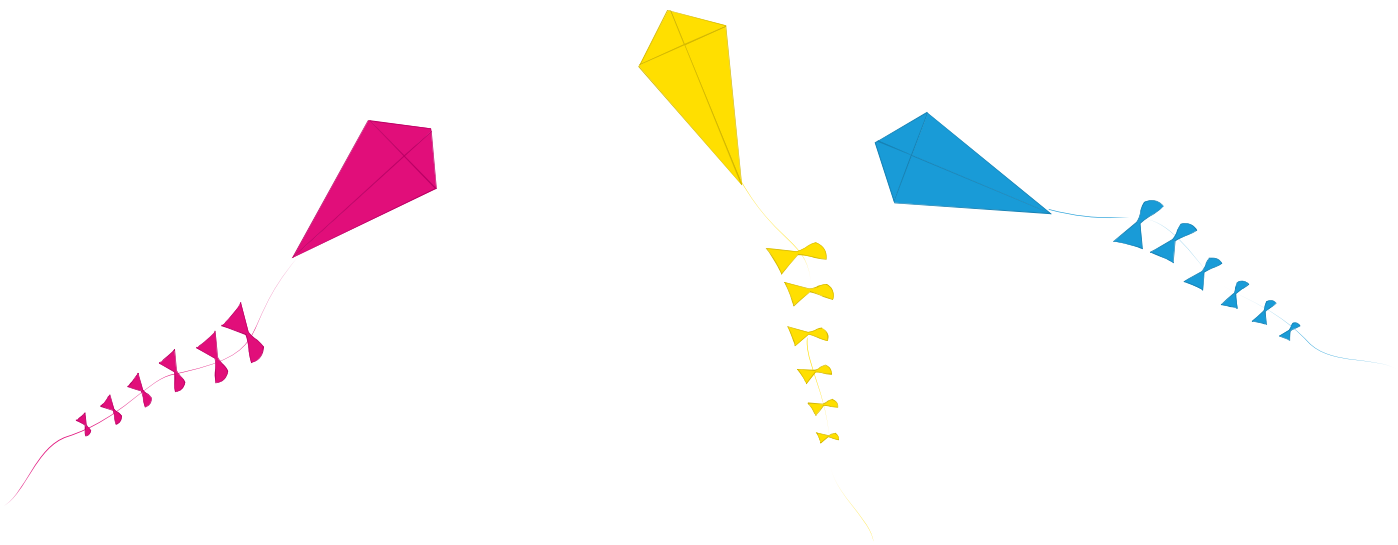
Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	<i>Oxfordshire 2030</i>
Appendix 2	<i>Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan</i>
Appendix 3	<i>Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments</i>
Background Papers	
Report Author	Helen Couperthwaite, Community and Corporate Planning Officer
Contact Information	01295 221751 Helen.couperthwaite@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Oxfordshire 2030

A partnership plan for
improving quality
of life in Oxfordshire





Oxfordshire 2030

A partnership plan for
improving quality
of life in Oxfordshire

Contents

Foreword	4
Oxfordshire 2030	5
Understanding Oxfordshire	7
A vision for the future	10
Delivering results	12
Planning for better places to live, learn and work	13
World class economy	17
Healthy and thriving communities	24
Environment and climate change	32
Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation	37
Local distinctiveness	40
Cherwell	42
Oxford	45
South Oxfordshire	50
Vale of White Horse	54
West Oxfordshire	58
How can I get involved?	62
Membership of the Oxfordshire Partnership	64
Glossary	66



OXFORDSHIRE 2030 identifies how we will respond to the challenges facing Oxfordshire over the next 20+ years. It sets out a long-term vision for Oxfordshire's future. Our vision is an ambitious one:

“By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can realise their potential, contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities.”

This strategy has been developed by the Oxfordshire Partnership on behalf of the people living and working in Oxfordshire. The partnership brings together people from Oxfordshire's most influential organisations and groups to tackle the issues that are important to local people. Oxfordshire 2030 is about partnership working. It has been developed through extensive consultation and collaboration and will be regularly reviewed and updated.


This is a diverse and changing county. There are pockets of deprivation amongst prosperous communities; areas of outstanding natural beauty and areas of significant housing and commercial development. Our rural areas, market towns and Oxford itself have different local identities, challenges and priorities. In consequence this strategy seeks to recognise broad priorities whilst recognising that action needs to reflect the needs of our local communities.

When we unite around our common aims, we can achieve a great deal working together. This strategy provides the framework to support partnership action. We have set out our key pledges and targets and will publish details annually on how successful we are in achieving them.

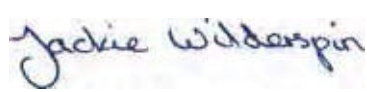

Councillor Keith R Mitchell CBE
Chairman of the Oxfordshire Partnership and Leader of Oxfordshire County Council


Mary Harpley
Chairman Cherwell Community Planning Partnership and Chief Executive Cherwell District Council


Rt Rev Colin Fletcher Chairman
South Oxfordshire Partnership and Bishop of Dorchester


Rev John Robertson
Chairman Vale Partnership and Vicar of Grove


David Neudegg
Interim Chairman
West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership and Chief Executive West Oxfordshire District Council


Jackie Wilderspin Chairman
Oxford Strategic Partnership and Head of Partnerships and Equalities, Oxfordshire PCT

OXFORDSHIRE 2030 is a Sustainable Community Strategy. It sets out a long-term vision for Oxfordshire's future. **Our ambition is to:**

- Create a world class economy for Oxfordshire building particularly on the high tech sector.
- Have healthy and thriving communities. We want to sustain what is good about our city, towns and villages but also respond to the needs of the 21st century including the impact of demographic and lifestyle changes.
- Look after our environment and respond to the threat of climate change and the potential for more extreme weather conditions. The threat of flooding is a particular concern.
- Break the cycle of deprivation by addressing the regeneration needs of disadvantaged communities; reducing the gap between the best and worst off and supporting people to maximise their talents and raise their aspirations.

The strategy has the support of all the key statutory agencies in the county as well as voluntary and business sector endorsement. Our expectation is that key agencies will reflect the vision and priorities in their own corporate plans and in their resource allocation so we ensure that we deliver the vision.

What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?

All local authorities have a duty to work with partner organisations to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy – a document which demonstrates how local organisations and agencies will work together to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area.

There are three main strands within the strategy:

- Place – where housing and other development will be concentrated.
- Major themes – Largely centred on economic and community well being.
- Cross cutting issues – Tackling inequality, responding to climate change and sustainability – ensuring that our approach to improving our economy, environment and communities takes account of the need for long-term sustainable solutions – for example: living within our environmental means and actions that help communities to be more resilient and self-supporting.

The Oxfordshire Partnership

The task of developing Oxfordshire 2030 has been taken on by the Oxfordshire Partnership which represents public, business and voluntary sector interests from across the county.

The Oxfordshire Partnership is the over-arching strategic partnership for the county and provides the form for setting the strategic vision for the county and for capturing the vision in the Sustainable Community Strategy. There are similar partnerships for each district and their strategies will pick up more detailed issues and focus on the needs of local communities.



The main objectives of the Oxfordshire Partnership are:

- To develop Oxfordshire 2030 - a Sustainable Community Strategy for Oxfordshire.
- To strengthen partnership working to ensure that everyone is working in the same strategic direction, sharing resources, information and expertise to address key issues and local priorities.
- To promote equality, respect and diversity and improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in, or visits Oxfordshire.

The evidence:

In developing the strategy, the partnership looked at the long-term social, economic and environmental trends, issues and other plans and strategies affecting the future of the county. Organisations from the partnership, including the police, health services, businesses, the voluntary and community sectors and elected members of local councils were invited to events in 2007 to debate the implications of these trends. They then agreed priorities for action for wider consultation with the public.

See the website for more information on the role of the Oxfordshire Partnership and the development of the strategy www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk

Understanding Oxfordshire

Detailed information on the trends and issues affecting Oxfordshire can found on our website www.oxfordshireobservatory.info

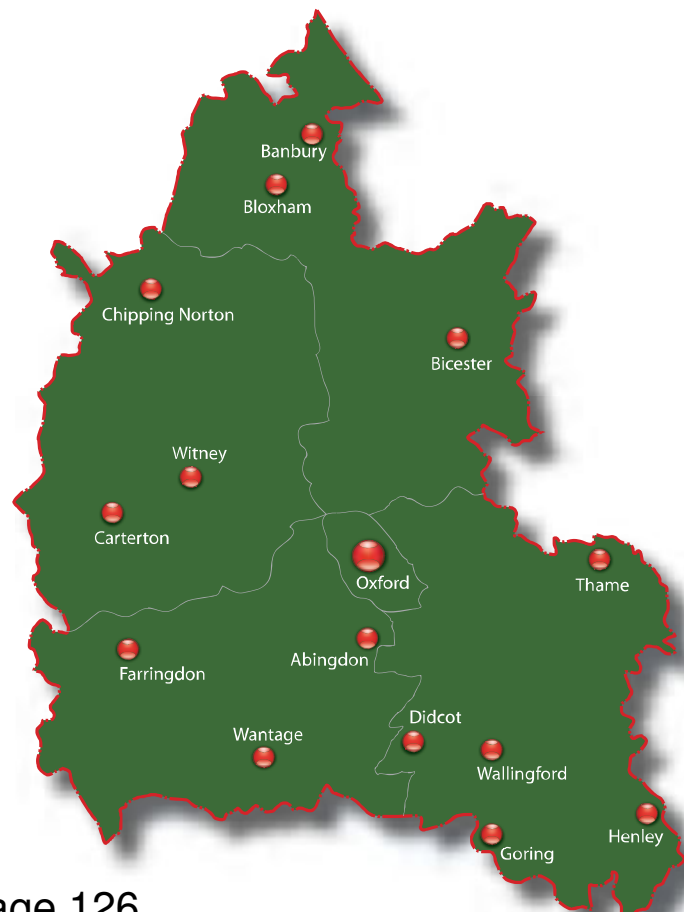
Oxfordshire is a county alive with enterprise, learning and history. It has become internationally renowned as a place of architectural and natural beauty, a centre of excellence for higher education, research and innovation and a designated European Centre of Culture.

The county includes three areas of outstanding natural beauty: the Cotswolds, the Chilterns and the North Wessex Downs and is crossed by the River Thames and its tributaries. The internationally famous city of Oxford is surrounded by numerous historic towns and villages set in beautiful countryside. Oxfordshire is at the north-western edge of the South East region and, with its central location in England, has strong links to London and the Midlands, as well as west to the Cotswolds and along the M4 corridor.

Economic prosperity and the quality of the environment make Oxfordshire an attractive place in which to live and work. People in Oxfordshire in general live long and healthy lives. However there are pockets of relative deprivation where residents have lower wages and low skills, poor housing, young people do not fulfil their potential at school and where older people have poorer health than most.

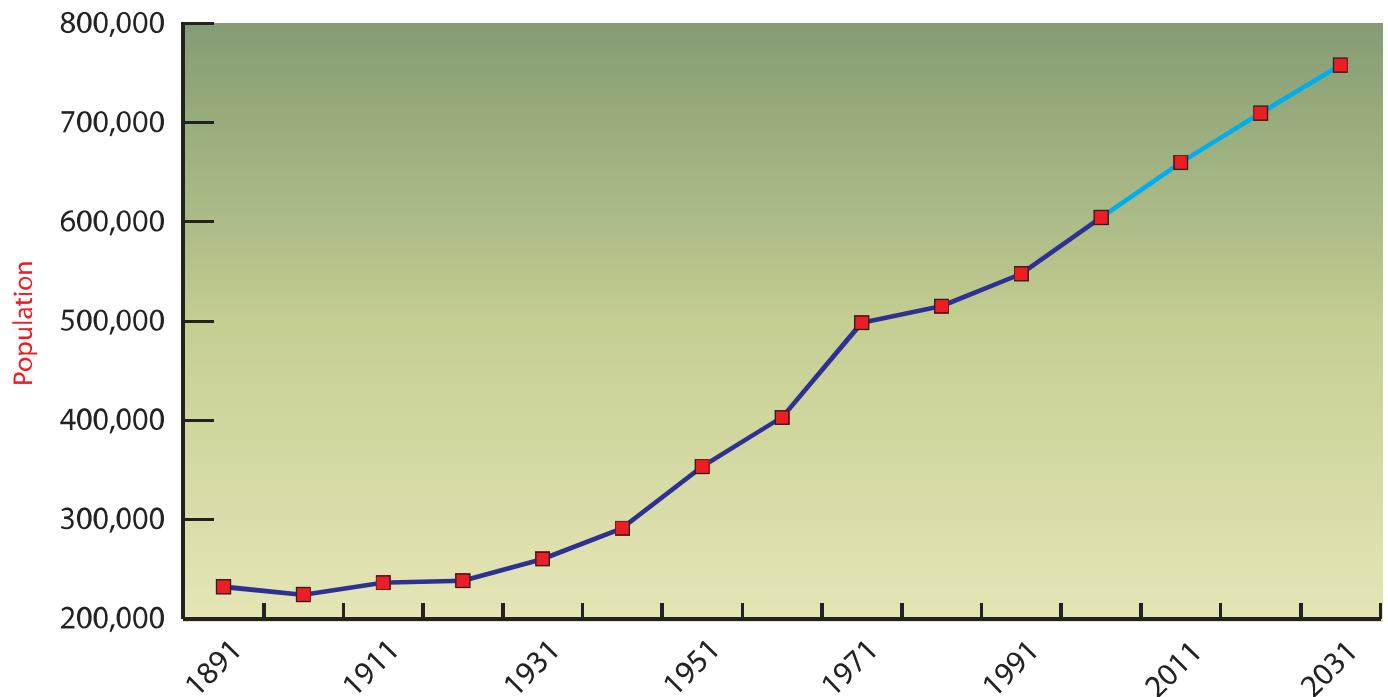
Oxfordshire in context

- In mid-2006, an estimated 632,000 people lived in Oxfordshire.
- Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East region - over 50% of people in Oxfordshire live in settlements of less than 10,000 people.
- Our largest settlement is Oxford City with a population of 149,100, with 42,500 students attending either Oxford University or Oxford Brookes University (Total students, Higher Education Statistics Agency - not students in residence).
- Around one-third of the population lives in our market towns.



Population growth

- The population of Oxfordshire has more than doubled since the 1940s.



- Between 2006 and 2026 Oxfordshire's total population is forecast to grow by over 12%, whilst the number of people aged 75 and over is projected to grow by 60% over the same period. This trend is similar to that expected nationally and is driven by increasing life expectancy and the current age profile of the county.

Region	mid 2001	mid 2026
Oxfordshire	607,300	711,800
Cherwell	132,000	165,900
Oxford	135,500	171,100
South Oxfordshire	128,300	135,000
Vale of White Horse	115,800	127,700
West Oxfordshire	95,700	111,900

- In 2006 the proportion of people from non-white ethnic groups in Oxfordshire was 7.7%.

Oxfordshire's environment

- 78% of the land in Oxfordshire is under agricultural management and almost a quarter of the land is designated an area of outstanding natural beauty.
- The number of cars owned by people living in Oxfordshire increased from 175,000 to over 300,000 (+78%) between 1981 and 2001.
- Traffic on Oxfordshire's roads increased by 12.5% in the 10 year period to 2006.
- 10.2 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person were emitted in Oxfordshire in 2005: 26.5% of the emissions were from domestic sources i.e. our homes, 38.2% from industry and 35.3% from road transport.

The Ridgeway



A vision for the future

“By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can realise their potential, contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities.”

Our strategic objectives are:

1. **World class economy:** To build on Oxfordshire’s vibrant economy and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to be included in that success.
2. **Healthy and thriving communities:** Oxfordshire is a great place to live for most but not all, and we need to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, health inequalities, lack of housing and congestion and respond effectively to the demographic challenges we face over the next 20 years. We also want our City, market towns and villages to be communities with a heart.
3. **Environment and climate change:** To respond to the challenges of climate change by minimising the effects of flooding, looking after our environment, reducing waste and use of energy to improve the quality of life for all.

Oxford Science Park



4. **Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation:** Whilst Oxfordshire is a pleasant and prosperous place to live and work, there are pockets of deprivation typified by some or all of the following:

- Low educational attainment
- Family breakdown
- Worklessness
- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- Poor health
- Poor housing.

These problems are linked and mutually reinforcing. They can combine to create a complex vicious cycle. Central to our vision is ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed in life. The Partnership will work together to reduce inequalities and narrow the gap between the least and most deprived individuals and communities in Oxfordshire.

We also recognise that in relation to everything we do, **we must:**

Reduce the gap between the best and worst off. We will do this by improving the outcomes for the worst-off and bringing them closer to the outcomes enjoyed by the best-off. This will mean targeting resources to the localities or communities experiencing the worst outcomes as we implement all our plans.



Job Centre Plus

Be sustainable as we work to deliver our vision we must consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of our work, and ensure the resources and capacity needed to deliver change exist and are sustainable. We must also ensure that we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

THERE is a strong track record of local organisations working collaboratively to deliver services and outcomes across the public, private, voluntary, community and faith sectors. There is a strong infrastructure of partnerships including county-wide partnership (for example The Children's Trust Board working for all our young people) and local partnerships (for example Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships who work together to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse).

Oxfordshire 2030 provides a context for this work. The strategy is supported by a Delivery Plan (www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/oxfordshire2030) which sets out specific and measurable medium term priorities for the partnership. For example targets to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour, improve health, housing, transport, and educational attainment and workforce skills.

The delivery plan contains the following:

- Three year targets that are in our Local Area Agreement (LAA) – an agreement between the Government and partners in Oxfordshire which reflects some of the highest priority key targets.
- Key targets which are important locally but not in the local area agreement.

Within Oxfordshire we have a countywide local strategic partnership and five local strategic partnerships at district level. We are all working together to achieve the shared vision for the future. This approach means that we can make best use of our resources, joining up where necessary, whilst ensuring very local issues are also tackled.

Monitoring progress and measuring change

The strategy is important for defining goals but at regular intervals we need to take stock to see if circumstances have changed. We will do this at least every five years. We also need to monitor progress against targets on an annual basis as well as taking stock of broader quality of life indicators.

The Local Area Agreement and the delivery plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis and progress will be reported to the Oxfordshire Public Service Board, which is responsible for managing the Local Area Agreement. It will also be formally reported to the Government once a year. We will produce an annual report which will analyse current performance and future trends.

This section is about land use planning rather than general planning for the future.

OXFORDSHIRE has to balance the need to protect and enhance its special environment, both urban and rural, with the needs for economic growth and housing. There is also a need to ensure that physical and social infrastructure (such as public transport, health services and schools), both within Oxfordshire and neighbouring areas, are provided at the right time. Only by balancing these requirements will the county be able to achieve its objectives of securing a world class economy and healthy and thriving communities whilst tackling climate change and addressing environmental issues.



New housing in Oxfordshire

Currently the framework for the overall spatial planning strategy for Oxfordshire is provided by the Structure Plan (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk). However, this will change very soon when the South East Plan is approved by the Government. Below the regional level there will be Local Development Frameworks prepared by each of the five district councils and a minerals and waste development framework prepared by the County Council.

A draft South East Plan was prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) and submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2006 and was subjected to a public examination in late 2006 and early 2007. The public examination panel's report was published in August 2007, and the Secretary of State published her proposed changes to the plan in July 2008.

These included a review of the greenbelt south of Oxford in order to facilitate an urban extension of at least 4,000 homes. The Secretary of State's final decision following consultation is awaited.

After the preparation of the South East Plan the government invited submissions for a number of 'eco towns'. "Weston Otmoor" between Weston on the Green and the M40 is one of 15 sites across the country currently under consideration. A decision as to whether this proposal is included in any finally approved list is expected in 2009. This section of the strategy will be updated in 2009 to reflect the requirements of the South East Plan and/or Eco Town provision.

Links to Local Development Frameworks

Critical to the delivery of 2030 goals is the provision of the physical and social infrastructure. The planning system will play an important role in helping us deliver sustainable communities by facilitating provision of, for example:

- Affordable homes and housing options.
- Shops, business sites and premises.
- Schools and health facilities.
- Transport networks for pedestrians, cyclists, bus and rail users, and private and commercial road users.
- Parks.
- Flood defences.

Rail services in Oxfordshire



To make sure this happens all five district councils are developing local development frameworks (LDF's) – a collection of policies and plans to guide development in the local area which are essential tools in order to shape communities and ensure that services are delivered to meet local needs. These Frameworks, along with the South East Plan and other major plans such as the minerals and waste development framework, will guide how much development and building there is in your area, where it is located and what infrastructure (roads, schools, community facilities) are needed to support it.

Housing

Housing demand is high in the South East. The Draft South East Plan proposed housing growth of 2,360 dwellings each year (within Oxfordshire) until 2026 but the Secretary of State has proposed an increase to 2,760 pa. The draft plan proposed that at least 50 per cent of all new houses (in the Central Oxfordshire sub region), should be 'affordable' to meet the needs of young people and those on low incomes, although the Secretary of State has suggested that this be reduced to 40%. Growth points have been designated within the county at Oxford and Didcot. Once the South East Plan is approved then Oxfordshire 2030 will be updated to reflect any changes.

Community

The South East Plan embraces the concept of 'lifetime neighbourhoods' with inclusive, well designed living environments for all ages. A lifetime neighbourhood would provide all residents with the best possible chance of health, wellbeing and social inclusion, particularly as they grow older. This would require an accessible and pleasant built environment in which residents of all ages are not unnecessarily excluded by age, physical or cognitive ability, and remain able to work, socialise and participate for as long as possible. We will work to respond to older people's needs and experiences for example, in relation to the use of public transport, access to residential care services, access to shops, amenities and leisure space, their perception of security, neighbourhood and place, and the desire to congregate, socialise and participate.

Employment

The main locations for the provision of additional land for employment will be at Bicester and Didcot, in particular to provide for the education, scientific and technological sectors and the expansion and relocation of existing local firms. In Oxford, the West End Development, the Northern Gateway and potentially the Science Park to the South of the City will provide employment opportunities. In Banbury development for employment will take place mainly on previously developed land.

Traffic congestion

Road traffic has grown rapidly in Oxfordshire, particularly on the M40 and A34, and congestion is a significant problem. The County Council, in partnership with Network Rail and the Highways Agency is promoting a package of measures called 'Access to Oxford' designed to ease congestion around the county. However, further traffic management and development of transport networks particularly around our market towns will be needed.

Oxfordshire's principal road network is already operating at near capacity and traffic growth is predicted to increase significantly over the next few years. There is a backlog on infrastructure development both in road and rail. This is likely to be a growing problem both for businesses and individuals. The resultant traffic congestion will also add to pollution.

Natural resources

Thames Water, through its resources management plan, has proposed a major new reservoir to the south west of Abingdon near the village of Steventon, although the need for this is still being examined. Consultation on the water resources management plan took place during the Summer of 2008.

Oxfordshire has extensive deposits of sand, gravel and limestone and is an important producer of aggregate minerals for construction work mostly within the county. Aggregates are needed both for new development and to maintain the existing built fabric and infrastructure. The draft South East Plan sets out plans for extraction rates but following central government guidelines are now being reviewed.

M40 in Oxfordshire



World class economy

Oxfordshire is an economically vibrant area. Compared with the rest of the UK unemployment is low and the economy is prosperous. We have a lot to be proud of: the highest level of research and development in Western Europe; a concentration of high-wage, high-tech industry; and of course, world-renowned universities. But global economic conditions and competition mean we have to work even harder to secure a world class economy for the county.

Key issues include:

- Supporting and growing our high technology businesses and increase high value employment.
- The need for Oxfordshire to continue to secure inward investment to help existing businesses to 'go global'.
- The need to provide the best possible business support to grow existing businesses.
- Improving infrastructure and in particular transport to reduce congestion.
- Increasing the supply of affordable housing.
- Raising educational attainment, improving workforce skills and encouraging lifelong learning.
- Local regeneration initiatives.
- Improving the sustainability of rural economies.

Current position

Oxfordshire's economy has sustained continued growth and stability over an extended period and is recognised as an economic powerhouse within the south-east and UK and also on the world stage. It has an exceptional concentration of research and development (7.9% of the workforce compared with 2.9% for the South East) with world renowned establishments such as the critical triangle of universities, hospitals and medical research leading to high technology spin offs, and the Diamond Synchrotron on the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. In the South East Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy, Oxford City and Central Oxfordshire is seen as a Regional Hub – a centre of economic activity and a Diamond for Investment and Growth. The County as a whole has strong sectors in tourism, motorsports (Banbury is a sub regional hub and other areas in North Oxfordshire), and publishing industries.

In terms of gross value added (GVA) Oxfordshire performance ranks in the top 10% for the UK, having increased more than Cambridgeshire but significantly less than Berkshire since 1995. Oxfordshire GVA per head has been consistently above the South East average.

Military

The armed forces are the largest employer in the county with 30,000 military personnel at bases in Bicester, Abingdon, Benson, Brize Norton, Shrivenham and Didcot. These bases have special needs, for example changes to employment are expected over the medium term, and these have been reflected in our planning.

Rural economy

The County's market towns depend largely on small businesses to provide the shops and services that communities need.

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East and its pleasant rural landscape, the high quality of its built environment and culture make it a place where businesses want to operate and people want to live and work. Farming plays a vital role in the economy with 78% of the land in Oxfordshire under agricultural management.

Our county is varied and offers visitors and residents a number of unique rural and urban attractions. We work with partners to promote strong tourism brands (for example Oxford, Cotswolds and Bicester Village) which highlights the energetic and cosmopolitan city of Oxford, our bustling market towns, picturesque rural communities and areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Thame town centre



Our many historic rural towns and villages provide access to a wide range of goods and services and a base for both established and new businesses from thatching to software engineering and local retail, financial services and distribution. Business is everywhere in the county from isolated rural parishes to high tech business parks near our major road and rail routes.

Culture and leisure

High quality cultural, sport, leisure and recreational activity is a key factor in making Oxfordshire a good place for business. They provide employment and improve the quality of life of everyone in the county. There are more than 70 festivals, world class museums and heritage attractions including the Ashmolean and Blenheim Palace; high quality theatre, art galleries and sporting events and access to the countryside, parks and rivers.

As global competition intensifies, maintaining growth and prosperity becomes more and more challenging and we need to focus on **economic regeneration** – particularly

- Urban renaissance of Oxford's West End.
- Developing the Southern Oxfordshire Science Vale as an international centre for innovation and enterprise. The Science Vale is an area of economic growth in southern central Oxfordshire whose future is defined by four points – Harwell science and innovation campus, Milton Park, Didcot and Grove.
- Developing the Bicester economy with greater emphasis on a high value, high wage, and high tech economy to keep pace with planned housing growth.
- Developing the Banbury economy by attracting mid and high-tech industries.

The castle complex at Oxford's West End



Workforce skills

Although the county has the highest concentration of degree level qualifications of any county (at the time of the Census 2001 survey, around 28% people aged 16 to 74 in Oxfordshire had a degree or higher, the highest proportion of any county in England), a significant proportion of the working age population are without qualifications and



Elms Road Nursery, Botley Primary and Matthew Arnold school pupils

are therefore ill equipped to meet the needs of businesses operating in very competitive markets. Despite this high percentage of graduates and the low rate of unemployment, the county has 30 areas within the worst 10% in England on education, skills and training deprivation and three areas in Oxford ranked within the worst 1% in England on this measure.

According to the 2005 National Employer Skills Survey, Oxfordshire employers were more likely to have recruitment issues and skills gaps than in either the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire area as a whole or across the South East region.

Educational attainment in our schools is a cause for concern with performance not as strong as in comparable areas of the country. There is a need not just to raise GCSE performance in schools, but for all young people in the county to aspire to share in the sense of opportunity which its economy provides.

Investment in transport and housing infrastructure lags behind the pace of economic development. This has contributed to increasing levels of congestion and shortages of affordable housing. The lack of affordable housing is especially a problem for those in essential service jobs not sharing in the high wage economy.

Traffic congestion nationally and locally is getting worse. As the population grows it is likely that congestion around the county will continue to worsen unless action is taken to address it. Taking into account national and local travel trends and levels of committed and expected future development, growth in all traffic on Oxfordshire roads is predicted to be over 25% over the period to 2026 - well above the national average of 18%.

Oxfordshire is a mostly rural county and for many the car is (and for the foreseeable future will continue to be) the predominant mode of travel. However a significant minority do not have access to a car, affecting their ability to reach services and employment. The county's road network is well-developed, and provides car users with direct links to all major destinations. However, for those people who do not have access to a car for all or part of the time, getting to key destinations can be far from easy.



The 'hamburger' roundabout in Headington

Improvements to the railways such as East-West Rail, improvements to Oxford Station as well as smaller schemes at local stations (for example Grove) have the potential to improve public transport services. Enhancements to bus infrastructure will have a similar impact. The County Council has secured funding from Government for a major project called Access to Oxford, including improvements for rail, bus and general road traffic, which is to be delivered in 2013-2015.

The need and demand for affordable housing (social rented and intermediate) is high in Oxfordshire as it is throughout the South East region and beyond. However, lack of land and the desire to protect the county's unique historical, environmental and cultural heritage will inhibit our ability to satisfy demand.

Oxfordshire is in a strong position to sustain economic growth. There are some things that Oxfordshire has right and should treasure – the balancing of economic and environmental interests and the links between universities, science, innovation and entrepreneurship

We pledge to

- ✓ Collaborate across public, business and voluntary sectors to build on Oxfordshire's economic success.
- ✓ Create the conditions for everyone to have access to jobs.
- ✓ Ensure that educational attainment and skill levels are amongst the very best in the country so we provide a well qualified, motivated workforce to meet the needs of business.
- ✓ Grow the economy whilst achieving a sustainable balance between jobs, housing and environment.
- ✓ Tackle traffic congestion across Oxfordshire, particularly on trunk roads and around market towns, Oxford City and other hotspots.
- ✓ Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.

Affordable housing in Witney



How we will measure success

By 2030 we expect:

- Education and skills levels to have risen well above the national average.
- GVA (gross value added) to be in the top 10% nationally.
- The ratio of housing supply to demand and the quality and affordability of housing to be improved.
- Those who are of working age but not in work, full time education or training and those not actively seeking work, to be the lowest in the country.
- Oxfordshire to be known throughout the world as a centre of science and innovation excellence.
- Journey times on Oxfordshire roads to be within the most reliable 10% in the country.
- Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling to have improved.

Our priorities for action

Details of action planned for the medium and longer term are set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan www.oxfordshirepartnership.gov.uk/oxfordshire2030

Key partnerships to develop the theme

Oxfordshire Economic Partnership
Learning & Skills Partnership
Housing Partnership
Environment Partnership
District Local Strategic Partnerships

Healthy and thriving communities

People enjoy living in Oxfordshire. Surveys show us that over 90% of the people in Oxfordshire like living in their communities. We are fortunate to have a population that is generally healthier than elsewhere, with longer than average life expectancy. However, there are pockets where life expectancy is lower in parts of the County. Levels of crime are generally lower than average. We have a diverse population: as the most rural county in the south east of England, half our population live in rural areas but a quarter live in Oxford city with the remainder living in our bustling market

more people over 85 living in the county and the number of people with learning disabilities living here has also increased. Our black and minority ethnic communities account for 5% of Oxfordshire's population overall and 13% in Oxford city. We want to ensure that everyone is safe from harm, able to live a healthy lifestyle and is valued in the community in which they live, work, grow up and grow old. We also want to ensure people have the ability to participate and contribute to their communities.

Healthy and Thriving Communities implies that:

- * Our towns, neighbourhoods and villages are communities with a heart, where local people work with each other and with service providers to improve their areas.
- * We work together to support and protect all vulnerable groups including older people and those with disabilities
- * People are physically and mentally healthy and live longer
- * Oxfordshire is a place where people feel safe and welcomed. Our foundations are strong: there are concerns about anti-social behaviour but generally our City, towns and villages are safe and pleasant places in which to live.

Key issues include:

- Housing has become unaffordable particularly for many young people within urban and rural areas.
- Maintaining local services in rural communities.
- Older people and those with disabilities want more choice and control over their care, wish to live independently and have access to high quality services when they need them.
- Preventing ill-health in the ageing population.
- Community engagement and self help is less strong than it once was and the community and voluntary sector needs strengthening to support this.
- Crime is relatively low but fear of crime and concern about anti-social behaviour – and particularly as a result of alcohol or drug abuse – is a growing concern for many people.

- Life expectancy is improving year on year, particularly in our affluent communities, but there are growing concerns about the effects of unhealthy lifestyles in some of our communities.
- Regeneration of deprived local communities.
- Involving more people in making decisions about their communities - including those who have not been involved in the past (for example, young people and those from different cultures and backgrounds).
- Putting our energy and resources into communities that are experiencing rapid change due to housing development, population and demographic change and where there is the greatest need to prevent ill-health, reduce crime and other problems.
- Encouraging a new generation of volunteers who actively support their communities.
- Valuing culture, sport, recreation and leisure as being vital to maintaining good quality of life and in providing opportunities for economic growth and employment.

Current position

Oxfordshire is a diverse county in terms of the range of urban and rural environments and ethnicity. A quarter of the population live in the city of Oxford with a similar proportion in our market towns and half the population living in rural areas. The population is ageing with substantial growth in the proportion of the population aged 85 and over. There is also a growing proportion of people with learning disabilities.

Black and minority ethnic communities are 5% of the population for the County overall and 13% in the city of Oxford with 10.9% in the Banbury Grimsbury Ward and a sizeable population in Didcot.

Although our population is generally healthier than elsewhere, with life expectancy above the average, there are significant variations and inequalities between local communities. This is reflected in the wide gap in life expectancy between the best and worst off.

Central Oxford Mosque

Communities with a heart

People want to live in communities where services are well planned and coordinated; where the local centre provides good shopping provision; where there is a good quality environment; where there is access to good quality housing and services; where there is access to high quality culture, sport and leisure. We also want places where local people help shape the future for their city, town, village or neighbourhood and who work to contribute to the solution of local problems.

In some areas of the City and our market towns there is a need to better join up activity as well as requirements for more active engagement to break the cycle of deprivation, in relation to skills, community safety and health.

'Aunt Sally' in Oxfordshire



We acknowledge the difficulties of people commuting longer distances to work and people working longer hours which have an impact on the amount of time people have available to input into their communities. Despite this we know that there are at least 3,000 voluntary and community groups in Oxfordshire and many people are involved and working hard to make life better for local people and their communities. However we are heavily reliant on those who are community spirited and active in our communities and we need to engage more people to build on that good work in the future.

A feeling of identity and 'sense of place' is critical to making Oxfordshire an even better place. Oxfordshire residents have a strong affiliation to the county and to their local community and there is a real sense of community and belonging. Distinctive local activities and events – such as the popular game of "Aunt Sally", the rural touring programme which brings live arts events to local community spaces, the annual Leveller's Day in Burford as well as one off special events and festivals like "Luminox" in Oxford reinforce this sense of identity and provide occasions for a whole community to come together.

Page 145

Our voluntary, community and faith organisations are vital to the well-being of local people and communities as are our parish, town, district and county councils who provide local services and local democratically elected representation to make sure that services are responsive to local people's needs.

Voluntary, community and faith organisations play a vital role in Oxfordshire life, both in providing services to people who need them and in making volunteering opportunities available for people to get involved in their communities. We will work to ensure that our community organisations receive the support they need to develop and operate effectively in order to meet the needs of the people they serve.

Participation in culture, sport, leisure and recreation are also important to how people experience and perceive the place where they live – contributing to a distinctive identity, engendering pride and a sense of belonging while helping to sustain community cohesion. The need to improve play opportunities for children and young people is also important in order to support thriving communities. The Oxfordshire Play Partnership is working with all local authorities (including parish and town councils) and relevant VCS organisations to increase and improve play opportunities

A strong local cultural life and a choice of leisure and recreational opportunities deliver benefits which strengthen communities and contribute to a rich quality of life for all while having a positive impact on the economy, tourism, educational attainment and community safety.

'Luminox' in Oxford



We would like Oxfordshire to be a community where:

- People feel they have a say in their own communities but also put something back in terms of neighbourliness, running local projects e.g. neighbourhood watch, fund raising, event organising etc.
- There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the community.

Bicester Resource Centre



Oxfordshire communities are well thought of with over 90% of the people in Oxfordshire saying they like living in their local communities. A recent analysis of parish plans also shows that a growing number of local people are working with their parish council to actively plan for the future of their community. Oxford City Council has had area committees for some years and are developing their approach to neighbourhood planning. Typically community-led plans reveal concerns about the 'environment' with 'access to services and travel', 'affordable housing and activities for young people' also raised.

Demographic change

One of the key areas of change facing us all is the ageing of our population. As a result of our improved longevity and declining birth-rate there is a profound shift in the structure of our population. Improvements in income, health care and healthier lifestyles have led to more people living longer. This has led to an increase in the number of relatively fit and active older people, many of who are and want to continue to be active contributors in employment, in their families and communities as volunteers, employees



Shotover Day Centre

and carers. Older people make an important contribution to economies and communities as consumers and for their expectations as citizens. It also means more people will need support to remain independent in later life.

However, the distribution of income amongst the older population is very uneven. Older people have one of the highest risks of poverty of all age groups and experience social exclusion due to a range of factors including reduced social contact, poorer health, low income and lack of mobility. The greatest consumers of health and social care are those over 85 which is the section of the population growing at the fastest rate. There is also an increase in the number of younger people who have experienced some form of learning or physical disability from birth, or who have survived a trauma. This will place increased financial pressure on both the County Council's adult care services and the Oxfordshire NHS.

There is a real danger that our healthy population will become less healthy over the next 20 years. The incidence of obesity is rising and so is alcohol consumption. Apart from the health implications, excessive alcohol consumption amongst people also gives rise to anti-social behaviour and so increases fear of crime.

Responding to these challenges will involve a renewed emphasis on prevention and provision of support to individuals to live their lives independently and successfully. We will also need to emphasise (even more strongly than we do now) the importance of family carers and the support they need to carry out this role effectively and with due regard to their personal needs. We want to shift the emphasis to prevention so that we can intervene early, providing support to help the person stay independent and delay the need for costly intensive support for as long as possible.

Safer communities

Oxfordshire does not have high crime levels; indeed parts of the county have very low crime levels compared to the rest of the country. However alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour and drug related crime are particular problems in some areas and generally fear of crime is disproportionately high throughout Oxfordshire. Statutory agencies (such as the local authority anti social behaviour teams) and voluntary agencies are working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour but we also need local communities to help find local solutions.

We pledge to

- ✓ Work with local people including the voluntary, community and faith organisations and the military to sustain and build supportive cohesive, resilient and well planned communities.
- ✓ Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour – particularly where the cause is the abuse of alcohol or other substance misuse.
- ✓ Work to prevent all forms of extremism that threaten the well-being of local people and communities.
- ✓ Support the people of Oxfordshire to achieve a healthy and positive old age, concentrating on the groups in greatest need.
- ✓ Ensure every child gets every opportunity for a good start in life.
- ✓ Improve support and opportunities for independent living.
- ✓ Promote healthy lifestyles including the increase of physical activity
- ✓ Defend access to local services particularly in rural communities.
- ✓ Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.

How will we measure success?

By 2030 we expect

- Everybody feels welcomed and safe in their local community.
- Volunteering and community self help are stronger than the national average.
- People are living longer by staying healthy.
- A reduction in the gap in between the best and worst off.
- Crime and anti-social behaviour to be in the bottom quartile in the country.
- Local communities to have developed and implemented a community-led plan (for example: a parish plan or a local community action plan) and have achieved a range of tangible improvements.

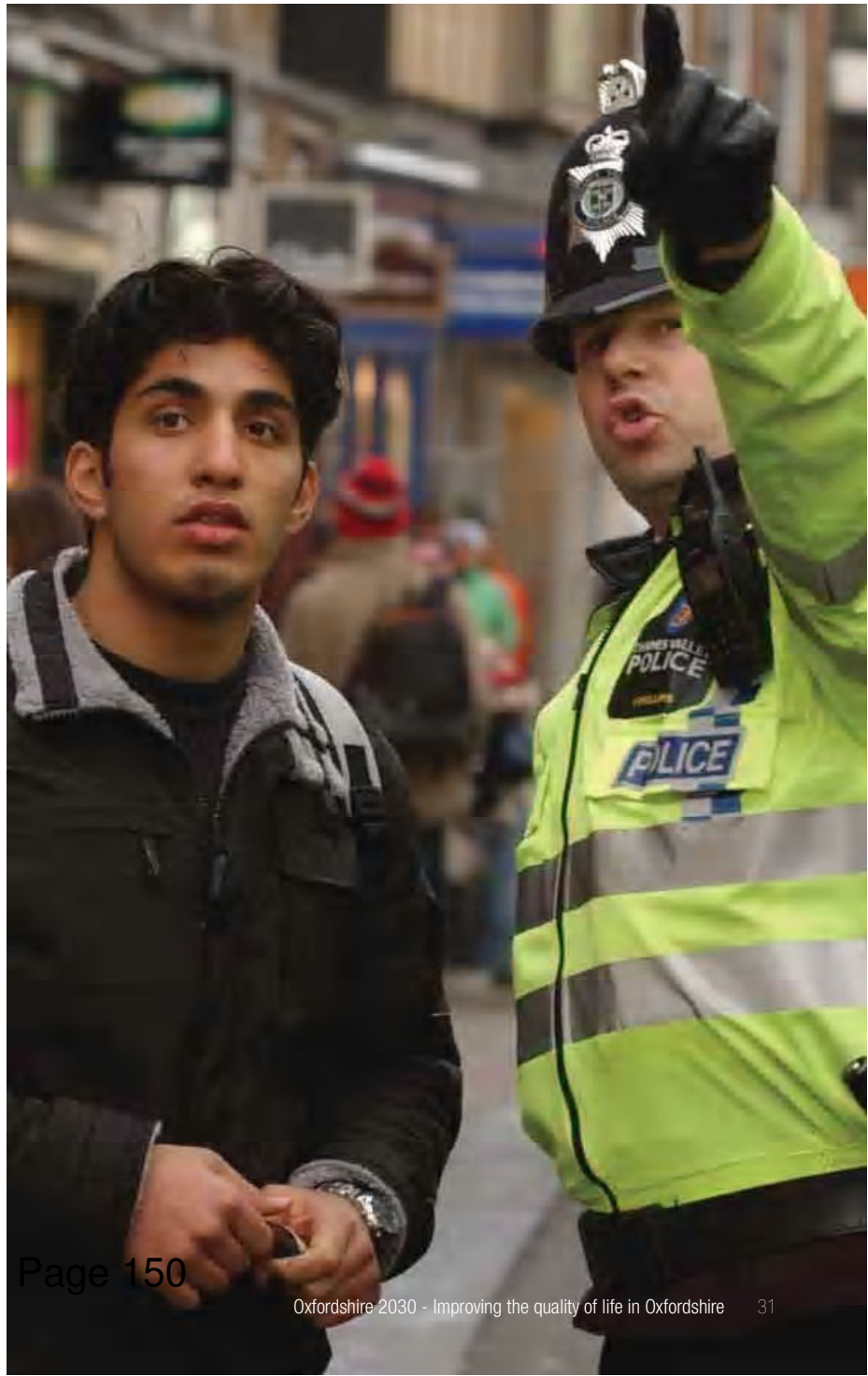
Police officer in central Oxford

Our priorities for action

Details of action planned for the medium and longer term are set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/oxfordshire2030

Key partnerships to develop the theme

- Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- Oxfordshire Sports Partnership
- Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership
- District Local Strategic Partnerships



Dreaming spires, rambling green spaces, buildings steeped in rich history: few could doubt that we enjoy an exceptional environment. We recognise our important role as custodians of the environment now and for future generations. Our challenge is to protect our areas of natural beauty while meeting the demands of a 21st century lifestyle and an expanding and ageing population. We recognise that the future of our environment is closely linked to the national and international response to the global challenge of climate change. We are committed to making our contribution.

Individuals, communities, the public sector and businesses will all need to play their part both in reducing carbon emissions and making our county as resilient as possible to the effects of climate change.

Our aspiration is to conserve and enhance our natural and built environment while balancing this against the needs of a thriving economy and the impact of climate change.

Key issues are:

- Reducing our carbon footprint and adapting to climate change.
- Ensuring that all developments reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to climate change.
- Preserving and enhance the character of our city, our market towns and villages.
- Enhancing the quality of the natural environment, landscapes and biodiversity.
- Addressing flooding risks.
- Reducing the landfill of waste.
- Dealing with the environmental impact of population growth and development while maintaining the character of our towns, villages and countryside.
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

Current position

Our climate is changing. Temperatures are likely to rise by 1.8-4.0° C by the end of the century, depending on the extent of remedial action to reduce carbon emissions. The increase in the next 20-30 years (between 0.5-1.0° C here in the UK) will probably happen regardless of remedial action because of the impacts of carbon already emitted.

A good quality local environment can help improve health, reduce crime and contribute to our economy. Our environment is precious and the impacts of climate change will be wide ranging and affect our lifestyles and economy. We recognise the need to ensure that ambitious growth plans and the need for new housing do not adversely affect the rural and built environments that give Oxfordshire its character and provide valuable recreational resources for the whole community. We want to keep Oxfordshire clean and green – improving street and environmental cleanliness is a priority.

Access to transport is crucial to our aim of balancing environmental and economic needs. Our park and ride schemes, priority bus routes and the real-time bus information service make public transport accessible and user friendly. We continue to have the highest public transport use of any county.

Tackling and adapting to climate change (managing and reducing the impact of climate change on our environment) and protecting our environment are two of the most important issues we face.



An Oxford Park and Ride bus

We already experience water shortages, more extreme weather conditions heat waves, intense winter storms and flooding. Climate change will increase the frequency, severity and cost of such events and could have devastating impacts, especially on those whose future is dependent upon their environment. It is therefore important that we work together to tackle climate change and plan for its impacts- both the positives and negatives. We can all play our part, for example, by reducing our waste, energy and water consumption and using greener transport options.

Managing the impact of climate change

A number of public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations have developed action plans for reducing their carbon footprint. An increasing number of businesses are doing this too, because they recognise that reducing carbon emissions is both good for the environment and can reduce their costs. Using resources effectively and reducing wastes are economically critical to businesses. Supporting our businesses to be efficient with resources is part of them becoming and remaining world class.

Save energy by switching things off



Some of the measures to reduce emissions require investment, such as improved building insulation or better heating and lighting controls, but a great deal too can be achieved through changes in behaviour, for example: switching off electrical appliances when they are not in use. The use of renewable sources of energy also needs to be explored.

Disposing of waste in landfill sites is not sustainable because of its effect on greenhouse gas emissions, the speed at which landfill sites are being filled, and the associated financial penalties which are imposed by government. Therefore reducing waste and then finding better ways of dealing with it is vital. Oxfordshire's domestic waste levels are already low and recycling rates are high compared with the rest of the country, but international comparisons are less favourable.

The Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (which includes the five Oxfordshire Districts and the County Council) has agreed a strategy for reducing waste and increasing reuse and recycling, but even if recycling rates matched the best in Europe there will still be a need for new waste treatment arrangements. The County Council is in the process of procuring treatment facilities for food, garden and residual waste. The latter waste will be burned in a new plant currently proposed to be built at an existing landfill site at either Ardley or Sutton Courtenay. The plant will provide electricity for the grid and potentially combined heat and power.



Cotswold landscape

Protecting the Environment

Oxfordshire has four National Nature Reserves, more than one hundred Sites of Special Scientific Interest, seven Special Areas of conservation, and many local nature reserves. There are three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the Chiltern Hills, the Cotswolds and the North Wessex Downs. Oxford city provides an important historic environment and at the heart of the county, Blenheim Palace & Parks is a world heritage site, and there are over 200 conservation areas and thousands of listed buildings across Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire currently has the most effective county biodiversity partnership in England. Within Oxfordshire we have access to wildlife through public rights of way and open green space, bringing well recognised benefits for health and wellbeing.

We pledge to

- ✓ Reduce carbon emissions and improve energy and water efficiency by public sector organisations, and encourage residents and businesses to do the same.
- ✓ Reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling by households and businesses.
- ✓ Minimise the effects and risk of flooding.
- ✓ Ensure new development is built to high environmental standards.
- ✓ Support individuals, communities and businesses, to respond to climate change and to improve efficiency in their use of energy and water.
- ✓ Keep Oxfordshire clean and green.
- ✓ Protect and enhance the biodiversity of the county.
- ✓ Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.

How will we measure success?

By 2030 we expect:

- Commercial and domestic waste reduction, re-use and recycling to be comparable with the best in Europe.
- Public sector and domestic energy and water use below the UK average.
- All new housing developments to include sustainable drainage.
- Oxfordshire's greenhouse gas emissions reduced to levels comparable with the best in the UK - a 50% reduction in CO², on 2008 levels by 2030.
- Oxfordshire's natural and built environment is preserved, protected and enhanced.

Our priorities for action

Details of action planned for the medium and longer term are set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/oxfordshire2030

Key partnerships to develop the theme

Oxfordshire Waste Partnership
Oxfordshire Environment Group
Climate Change Partnership
District Local Strategic Partnerships

OXFORDSHIRE is an affluent county but there are pockets of deprivation. It is important to tackle these problems for economic reasons, to ensure we sustain a stable and cohesive society and to give individuals every chance to succeed. Key areas for attention will include:

- Improving educational attainment and skills.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles.
- Working with local people to address local community concerns.
- Focusing attention on the localities in greatest need to make a real difference.

Crime in Oxfordshire is significantly below the national average

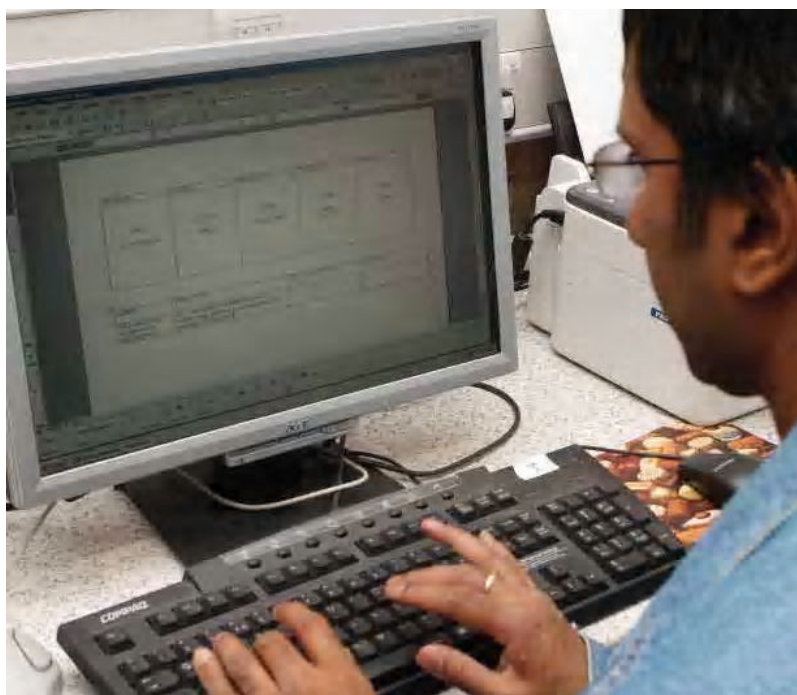


Current position

Oxfordshire is, in general, an affluent county with low levels of social exclusion compared with England as a whole. Unemployment, poverty, poor health, poor housing and crime are all significantly below the national average. But stubborn inequalities remain, within particular groups of people and specific geographical localities. We recognise that pockets of deprivation and groups of people experiencing inequality occur in rural as well as urban areas of the county and that rural deprivation is particularly difficult to address as it is scattered across a large number of often small settlements.

In such communities there may be evidence of worklessness (those who are of working age but not in work, full time education or training and those not actively seeking work), poor housing and crime. Individuals may be living in relative poverty often related to low income, poor qualifications and skills and associated low self esteem. Lifestyles may also be unhealthy.

Improving skills



The cycle of deprivation is a description of what happens when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked factors including employment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, crime, poor health and worse access to services. The combination of several or all of these elements leads to disadvantage that can continue from one generation to the next. We recognise that extra effort is required to break this cycle so that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed and to achieve their full potential in life.

We also recognise that there is a high “turnover” of residents in some communities with people moving onwards to pursue jobs, secure the housing and access to services they need and this can undermine a sense of local community. This trend needs to be reversed if the aspiration for all our communities to be thriving communities is to be delivered.

Our approach will be focused on the following:

- Raising educational achievement and skill levels – We want to raise educational achievement for all but there is a particular need to address the achievement of some Black and Minority Ethnic communities, children in public care and people in communities where people have few qualifications and in particular to equip local people with the skills needed by local businesses.
- Family support – to break the cycle of deprivation, work with families to promote the importance of education and skills, addressing parenting skills, and reduce teenage pregnancy and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Regenerating local communities – there are several areas of the city and of some of our market towns where statutory agencies need to work together and with local people to improve the area. This will include work to
 - Improve the supply and quality of housing for those who require it and support the vulnerable including those experiencing homelessness
 - Reduce the impact of crime in identified “hotspots” and divert young people from antisocial behaviour.

We pledge to

- ✓ Reduce the gap between the best and worst off.
- ✓ Increase educational attainment and skill levels.
- ✓ Tackle crime and anti social behaviour “hot spots”.
- ✓ Regenerate deprived local communities.

How will we measure success?

- No communities to be amongst the worst 10% in the country for aspects of deprivation.
- Educational attainment and skill levels to have risen well above the national average.
- Health inequality measured in differences in death and disease rates between the best and worst off will be reduced.
- Worklessness (those who are of working age but not in work, full time education or training and those not actively seeking work) to be in the lowest 20% in the country.
- Crime and fear of crime to be below the national average.

Our priorities for action

Details of action planned for the medium and longer term are set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/oxfordshire2030

Key partnerships to develop the theme:

- Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership
- Children and Young People Partnership
- Health and Well-Being Partnership
- Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership
- Economy Partnership
- Environment Partnership
- District Local Strategic Partnerships

Educational achievement for all



Local distinctiveness

OXFORDSHIRE is a diverse county and, although we have identified a number of countywide priorities, there are geographical variations in terms of how important those priorities are for different parts of the county.

The five district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in Oxfordshire have all produced community strategies relevant to their local areas, which reflect their own ambitions, aims and objectives. These local ambitions have fed into and helped to identify the countywide priorities set out in this document.

This section sets out how the key issues within each district and a summary of their priorities for action. Local Strategic Partnerships will have an important role to play in implementing both the countywide and local priorities identified within this strategy.

Oxfordshire Partnership: www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk



Cherwell Community Planning Partnership: www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk



Oxford Partnership: www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk



South Oxfordshire Partnership: www.southoxon.gov.uk

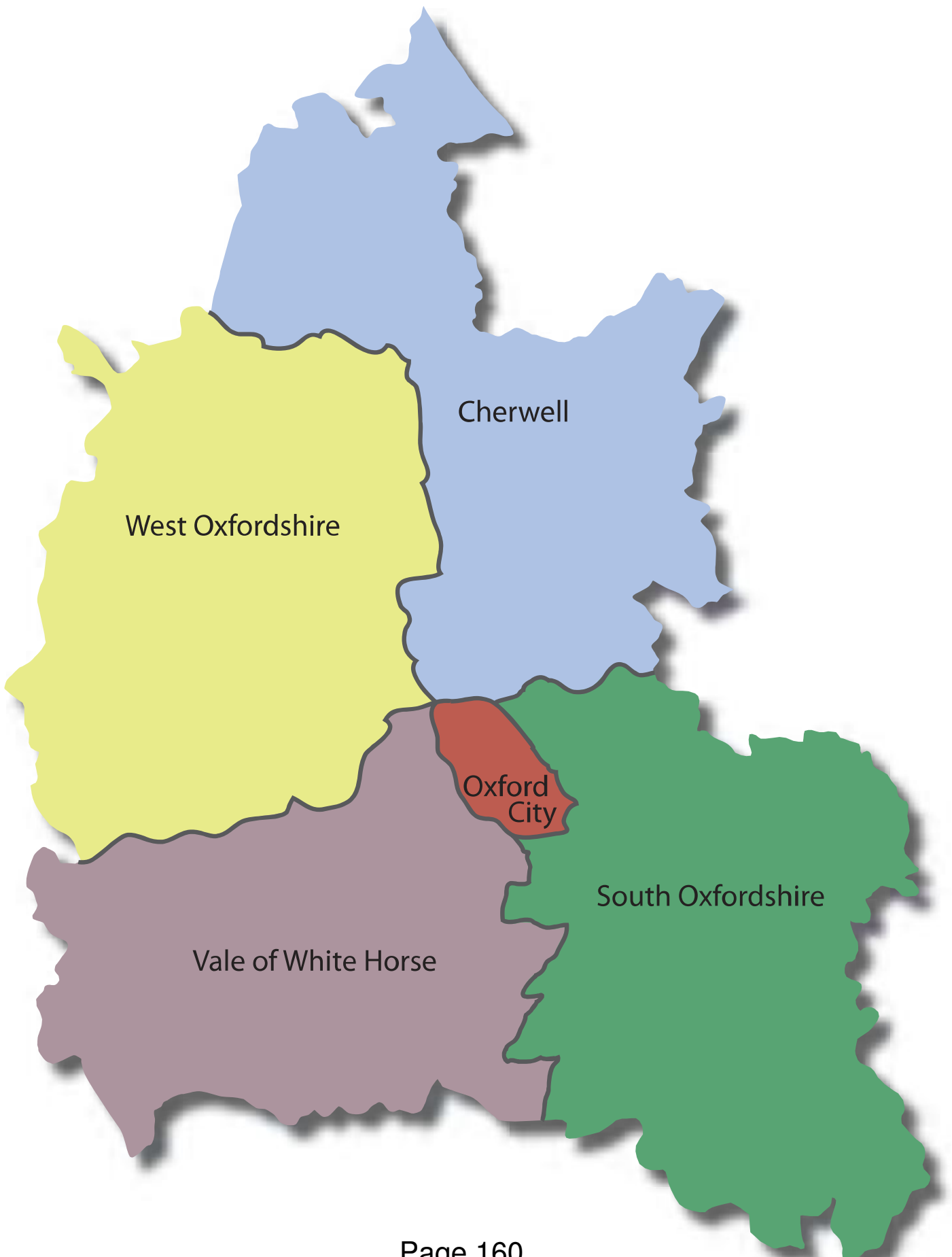


Vale Partnership: www.thevalepartnership.org.uk



West Oxfordshire Partnership: www.westoxon.gov.uk





Banbury Cross



Cherwell covers an area of 590km² in north Oxfordshire. Named after the River Cherwell which flows through it, the District offers a unique and successful combination: its fine rural landscape provides some of the most attractive and picturesque scenery in Oxfordshire, whilst thriving commercial and industrial centres bring prosperity and economic strength in a highly accessible and desirable location.

Cherwell is a relatively affluent area but there are significant differences in wealth distribution. Banbury in particular has pockets of severe deprivation, second only to Oxford in the County. Other forms of deprivation derive

from rural isolation. 137,600 people live in Cherwell. Over 62% of the population live in the principal centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington; the rest in more than 70 smaller settlements between 50 and 3,500 people. 85% of the District is attractive farmland and 14% lies within the Oxford Green Belt, contributing to making Cherwell the 12th least densely populated district in the South East. So Cherwell's population faces both urban and rural challenges. Banbury, Cherwell's urban centre, is an industrial town whose services, which include the Horton Hospital, support a large rural hinterland which stretches beyond Oxfordshire.

Cherwell's population increased by almost 12% between 1991 and 2001 and by a further 4.5% since. Growth predictions of a further 8% by 2016 and a cumulative 15.6% by 2026 are significantly higher than regional and national rates. Most of the recent growth has been in Banbury and Bicester and this will continue. Bicester's population is projected to grow by 13.8% between 2001 and 2016. The rapid growth across the District will put pressure on the local infrastructure.

Cherwell's population profile is changing. The 2001 Census showed that 3.9% of the District's population was of non-white ethnic origin. These low numbers were generally highly dispersed, apart from higher concentrations in some Banbury Wards. 2006 estimates indicate that the non-white population has grown to 5.9% overall. In 2001 7.5% of the population considered themselves to belong to a group other than white British. By 2006 this had grown to 10.7%. Experience suggests that this growth comes and continues to come from migrant workers from Polish and other Eastern European communities.

Cherwell now has the highest proportion of 0-15 year olds in Oxfordshire. By 2031 the population is forecast to age dramatically, with numbers in each of the over 65s, over 75s and over 85s bands increasing by at least 23 percentage points more than national rates, and by more than 47 percentage points in the case of the over 85s.

Priorities for Cherwell include:

World class economy

- Raise the standards in schools and colleges with vocational as well as educational qualifications, to meet the needs of Cherwell's businesses.
- Improve educational achievement, particularly in secondary schools where outcomes are sometimes below county and national averages. This problem is highlighted in Bicester where there is a marked migration of pupils either to outside of the county or to private schools.
- Work to attract further mid and high-tech as well as knowledge-based industries to Cherwell with a view to providing more local, attractive employment opportunities. The employment mix in Cherwell means that earnings from Cherwell workplaces are 3.9% below the national average, but residents' earnings are, however, above national averages.
- Make it easier for you to get where you need to go. Cherwell residents travel further to work than people in the rest of the South East and nationally. It should be noted that many people in the north of the District tend to look towards Banbury rather than Oxford.
- Increasing the number of affordable homes remains one of Cherwell's top priorities. The 2007 median house price to income ratio is 8.9, up from 7.7 in 2005, above both South East and English averages.

Shoppers at Bicester Village



Healthy and thriving communities

- Help you feel safe in your home and community, working to reduce further the very low levels of crime in Cherwell. Overall crime levels dropped by 13.2% between 2003/04 and 2007/08 (a real reduction of 794 reported crimes), compared with a 10.9% reduction across the Thames Valley. However, in 2006 residents felt less safe than those in any other Oxfordshire district in terms of being alone and walking alone during the day or at night.
- Registration with GPs is low in parts of North Oxfordshire.
- Co-ordinate, improve and provide more diverse and accessible health provision and advice through improved education, partnership working, better local access and increased choice.
- Make it easier for you to lead a healthy and active life.
- Reduce teenage conception rates as Cherwell has a high and rising rate with four out of six Banbury wards in the highest 20% in England in 2005.
- Improve local services and opportunities in rural areas. 11 rural wards in Cherwell have areas that feature in the 10% most deprived nationally for barriers to housing and services.
- Develop the unique characters of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and engender a sense of pride, belonging to the community and heritage.
- Improving the quality of life for all, particularly older people, the young, disabled people and ethnic minorities recognising and supporting the important role of the family, carers, voluntary sector and faith communities.

Environment and climate change

- Protect and enhance our environment, wildlife habitats and the countryside.
- Protect and enhance our built environment. It should be noted that Cherwell has a rich built heritage, with approximately 3,000 listed buildings (8.6% of the South East's total) and 54 conservation areas.
- Reduce carbon emissions. Per capita carbon dioxide emissions in Cherwell in 2004 were significantly higher than regional and national levels, although domestic emissions were the lowest in Oxfordshire.
- Improve further our already high recycling rates (48% of domestic waste was recycled in 2007/08) so that we can reduce the amount of landfill waste.
- Prepare for and respond to the effects of climate change.
- Conserve resources and reduce energy consumption.

Local Development Framework

The local development framework (LDF) will support and facilitate the delivery of the aims within the sustainable community strategy. Find out more at www.cherwell.gov.uk



Radcliffe Camera, Oxford

Oxford is centrally located within England, and is at the heart of the county of Oxfordshire.

Oxford is one of the most photographed, filmed, and written about cities in the world. The enduring images are of historic Oxford and these images are vital to our flourishing tourist industry because it is historic Oxford that tourists visit in millions. It is, however, only one part of our city's story. Oxford at the beginning of the 21st century, while still with its historic core and green spaces, is a far cry from its media stereotype.

The population of Oxford in mid-2007 is estimated to be 151,000¹. In marked contrast to other parts of the county, Oxford is ethnically and culturally diverse, with the third highest minority ethnic population in the South East. The city is not only culturally diverse but also youthful. 32% of Oxford's population consists of 16-29 year olds. This is twice the national average². Over 30,000 students studied full-time at the two universities³ in 2005/06; this is the highest proportion of students in England and Wales⁴.

1. Source: Mid Year Estimates 2007, Office for National Statistics

2. Source: 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics

3. Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency

4. Source: 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics

Oxford is an affluent city. However, median earnings of residents (£488 per week) are lower than the regional average⁵ and the city contains pockets of severe deprivation. Of 85 areas in Oxford, 18 are among the 30% most deprived areas in England⁶. These areas suffer multiple levels of deprivation - low skills, low incomes and high levels of crime.

The city is home to around 3,400 businesses providing 108,000 jobs. There has been little change in the total number of jobs in Oxford over the last 30 years. As manufacturing has

declined, these jobs have been replaced by jobs in health, education and the service sectors. 89% of employees now work in services, including 42% in public administration, education and health⁷. Other key features of the local economy include the bioscience sector, IT, software and creative media businesses and university 'spin-off' companies. The impact of the education economy, universities and major teaching hospital are positive drivers for the economy but add to the transitional population and puts pressure on the housing market. Oxford has a high level of in-commuting, with around half its workforce living outside its boundary⁸.



Blackwell Publishing offices in Oxford

5. Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earning 2007, Office for National Statistics

6. Source: Indices of Deprivation 2007, Department for Communities and Local Government

7. Source: Various, available from Nomis (www.nomisweb.co.uk)

8. Source: 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics

The city is a densely packed urban space - covering 46 sq km (29 sq miles) - with very high levels of housing density. There are severe pressures on housing stock, with large concentrations of homes in multiple occupation and significant numbers of homeless and other vulnerable groups. House prices in Oxford are almost ten times greater than annual incomes⁹. This ratio is considerably higher than the South East average. Consequently the average joint attainable mortgage is far lower than the average price of houses.

As house buying in the city is out of reach of most households, there is a huge demand for more affordable rented housing in Oxford. The draft South East Plan states that 7000 new houses should be developed in Oxford City during the 20 year period 2006 – 2026 (350 per year) and includes a review of the green belt which may result in opportunities to meet some of the housing pressures in the city.

Contemporary Oxford is a global brand. It is an economic hub at the centre of the South East Plan's central Oxfordshire sub-region and the Regional Economic Strategy's "diamond for investment and growth". As such it is part of a sub-region with the greatest concentration of research and development in western Europe, with a world-class knowledge economy that underpins continued prosperity not just in Oxfordshire but in the south-east of England and beyond.

Oxford is a top international tourist destination and attracted approximately 8.8 million visitors in 2005¹⁰. The city attracted the designation "European Centre of Culture" in 2002, associated with the UK hosting of "European Capital of Culture" in 2008. The city centre is a regional shopping destination, which performs extremely well and has a low vacancy rate. Oxford is ranked sixth as a retail centre of regional importance in the South East. The renaissance of the West End is an exciting joint project between SEEDA, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. The vision is for the creation of a vibrant quarter of the city centre for all with a mix of uses and facilities to further develop opportunities for tourism, culture and retail.

Over 3000 voluntary and Community Groups exist in Oxfordshire with a large proportion providing services to the residents of Oxford City¹¹.

9. Source: Ratio of median house price to median earnings 2007, Department for Communities and Local Government

10. Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism Oxford 2005, Tourism South East

11. Oxford City Council provided £1.6m in grants to community and voluntary sector organisations in 2006/7

Priorities of the Oxford Strategic Partnership

The Oxford Strategic Partnership's vision is to make Oxford a world class city for everyone.

The Partnership recognises that strengthening the local economy is a cross cutting issue that impacts on the Partnership's five key priorities and objectives:

- To tackle the urgent need for more affordable housing.
- To improve the health and social welfare of the people of Oxford by providing opportunities and improving services for the vulnerable and those experiencing disadvantage and deprivation.
- To work towards Oxford City becoming a carbon neutral city and a centre of excellence for climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.
- To work in partnership to improve the public realm in all areas of the city
- To make Oxford a more cohesive and safer place.

These priorities link strongly to the three key themes of Oxfordshire 2030

- World class economy
- Healthy and thriving communities
- Environment and climate change

Priorities in the Local Development Framework

The Oxford Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Development Framework and Core Strategy are being prepared in close collaboration, with City Council planners reporting regularly to the Strategic Partnership. As a result, the aspirations set out in the emerging Core Strategy vision are very similar to those in the SCS vision. The Core Strategy argues that Oxford should:

- build on its unique heritage and international reputation. It emphasises the importance of new developments contributing to the distinctive character of particular areas of Oxford.
- be at the forefront of measures to tackle climate change.
- enhance its role as a sub-regional capital and service centre, e.g. by promoting sustainable tourism and the renaissance of the West End.
- build on its strengths as a centre of excellence in areas such as higher education, health services, car manufacturing, and medical and scientific research.

More specifically, the Core Strategy also proposes:

- Achieving a high level of affordable housing from residential development and by requiring an appropriate contribution from commercial development.
- Adopting strong planning policies on flood protection and minimising the use of energy and natural resources in new developments to mitigate the impact of climate change.
- Addressing the theme of health and social inclusion by:
 - promoting the provision of high quality convenient local health services
 - prioritising new green spaces in areas with a significant current shortage
 - promoting regeneration in the most deprived areas of the city.

Find out more at www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk

River Isis in Oxford



South Oxfordshire

South Oxfordshire is a mainly rural area of 253 square miles, adjoining Oxford in the north, and Reading in the South, with Wycombe and Maidenhead a few miles to the east. It has beautiful countryside, which includes rolling downland, wooded hills, historic parkland, low-lying farmland and riverside meadows rich in biodiversity. The River Thames, runs through South Oxfordshire from the north-west of the district to Goring.

Around 35 per cent of South Oxfordshire's 128,000 residents live in the four towns of Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford with the majority (65%) living in the more than eighty villages and settlements of varying sizes throughout the district. Didcot, recently designated a New Growth Point, has benefited from investment in a new shopping centre, cinema and the Cornerstone Arts Centre and the three historic market towns each have their own distinctive character and heritage.

Agriculture is the main land use in South Oxfordshire but the district also contains many science and high value businesses, particularly in and around Didcot, and the four towns all provide a range of businesses and employment opportunities.

Wallingford



Economic issues

- unemployment rates are low, currently running at less than 1%.
- the future viability of the market towns is a key concern and the survival of independent business and specialist retail outlets and improvements to visitor facilities and marketing are seen as central to the towns' prosperity.
- farm based employment has declined by almost one-fifth since 1990.
- small businesses thrive in South Oxfordshire; businesses registering for VAT in 2002 had the highest survival rate (77%) in the county.
- overall the level of qualifications of residents is high, but 20 per cent of the workforce has no formal qualification and 28% of businesses in the district report a skills gap.



Brakspear brewery, Henley-on-Thames

Social issues

- A higher proportion of people are over the age of retirement in South Oxfordshire (20.3%) compared with the national average, and the projected increase in the population aged 75 and over between 2006 and 2026 is 66%.
- South Oxfordshire is one of the least deprived parts of the country but pockets of deprivation exist.
- People in South Oxfordshire are relatively healthy but there are 170 deaths from smoking each year, 14% of people are binge drinkers, obesity rates are rising and only 23% of adults participate in the recommended weekly level of activity.
- In May 2007 the average house price was £400,200 compared with a national average of £211,000 and the overall annual shortfall in affordable housing in South Oxfordshire is 835 units.
- South Oxfordshire experiences low levels of reported crime and feelings of safety are improving but alcohol related antisocial behaviour is a key concern amongst residents and alcohol related accident and emergency admissions are rising.
- Young people have a poor image amongst many adults but many communities also recognise that facilities and access to transport for young people need to be improved.
- Many people rely on community and voluntary action to help them to access public and other services.

Environmental issues

- South Oxfordshire has the highest car ownership to household ratio in the country.
- poor air quality issues in South Oxfordshire are directly linked to congestion and transport emissions.
- domestic energy consumption and CO₂ emissions in South Oxfordshire are higher than the Oxfordshire, South East and UK averages.
- the amount of domestic waste recycled or composted has increased year on year but the total amount of domestic waste collected per head has also increased.



World class economy

- create and support vibrant and thriving economies in market towns and villages.
- achieve sustainable balance of business growth, new and more locally-based jobs and environmental protection.
- increase inward investment.
- develop a skilled and motivated workforce matched to local business needs and opportunities.

Healthy and thriving communities

- reduce crime and fear of crime in the district.
- meet people's housing needs in South Oxfordshire.
- balance housing development with protecting and enhancing the environment.
- improve the support service for voluntary, community and faith groups.
- support local people to develop inclusive plans for their area.
- promote and support opportunities for people of all ages to get involved in community life and support inclusive and cohesive communities.
- promote access to services.
- improve people's health and well-being by providing quality health care and proactively working in partnership to prevent ill-health.

Didcot Parkway railway station

Environment and climate change

- protect and enhance the quality of our built and natural environment.
- protect and improve the quality of our public open spaces.
- reduce waste.
- conserve resources and reduce energy consumption.
- prepare for and respond to the effects of climate change.
- maintaining and improving the quality of the natural environment and landscape.

Local Development Framework

The local development framework (LDF) will support and facilitate the delivery of the aims within the sustainable community strategy (SCS). The SCS document provides examples of how the core strategy and other LDF policies will support delivery of a key aims within each of the theme areas. Further information about the development of the LDF is available at www.southoxon.gov.uk/yourplaceyourfuture

Pishill near Henley-on-Thames



Vale of White Horse

The Vale of White Horse (the 'Vale') covers an area of 580 square kilometres and extends from the edge of Oxford in the north east almost to the edge of Swindon in the south west. The north east of the District contains parts of the Oxford Green Belt and in the south the Downs form part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The River Thames forms the northern and part of the eastern boundary of the District.

The Vale is far more than its rural character might suggest: the two power stations at Didcot and the reservoir at Farmoor make major contributions to the power and water supply of the wider region. The UK Defence Academy at Watchfield, the Saïd Business School's Executive Education Centre at Egrove Park, and Oxford Brookes University's Westminster Campus all provide higher education facilities. There are extensive employment areas including Milton Park and the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus – one of the largest research centres in Europe. Together these two sites employ about 11,000 people.

Just over half of the Vale's 117,300 residents live in the five main settlements of Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage. The rest of the population lives in over 70 villages and hamlets.

Abingdon Town Hall



In autumn 2007 the Vale Partnership prepared an 'Issues and Options' report. The report outlined the issues that the Vale will face in the future and started to consider ways in which they might be addressed. The Partnership then consulted with residents and businesses to learn more about what the issues facing the Vale in the future might be, and how local people and businesses would suggest dealing with them. Hundreds of residents wrote in and attended meetings and this feedback helped with the preparation of the Vale's Strategy for Sustainable Communities (the "Sustainable Community Strategy").

Social issues

- The Vale has an ageing population. Between 2006 and 2026 the population in the District aged over 75 is estimated to increase by 65%.
- Many residents have reasonable incomes but in 2007 6,000 residents (5% of the Vale's population) were dependent on means tested benefits and around 1,900 children live in low income households.
- It is estimated that 20% of adults in the Vale are obese.
- In terms of reported crime, the Vale is one of the safest districts in South East England, but the fear of crime is a real concern locally.
- Many young people say they do not have things to do in their leisure time.
- In 2006 around 44% of pupils in the Vale's state schools did not achieve five or more A* to C GCSE passes.
- There is a good sense of community in the Vale but many residents acknowledge that they do not have the time to be involved in their local community.
- The average house price in the Vale is nearly nine times higher than the average income.
- The Vale is a rural district and access to services and jobs in many areas is difficult, with many people having to use a car rather than public transport.



Wantage town centre

Economic issues

- Traffic congestion, particularly on the A34, will continue to affect the competitiveness of local businesses.
- The Vale has six times the national average of research and development jobs but China, India and other emerging economies are investing heavily in the skills needed to compete with our economy.
- Our town centres are not all enjoying the full benefits of the Vale's economic success.
- Farming continues to change, with higher grain prices making livestock farming difficult and an increased interest in growing biomass or crops for bio-fuel; both of which have the potential to change the look of the countryside.

Environment issues

- On 20 July 2007 a record amount of rain caused extensive flooding in the Vale, a sign that flooding and other extreme weather conditions may become more frequent in the future.
- In 2006 every person in the Vale produced an average of a third of a tonne of rubbish.
- There is a substantial body of evidence that the Earth's climate is changing as a result of an increase in greenhouse gases which are trapping more heat at the planet's surface.
- The growing population in the Vale and the South East will place increasing pressure on water supplies; Thames Water is consulting on proposals to build a large reservoir near Abingdon.
- The draft South East Plan proposes that 11,550 new homes should be built in the Vale between 2006 and 2026.

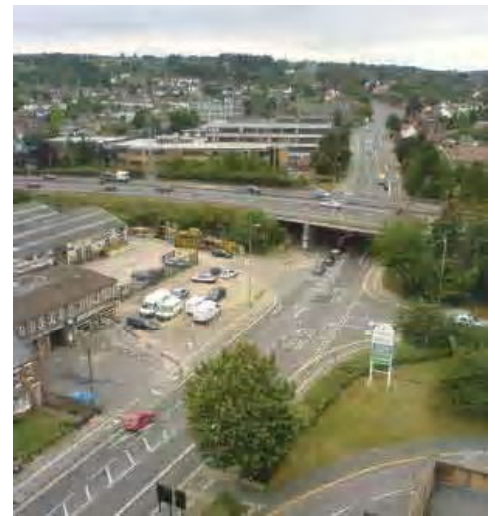


Williams F1 headquarters, Grove

Priorities for action

Healthy and thriving communities

- Healthier communities.
- Improving quality of life for older people.
- Safer communities.
- Fostering a greater sense of community.
- A good understanding of town and parish priorities.
- Involving young people.
- Helping those without cars to access jobs and services.
- Affordable homes.
- Good quality homes.
- Access to good quality green spaces, sport, cultural and leisure facilities.



Botley

World class economy

- Addressing economic weaknesses.
- Building on our economic strengths.
- Maintaining and enhancing the health and vitality of the Vale's market town centres.

Environment and climate change

- A low carbon Vale.
- Living with extreme weather conditions.
- Using resources wisely.
- Reducing waste and increasing recycling.
- A high quality natural and historic environment.



Faringdon

Local Development Framework

The common aim of the Vale's Strategy for Sustainable Communities and the Local Development Framework is to create good places to live and work. Some actions will be tackled specifically through policies and proposals in the Local Development Framework; whilst others will be addressed through the Strategy for Sustainable Communities.

Find out more at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/community_support_and_advice/
community_strategy/default.asp](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/community_support_and_advice/community_strategy/default.asp)

West Oxfordshire

West Oxfordshire lies to the west of the city of Oxford on the western edge of the South East Region, and adjoins the County boundaries with Gloucestershire and Warwickshire. The upper reaches of the River Thames form the southern boundary and the Cotswold Hills cover the north-western part of the District.

West Oxfordshire is one of the most attractive parts of Britain, a charming blend of bustling market towns, picturesque villages and breathtaking natural scenery. A third of the District is in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and 2% lies within the Green Belt surrounding Oxford City. The District has a population of about 100,000 people and an overall density of around 1.4 persons per hectare, making it one of the most rural authorities within the South East Region. Residents and visitors enjoy a high quality environment, with a strong sense of place derived from the character of its buildings set in attractive rolling countryside and wooded river valleys. This places great importance on protecting and enhancing the environment, and managing the impacts of climate change.

West Oxfordshire has a rich architectural and historic heritage ranging from Cotswold stone cottages and dry stone walls to the splendour of Blenheim Palace, a World Heritage site.

Blenheim Palace, Woodstock



There are two distinct landscape types, the Cotswold Hills and the Upper Thames Clay Vale. Several rivers such as the Windrush, Evenlode, Thames and Cherwell contribute to the District's rich biodiversity and offer opportunities for leisure and recreation, including through use of restored gravel pits. There are more than 500 miles of public footpaths, bridleways and way-marked routes across the District.

There are around 130 separate settlements, but few larger towns. 40% of the population lives in the two largest centres (Witney and Carterton), and forecasts suggest that by 2016 nearly half of the population will live in just 3% of the District's area. West Oxfordshire has a higher proportion of residents of retirement age than any of the other Oxfordshire districts or the South East overall, and this proportion is forecast to increase significantly over the next ten years. Carterton is home to RAF Brize Norton, the proposed expansion of which means the high proportion of people in the District working in or linked to the service community is likely to increase.



Charlbury

The area faces no major social problems, and crime figures are amongst the lowest in the country. The local economy performs well, with above average levels of entrepreneurial activity, low unemployment and a tight labour market. The area is an attractive place to live for skilled staff, with a diverse economy including clusters of high technology industry and a strong tourism sector worth over £200 million annually to the District's economy. However, high house prices in the District can make it difficult for young people and families to stay in the area, and combined with an ageing population this creates challenges for communities in maintaining the vibrancy and prosperity of the towns and villages.

Main roads such as the A40, A44, A361 and A4095 provide access to larger centres outside of the District but within easy reach, including Oxford, Swindon, Cheltenham and Banbury. The Cotswold and Cherwell Valley railway lines pass through the area, and there is a network of bus services and community transport schemes. Despite this, about a quarter of the

population lives in areas ranked within the worst 10% in England in terms of accessibility to a range of services. As a result many rural residents have no alternative but to rely on cars (where available), meaning the District faces specific challenges in ensuring all residents can access the services and facilities they need now and in the future.



Brize Norton air base

World class economy

- Sustain economically prosperous and vibrant towns and villages.
- Create an environment that encourages a diverse range of business types and employment across the district.
- Developing skills that support local business success.
- Developing appropriate business development and support in the local area.
- Give young people the best chance of gaining employment and becoming economically independent.

Healthy and thriving communities

- Facilitate vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities, and address the specific challenges of living in rural West Oxfordshire in terms of access to services and facilities.
- Ensure that all policy and service delivery is subject to testing to make sure it considers the impact on rural issues and areas (rural proofing).
- Joint working to improve access to services, including a co-ordinated approach to minimising the barriers experienced by older people.
- Promote and help facilitate investment in new infrastructure and better public transport.
- Create a joined-up approach to improving health and well-being, and promote and support healthy lifestyle choices.
- Address the inequalities in health in West Oxfordshire, and health issues and support needs specific to an ageing population such as mental health and wellbeing and social inclusion.
- Improve the promotion of the welfare of children and young people in the district, and support communities to offer a wide range of positive activities for young people.
- To promote the provision of new affordable homes, including better access to affordable housing and improvement in the affordability of existing accommodation.
- Further reduce crime and nuisance and fear of crime across the district to improve the quality of life in our neighbourhoods, and address neighbourhood concerns.

Environment and climate change

- Maintain and enhance the natural environment across West Oxfordshire.
- Maintain and improve the built environment across West Oxfordshire.
- Take a more sustainable approach to resource management across the district.
- Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Local Development Framework

Shaping Futures, the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for West Oxfordshire, and the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework (LDF) are being prepared in close collaboration, with joint consultation undertaken in the initial stages. As a result, the emerging Core Strategy is expected to support and facilitate the delivery of the aims within the SCS. Further information about the development of the LDF is available at www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning/LDF.cfm

Find out more at www.westoxon.gov.uk

Bliss Mill, Chipping Norton

How can I get involved?

OXFORDSHIRE Partnership wants as many local people and organisations as possible to know about what we do, how we are performing and how people can get involved in our work. There are lots of ways you can get involved. You can receive newsletters, help promote our activities, attend meetings and events, take part in consultations, and discuss issues with your local councillors.

Subscribe to our newsletter

Newsletters are available by email and include updates about the work of the partnership. To subscribe email **oxfordshirepartnership@oxfordshire.gov.uk**

Attend meetings

Anyone is welcome to attend Oxfordshire Partnership meetings where strategic countywide issues are discussed. Information about meeting dates is available at **www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk**

If you would like to attend a meeting of your district local strategic partnership please contact them directly.

- Oxfordshire Partnership - 01865 816029
oxfordshirepartnership@oxfordshire.gov.uk
- Cherwell Community Planning Partnership - 01295 221751
community.planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
- Oxford Partnership: Oxford City Council - 01865 249811
info@oxfordpartnership.org.uk
- South Oxfordshire Partnership: South Oxfordshire District Council - 01491 824033
partnerships@southoxon.gov.uk
- Vale Strategic Partnership: Vale of White Horse District Council - 01235 520202
comments@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
- West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership: West Oxfordshire District Council - 01993 861000

Talk to your councillor

You and your community are represented by county and district councillors who will be happy to talk to you about any issues you would like to raise. For example you might want to talk to them about improvements you would like to see in your area. You can check who your councillors are at **www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillors**. You can also talk to your

parish council, town council or area committee representatives to highlight local concerns. Read more about town and parish council at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk Oxford City residents can find out more about area committees at www.oxford.gov.uk

Find out more about your Local Strategic Partnership

The six Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in Oxfordshire have all produced community strategies relevant to their local areas, which reflect their own ambitions, aims and objectives. The local ambitions of the five District LSPs have fed into and helped to identify the countywide priorities set out in this document. You can find out more about each of them on the following websites:

Oxfordshire Partnership: www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk



Cherwell Community Planning Partnership: www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk



Oxford Partnership: www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk



South Oxfordshire Partnership: www.southoxon.gov.uk



Vale Partnership: www.thevalepartnership.org.uk



West Oxfordshire Partnership: www.westoxon.gov.uk



Feedback

We welcome your comments about the work of Oxfordshire Partnership. Please contact the Partnership team with your comments: oxfordshirepartnership@oxfordshire.gov.uk or telephone 01865 323966.

Membership of the Oxfordshire Partnership

Organisation / sector	Members	
County council	Cllr Keith Mitchell	Leader of the Council – Chairman
Health	Fred Hucker	Chairman, Primary Care Trust
Thames Valley Police	Francis Habgood	Thames Valley Police Assistant Chief Constable (Local Policing)
District councils	Cllr Bob Price Cllr Ann Ducker Cllr Barry Norton Cllr Barry Wood Cllr Tony de Vere	Leader Oxford City Council Leader South Oxfordshire District Council Leader West Oxfordshire District Council Leader Cherwell District Council Leader Vale of White Horse District Council
District LSPs	Jackie Wilderspin Rev John Robertson Mary Harpley Bishop Colin Fletcher David Neudegg	Chairman Oxford Strategic Partnership Chairman Vale Partnership Chairman Cherwell Community Planning Partnership Chairman South Oxfordshire Partnership Interim Chairman West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership
Parish/town councils	<i>City:</i> Cllr David Rundle Cllr M J Leeding (Forest Hill with Shotover) <i>South Oxfordshire:</i> Cllr Kester George (South Harpsden) <i>Vale of White Horse:</i> Cllr Ian Charlton (Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor)	Up to five representatives. Further consultation is required with third tier authorities / Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils to clarify representation.

Organisation / sector	Members	
Parish/town councils (continued)	<p><i>West Oxfordshire:</i> Mrs Catherine Hitchens (Fifield)</p> <p><i>Cherwell:</i> Cllr David Wood (Caversfield)</p>	Up to five representatives. Further consultation is required with third tier authorities / Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils to clarify representation.
Learning, skills, education	<p>Bob Walding</p> <p>Julie Maxton</p> <p>Prof John Raftery</p> <p>TBC</p>	<p>Executive Director Learning and Skills Council Thames Valley</p> <p>Registrar Oxford University</p> <p>Pro Vice-Chancellor (External) Oxford Brookes University</p> <p>Chair of the Learning Partnership</p>
Private Sector	<p>Frank Nigriello</p> <p>Derek Holmes</p> <p>Nick Merry</p> <p>Elizabeth Sale</p> <p>Miranda Markham</p>	<p>Chairman of Oxfordshire Economic Partnership</p> <p>Editor Oxford Times</p> <p>Chairman Oxford United Football Club</p> <p>President Oxfordshire Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Community Relations Manager, Value Retail</p>
Government Office for the South East	Chris Farthing	GOSE Locality Manager for Oxfordshire (Thames Valley)
SEEDA	Warren Ralls	Area Director
Voluntary, Community and faith sectors	<p>Alison Baxter</p> <p>Bede Gerrard</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>Martin Briggs</p>	<p>Director Oxfordshire Community Voluntary Action</p> <p>County Ecumenical Officer Churches together in Oxfordshire</p> <p>Voluntary and Community Sector elected representative</p> <p>Voluntary and Community Sector elected representative (Oxfordshire Consortium of Citizens Advice Bureau)</p>
BME sector	Patrick Tolani	Director, Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council

Organisation / sector	Members	
Culture, tourism and leisure	Sarah Maxfield	Chief Executive, Oxford Inspires <i>Further consultation is required with the sector to clarify representation</i>
Environment	Robin Buxton	Chair, Oxfordshire Environment Group <i>Further consultation is required with the network of forums and partnerships in this area to clarify representation</i>
Rural communities	Linda Watson	Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
Total		37 members
Others who attend as required / by invitation		
County council, health, other	County council - Chief Executive District council Chief Executives Chief Executive PCT Director of Public Health Chairs of the thematic partnerships - for example: Children and Young People's Partnership. <i>Purpose is to link these partnerships with this Board and report on LAA and other strategic targets and emerging issues</i>	
Support team	Partnership Working Unit, Corporate Core, Oxfordshire County Council	

Glossary

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - The long term vision and action plan articulating the aspirations, needs and priorities of the local community, prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership. The strategy is evidence based. For Oxfordshire this is Oxfordshire 2030.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - is a multi-agency partnership representing all sectors of the community which oversees development of the vision for the local area through the Sustainable Community Strategy. There are six LSPs in Oxfordshire that relate to each local authority's area.

Oxfordshire Partnership (OP) - the countywide Local Strategic Partnership. It brings together organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors within the county, with the objective of working together to improve the quality of life for Oxfordshire.

Local Area Agreement (LAA) - is a three year agreement between the local area (in this case Oxfordshire) and government to deliver a range of improvement targets. The LAA priorities are drawn from the vision for the area as articulated in the sustainable community strategy.

Public Service Board (PSB) - is responsible for negotiation and delivery of the LAA on behalf of the Oxfordshire Partnership. It brings together decision makers from the key public sector organisations in the county.

Government Office of the South East (GOSE) - represents central government in the region and promote better and more effective integration of Government policies and programmes at a regional and local level. We work with the Government Office to agree our Local Area Agreement.

South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) - is the Government funded agency responsible for the economic and social development of the South East of England.

South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) - is a partnership of the region's councils and communities, representing the interests of South East England. It brings councils and communities together to make decisions on the South East region's priorities for planning, transport and housing.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) - The Office for National Statistics produces independent information to improve our understanding of the UK's economy and society. We use these statistics to inform our planning for the future and priorities for action within the county.

Gross Value Added (GVA) - measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector in the United Kingdom. It is used in the estimation of the UK's gross domestic product (GDP), which is a key indicator of the state of the whole economy.

Breaking the cycle of deprivation - In some of the poorest families there is often a cycle of deprivation typified by some of the following low educational attainment, family breakdown, worklessness, crime and poor health and housing. This passes from generation to generation, and even by the age of a few years old, the life chances of young children are shaped. The aim is to break this vicious cycle in those areas/families where it can be seen.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) - describes people living in Britain of African, Caribbean, South Asian, other Asian origins (including those who identify with more than one ethnic origin), and people from other communities who have a common experience of discrimination because of their race and who are not from the majority white community.

'sense of place' - is a feeling of identify and belonging to the area around you or the community you live in. It is what characterises a place as distinct and unique from others and contributes to a sense of well-being and community cohesion.

Local development framework (LDF) - is a folder of local development documents that outlines how planning will be managed in an area. In Oxfordshire there is a local development framework in each district council as well as one for minerals and waste planning for the whole county. These documents guide how much development and building there is in your area, where it is located and what infrastructure (roads, schools, community facilities) are needed to support it.

اشكال بديلة لهذا المنشور موجودة حسب الطلب. هذه تشمل لغات مختلفة و الطبعة البارزة وطريقة بريل و اشربة كاست و اقراص الحاسوب او البريد الالكتروني.
Arabic

আপনি যদি অনুরোধ করেন তাহলে এই পুস্তিকাটি বিকল্প ছাঁদে, যেমন, অন্য কোনও ভাষায়, বড় হরফে, ব্রেইলে, অডিও-ক্যাসেটে, কমপিউটারের ডিস্কে বা ইমেলের মাধ্যমে পেতে পারেন।
Bengali

“本刊物備有其他的格式可供索取。這些包括有其他語言版，大字版，盲人用版，錄音帶版，電腦磁碟版或電子郵件版。”
Chinese

प्रार्थना करने पर यह प्रकाशन दूसरे रूपों में प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। जिस में सम्मिलित है, दूसरी भाषाओं में, बड़े छापे में, ब्रेअल, सुनने की टेप पर, कम्प्यूटर की डिस्क पर या ई-मेल द्वारा।
Hindi

“ਇਹ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਛਾਪੇ ਤੇ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ ਵਿਚ, ਸੁਣਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਟੇਪ ਤੇ, ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਡਿਸਕ ਜਾਂ ਈ ਮੇਲ ਤੇ।”
Punjabi

“اس اشاعت کو متبادل اشكال میں درخواست کرنے پر حاصل کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ اس میں دوسری زبانیں، بڑا پرنٹ، بریل (جسے آئندے چھو کر پڑھ سکیں)، آڈیو کیسٹ، کمپیوٹر ڈسک یا ای میل شامل ہیں۔”
Urdu

Na życzenie publikacja jest dostępna w innych formatach. Do nich należą wersje w innych językach, drukowane dużą czcionką, alfabetem Braille'a, w wersji audio, na dysku komputerowym, lub jako email.
Polish

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Oxfordshire 2030

Delivery Plan

**Delivering on our pledges
to improve quality of life in the county.**

Oxfordshire 2030

Oxfordshire 2030 is a Sustainable Community Strategy and sets out a long-term vision for Oxfordshire's future.

“By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can realise their potential, contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities”

Our ambition is to:

- Create a world class economy for Oxfordshire building particularly on the high tech sector
- Have healthy and thriving communities. We want to sustain what is good about our city, towns and villages but also respond to the needs of the 21st century including the impact of demographic and lifestyle changes
- Look after our environment and respond to the threat of climate change and the potential for more extreme weather conditions. The threat of flooding is a particular concern.
- Break the cycle of deprivation by addressing the regeneration needs of disadvantaged communities; reducing the gap between the best and worst off and supporting people to maximise their talents and raise their aspirations.

Our main **strategic objectives** are therefore:

1. A World Class Economy
2. Healthy and thriving communities
3. The Environment and climate change
4. Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation

The Partnership is committed to tackling inequalities across all its work.

We recognise that in relation to everything we do we must:

- Reduce the gap between the best and worst off. We will do this by improving the outcomes for the worst-off and bringing them closer to the outcomes enjoyed by the best-off. This will mean targeting resources to the localities or communities experiencing the worst outcomes as we implement all our plans.
- Be sustainable. As we work to deliver our vision we must consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of our work, and ensure the resources and capacity needed to deliver change exist and are sustainable.

The strategy has the support of all of the key statutory agencies in the county as well as voluntary and business sectors' endorsement. The expectation of the Oxfordshire Partnership is that key agencies will reflect the Vision and priorities in their own corporate plans and in their resource allocation so we ensure that we deliver the vision.

The Delivery Plan

The Delivery Plan contains the following:

- Three year targets that are in our Local Area Agreement (LAA) – an agreement between the Government and partners in Oxfordshire which reflects some of the highest priority key targets.
- Key targets which are important locally but not in the Local Area Agreement

We officially agreed our Local Area Agreement 2008-11 with Government in June this year. At the original negotiation it was not possible to agree three year targets for all our chosen indicators. It was agreed that these gaps would be filled during the first year of the agreement through the review and refresh process. We are currently scoping the indicators that will be refreshed and are having regard to the current economic situation in doing so. This will in turn be reflected in the *Oxfordshire 2030* delivery plan.

Managing performance

The governance and performance management framework for the Oxfordshire partnership is currently under review. The principles are as follows:

Progress in meeting targets and objectives is managed by the thematic partnerships responsible for that theme. Some targets cut across partnerships and in these cases agreements will be made about who shall be responsible for delivery.

Partnerships are responsible for developing action plans which show how we will achieve our targets. The detail of the targets is not reflected in this plan but will be available through the performance reports. We are also developing project and risk management principles.

LAA and Local targets are monitored by the Oxfordshire Public Service Board (www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk) who report to the Oxfordshire Partnership and to the public on progress. In addition the Oxfordshire Partnership will review quality of life indicators annually to ensure that action being taken is having a beneficial effect on the lives of local people. Local targets are managed by Local Strategic Partnerships in each district and district Local Strategic Partnerships also contribute to relevant countywide targets – please see the local distinctiveness section. We are all working together to achieve the shared vision for the future. This approach means that we can make best use of our resources, joining up where necessary, whilst ensuring very local issues are also tackled.

<p>Local Area Agreement targets – agreed by the Oxfordshire Partnership and with the Government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress managed by thematic partnerships. • Progress monitored by the Public Service Board quarterly. • 6 monthly reports to GOSE / Government. 	<p>Oxfordshire Partnership produces an annual overview of</p>
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Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Local targets – agreed by the Oxfordshire Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reported quarterly to the Public Service Board. 	progress based on quality of life indicators.
District targets + contribution to countywide targets where relevant – agreed by District Local Strategic Partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress monitored by District Local Strategic Partnerships. 	

All performance reporting shall be available on the Oxfordshire Partnership website. (www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk)

Criteria for agreeing targets and actions in this plan

Targets and actions in this delivery plan have been included because:

- They will deliver on the strategic objectives in **Oxfordshire 2030**.
- They can only be achieved through partnership working – not “business as usual” for the public sector or any organisation acting alone.
- They came out of the consultation events we held in 2007 to develop *Oxfordshire 2030*.
- They are targets agreed with the Government for the Local Area Agreement.
- They are targets agreed by the Oxfordshire Partnership as being Local targets
- There is an emphasis on, or contribution to, preventing problems developing further in the future, for example, reducing childhood obesity to improve health and well-being later in life, or reducing the risks of flooding to housing and business.

There are many plans and strategies in the county. Strategic county-wide partnerships, for example, Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s Trust have their own priorities and action plans. There are five District Local Strategic Partnerships – the Oxford Strategic Partnership, Cherwell Community Planning Partnership, West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership, South Oxfordshire Partnership and the Vale Strategic Partnership. They each have their own challenges, priorities and action plans.

This Delivery Plan does not replace these. Its purpose is to align our objectives where it is relevant to the priorities in **Oxfordshire 2030** in order to deliver better outcomes for everyone in the county and raise the profile and importance of acting together to get things done.

Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan

Strategic objective : World Class Economy

Oxfordshire is an economically vibrant area. Compared with the rest of the UK unemployment is low and the economy is prosperous. We have a lot to be proud of: the highest level of research and development in Western Europe; a concentration of high-wage, high-tech industry; and of course, world-renowned universities. But global economic conditions and competition mean we have to work even harder to secure a world class economy for the County

We pledge to:

- Collaborate across public, business and voluntary sectors to build on Oxfordshire's economic success.
- Create the conditions for everyone to have access to jobs.
- Ensure that educational attainment and skill levels are amongst the very best in the country so we provide a well qualified, motivated workforce to meet the needs of business.
- Grow the economy whilst achieving a sustainable balance between jobs, housing and environment
- Tackle traffic congestion across Oxfordshire, particularly on trunk roads and around market towns Oxford City and other hotspots
- Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
<p>1. Collaborate across public, business and voluntary sectors to build on Oxfordshire's economic success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the GVA per head of Oxfordshire's population from its current position of 13th out of 131 NUTS3 (county) regions nationally to one of the top 10 in the NUTS3 league by 2010 • Increase the economic impact of tourism, increasing the value of tourism activity for local businesses. The aim therefore is to increase the value of tourism activity that directly benefits local business in terms of direct business turnover from the 2006 baseline of £1,198,616,000 (from economic impact model data commissioned from Tourism South East). • Increase the promotion of cultural and sporting events within tourism and create 5 new festivals/events with a national profile by 2012. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAT registered businesses showing growth. NI 172 • New business registration rate NI 171 • Average earnings of employees in the area NI 166 • Partners receive clear and timely intelligence about Oxfordshire's economy and the issues and opportunities facing it. • Strengthened town centre economies through retail, employment and tourism data on individual towns 	<p>Oxfordshire Economic Partnership</p>
<p>2. Create the conditions for everyone to have access to jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of working age people on out of work benefits. (LAA target NI 152) • Increase the number of those joining Oxfordshire County Council apprenticeship schemes by 100% by December 2010 (2009 target is 50/2010 target is 100) • Increase numbers of Level 2 Health and Social Qualifications in the workforce. (PCT / Learning & Skills Partnership to set target by Jan 09). Local target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire's overall employment rate is above the average for the South East. NI 151. • Job density (number of jobs filled to working age population) QoL 14 • % of the working age population that is in employment QoL 11 • Working age people have access to employment by public transport. NI176 	<p>Oxfordshire Learning & Skills Partnership and Oxfordshire Economic Partnership.</p>

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
3. Ensure that educational attainment and skill levels are well above the national average so we provide a well qualified, motivated workforce to meet the needs of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the numbers / percentage of all 16 to 18 year olds who are in education, training or employment. (LAA target NI 117) • Reduce the inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19. (LAA target NI 81) • Mandatory educational attainment targets (LAA NIs 72, 73, 74, 75, 83, 87, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101) • Increase the percentage of the working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher. (LAA target NI 163) • Increase the percentage of the working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher. (LAA target NI 164). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All young offenders and care leavers to be in education, training or employment.. NI 45 • Increase the percentage of the working age population qualified to at least level 4 or higher. NI 165 • Reduce skills gaps in the current workforce as reported by employers. NI 174 • Ensure that attainment, and skills levels are well above the average so we provide a well qualified, motivated workforce to meet the needs of businesses and public sector employers. 	Oxfordshire Children's Trust and Oxfordshire Learning & Skills Partnership
4. Grow the economy whilst achieving a sustainable balance between jobs, housing and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase net additional homes provided. (LAA target NI 154) • Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (LAA target 155) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure housing supply (including affordable housing) meets targets agreed in the South East Plan. • House price to income ration QoL 41 	Oxfordshire Housing Partnership
5. Tackle traffic congestion particularly on trunk roads and around market towns, Oxford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling. (LAA target NI 175) • Increase the percentage of school pupils who travel to school by walking, cycling, by bus or 	More reliable journey times (reduced average journey time per mile during morning peak times) NI 167 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of major strategic transport projects including improvements to 	Oxfordshire Children's Trust Partnership

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
City and other hotspots	through car sharing (LAA target NI 198)	M40 Junction 9 and 10./ East-West rail/ Access to Oxford and Quadrant Strategic Transport package. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of localised transport packages / improvements to deal with congestion hotspots throughout central Oxfordshire. 	arrangements to be confirmed subject to the current review of governance.
6 Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.	<div style="text-align: center; font-size: 100px; opacity: 0.3; font-weight: normal;">DRAFT</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop targets and objectives that improve the outcomes for the worst-off and bring them closer to the outcomes enjoyed by the best off. 	Oxfordshire Economic Partnership Oxfordshire Learning and Skills Partnership Oxfordshire Children's Trust Oxfordshire Housing Partnership

Strategic objective : Healthy & Thriving Communities

People enjoy living in Oxfordshire. Surveys show us that over 90% of the people in Oxfordshire like living in their communities. We are fortunate to have a population that is generally healthier than elsewhere, with longer than average life expectancy. However, there are pockets where life expectancy is lower in parts of the County. Levels of crime are generally lower than average. We have a diverse population: as the most rural county in the south east of England, half our population lives in rural areas, but a quarter live in Oxford City with the remainder living in our bustling market towns. The profile of a 'typical' Oxfordshire resident is changing. There are now many more people over 85 living in the county and the number of people with learning disabilities living here has also increased. Our black and minority ethnic communities account for 5% of Oxfordshire's population overall and 13% in Oxford city. We want to ensure that everyone is safe from harm, able to live a healthy lifestyle and is valued in the community in which they live, work, grow up and grow old. We also want to ensure people have the ability to participate and contribute to their communities.

Healthy and Thriving Communities implies that:

- * Our towns, neighbourhoods and villages are communities with a heart, where local people work with each other and with service providers to improve their areas.
- * We work together to support and protect all vulnerable groups including older people and those with disabilities
- * People are physically and mentally healthy and live longer
- * Oxfordshire is a place where people feel safe and welcomed. Our foundations are strong: there are concerns about anti-social behaviour but generally our City, towns and villages are safe and pleasant places in which to live.

We pledge to:

- Work with local people including the voluntary, community and faith organisations and the military to sustain and build supportive cohesive, resilient and well planned communities
- Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour – particularly where the cause is the abuse of alcohol or other substance misuse.
- Work to prevent all forms of extremism that threaten the well-being of local people and communities
- Support the people of Oxfordshire to achieve a healthy and positive old age, concentrating on the groups in greatest need
- Ensure every child gets every opportunity for a good start in life.
- Improve support and opportunities for independent living.
- Promote healthy lifestyles including the increase of physical activity
- Defend access to local services particularly in rural communities
- Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
<p>7. Work with local people including the voluntary, community and faith organisations and the military to sustain and build supportive, cohesive, resilient and well planned communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation in regular volunteering (LAA target NI 6) • Improve the overall/general satisfaction of residents with the local area (LAA target NI 5) • Increase the number of people who feel that they are treated fairly when using local services. (LAA target NI 140) • Increase the number of communities benefiting from involvement in local community planning to 8 -10 communities starting per annum and 20 already in development (April 09) • Increase the number of actions (identified as local priorities in community-led plans) are progressed within one year of publication to at least 50%. (April 09) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an environment for a thriving voluntary, community and faith sector by supporting the VCS Delivery Plan and objectives. NI 7. • Areas in the most deprived 20% of wards nationally will show a consistent improvement in deprivation scores (measured by indices of multiple deprivation domain scores. Proxy indicators on mortality rates, crime, skills, housing, education, income, benefits uptake and employment). 	<p>Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership</p> <p>Local Authorities + Town and Parish Councils</p>
<p>8. Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce hate crime in Oxfordshire (Actions to reduce hate crime commence November 2008. Baseline and target to be set June 2009). Links to NI1 and NI 140 • Reduce the assault with injury crime rate. (LAA target NI 20). • Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime. (LAA target NI 21) • Reduce repeat incidents of Domestic Violence. (LAA target NI 32) • Reduce first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17. (LAA target NI 111) • Reduce the harm caused to young people under 18 caused by the use of illicit drug and alcohol use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the re-offending rates of priority and prolific offenders (NI 30). 	<p>Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils (includes parish meetings)</p>

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
	<p>(LAA1/S&SC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce crime rates including vehicle crime, burglary, theft, criminal damage, assault, woundings and robbery (LAA1/S&SC) • Increase the number of drug users in effective treatment (LAA target NI 40) <p>Targets to be set by Safer Communities Partnership date TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of young people engaged in organized activities • A decrease in the number of young people entering the criminal justice system • A reduction in the number of complaints of antisocial behaviour associated with public houses • Improve public perceptions around the levels of anti social behaviour and the behaviour of others (NI 17) • A reduction in alcohol related A&E admissions • A reduction in the number of alcohol related assaults • A reduction in the level of alcohol related criminal damage • A reduction in the number of shops and pubs found to be prepared to sell alcohol to children • Reduce priority crime and fear of crime. • Reduce harm caused by drug misuse to individuals, the family and wider community through increased numbers entering and drug treatment programmes, offenders completing the programme and quantities of drugs seized. 		

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
<p>9. Work to prevent all forms of extremism that threaten the well-being of local people and communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the rate of Domestic Violence • Build resilience to violent extremism (NI 35) 		<p>Oxford Building Resilience Amongst Communities Delivery Group.</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils</p> <p>Oxfordshire Partnership</p>
<p>10. Support the people of Oxfordshire to achieve a healthy and positive old age, concentrating on the groups in greatest need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. (LAA target NI 141) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the percentage of over 65s who say that they receive the information, assistance and support they need to exercise choice and control in their lives. NI 139 • Shift the emphasis to prevention and work together with the public to promote health and wellbeing and self care. (N1 137 Healthy life expectancy at age 65 – place survey) • Improve the range and availability of extra care housing or other support to enable older people to live at home – we will provide 840 units of extra care housing by 2013 	<p>Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Partnership</p>
<p>11. Ensure every child gets every</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves. (LAA target NI 62) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the percentage of a) children and b) over 60s that live 	<p>Oxfordshire Children's Trust</p>

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
<p>opportunity for a good start in life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase young people’s participation in positive activities. (LAA target NI 110) • Reduce the under 18 conception rate. (LAA target NI 112) • Increase the number of schools in the healthy schools programme (LAA1/CYP4) • Reduce the number of vulnerable homeless 16/17 year olds (LAA1/CYP7). • Reduce hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people (LAA target NI 70) • Reduce obesity among primary school age children in year 6 (LAA target N1 56) • Increase the number of young people participating in the youth service (LAA1/CYP13, links to NI 110) • Reduce the number of half days missed by children looked after (LAA1/CYP14) 	<p>in households that are income deprived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of care leavers who are living in suitable accommodation for their needs. 	
<p>12. Improve support and opportunities for independent living</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. (LAA target NI 141) • Reduce the delays in transferring people from hospital to home and other types of care (NI 131) • Increase the numbers of carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer’s service, or advice and information (LAA target NI 135) • Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation. (LAA target NI 156) • Establish a common referral assessment process (LAA1/HCOP8). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of extra care housing units provided each year. • Increase the percentage of over 65s who say that they receive the information, assistance and support they need to exercise choice and control in their lives. NI 139 • Achieve the 365 <i>Alive</i> fire safety scheme to reduce fatalities from household fires. • Shift the emphasis to prevention and work together with the public to promote health and wellbeing and self care. (N1 137 Healthy life 	<p>Oxfordshire Health & Well-Being Partnership</p> <p>Oxfordshire Housing Partnership</p>

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
		expectancy at age 65 – place survey) • Improve the range and availability of extra care housing or other support to enable older people to live at home – we will provide 840 units of extra care housing by 2013	
13. Promote healthy lifestyles including the increase of physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the gap in all-age all cause mortality between the worst and best 20% (LAA target NI 120) • Increase adult participation in sport. (LAA target NI 8) • Improve mental health and well-being in the adult population, especially among vulnerable groups and those living in areas with worse outcomes focusing in particular on employment and housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase healthy life expectancy at age 65. NI 137 • Increase life expectancy at birth (QoL indicator 33) • Increase the number of people who quit smoking NI 123 • Reduce the harm to health caused by harmful or hazardous consumption of alcohol (alcohol harm related hospital rates NI39) • Reduce obesity rates in the adult population 	Oxfordshire Health & Well-Being Partnership
14. Defend access to local services particularly in rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the impact of decisions made by public service providers that affect local and rural services is assessed through a customer impact assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of consistent customer / equality standards across public service providers. 	Partnership arrangements to be confirmed subject to the current review of governance.
15. Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop targets and objectives that improve the outcomes for the worst-off and bring them closer to the outcomes enjoyed by the best off 	Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership Local authorities

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term objectives (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
	DRAFT	DRAFT	(including town and parish councils) Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership Oxford Building resilience amongst communities delivery group Oxfordshire Children’s trust Oxfordshire health and wellbeing partnership Oxfordshire housing partnership

Strategic objective : Environment & Climate Change

Dreaming spires, rambling green spaces, buildings steeped in rich history: few could doubt that we enjoy an exceptional environment. We recognise our important role as custodians of the environment now and for future generations. Our challenge is to protect our areas of natural beauty while meeting the demands of a 21st century lifestyle and an expanding and ageing population. We recognise that the future of our environment is closely linked to the national and international response to the global challenge of climate change. We are committed to making our contribution.

Individuals, communities, the public sector and businesses will all need to play their part both in reducing carbon emissions and making our county as resilient as possible to the effects of climate change.

Our aspiration is to conserve and enhance our natural and built environment while balancing this against the needs of a thriving economy and the impact of climate change.

We pledge to:

- Reduce carbon emissions and improve energy and water efficiency by public sector organisations, and encourage residents and businesses to do the same.
- Reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling by households and businesses.
- Minimise the effects and risk of flooding.
- Ensure new development is built to high environmental standards.
- Support individuals, communities and businesses, to respond to climate change and to improve efficiency in their use of energy and water
- Keep Oxfordshire clean and green.
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity of the county.
- Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Page 204

Pledges	Medium term targets (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
16. Reduce carbon emissions and improve energy and water efficiency by public sector organisations, and encourage residents and businesses to do the same.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce CO2 emissions caused by local authority activities (LAA target NI 185) 		Oxfordshire Environment Partnership
17. Reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling by households and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the amount of residual household waste per head (LAA target NI 191) Increase the amount of household waste recycled and composted (LAA target NI 192) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 55% of household waste is recycled or composted by 2020. NI 192 	Oxfordshire Waste Partnership
18. Minimise the effects and risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plans that help Oxfordshire adapt to climate change (LAA target NI 188) Carry out a minimum of 25% more drainage clearing focused on areas vulnerable to flooding (action plan to be agreed in January 09 by the long term flooding issues group) <p>Oxfordshire Environment Partnership to develop strategy and local targets (date TBC) which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases our preparedness and responsiveness to flooding including managing flooding events including improvements to joint emergency planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve our resilience to flood through flood risk management NI 189 	Oxfordshire Environment Partnership

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term targets (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports EA to implement all planned flooding alleviation schemes • Supports the district councils to ensure new developments reduce the risk and minimise the impact of flooding • Ensures all flooding alleviation schemes planned by local authorities are implemented • Ensure waste, minerals and highways plans include measures to reduce flood risks 		
<p>19. Ensure new development is built to high environmental standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District Councils will ensure the delivery of new housing development to at least code level 3 in the Code for Sustainable Homes (which is expected to be a national requirement in building regulations by 2010) • The District Councils Local Development Frameworks, to be adopted by 2011, will include a range of policies and proposals to deliver higher environmental standards and to reflect the delivery of the minimum requirements in the Code for Sustainable Homes 	<p>All developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate high standards of energy efficiency in design and construction in line with best practice • Achieve high levels of water efficiency in line with current best practice 	<p>Spatial Planning Partnership (to be agreed)</p>
<p>20. Support individuals, communities and businesses to respond to climate change and to improve efficiency in their use of energy and water.</p>	<p>Oxfordshire Environment Partnership to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a programme and local targets (date TBC) which engage residents, communities and businesses in energy and water reduction. Measures : Per capita water consumption (Thames Water). Energy consumption measured through per capita CO2 emissions (NI 186). Average annual domestic consumption of gas and electricity (kwh) (QoL 26). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% reduction in CO2 emissions from Oxfordshire on 1990 levels by 2030 (need to look further as gov't target 60% by 2050) per capita CO2 emissions in the county. NI186 	<p>Oxfordshire Environment Partnership</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils</p>
<p>21. Keep Oxfordshire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve street and environmental cleanliness 		<p>Oxfordshire</p>

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Pledges	Medium term targets (LAA and Local targets for next 3 years)	Longer-term objectives	Lead partnerships
clean and green	(reduce levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting) (LAA target NI 195) • Improved street and environmental cleanliness – reduce fly tipping. (LAA target NI 196)		Waste Partnership Local Authorities / Public Service Board Town and Parish Councils
22. Protect and enhance the biodiversity of the county	Oxfordshire Environment Partnership to • Implement actions set out in Habitat action plans for Oxfordshire • Report annually on core/contextual biodiversity indicators as part of the annual monitoring report • Report annually on NA 197 (biodiversity) on local wildlife sites • Work with partners to maintain and enhance sites of special scientific interest, local wildlife sites and other key sites	Maintain and enhance status of UK biodiversity action plan habitats/species in the county Implement conservation target area and habitat action plan objectives and help accommodate to the consequences of climate change.	Oxfordshire Environment Partnership
23. Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off by targeting our work appropriately.		Develop targets and objectives that improve the outcomes for the worst-off and bring them closer to the outcomes enjoyed by the best off	Oxfordshire Environment Partnership Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Spatial planning partnership (to be agreed)

Local Distinctiveness

Oxfordshire is a diverse county and, although we have identified a number of countywide priorities, there are geographical variations in terms of how important those priorities are for different parts of the county.

The five district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in Oxfordshire have all produced community strategies relevant to their local areas, which reflect their own ambitions, aims and objectives. These local ambitions have fed into and helped to identify the countywide priorities set out in this document.

This section sets out how the key issues within each district and a summary of their priorities for action. Local Strategic Partnerships will have an important role to play in implementing both the countywide and local priorities identified within this strategy

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Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Cherwell

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
Reducing Inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation is a cross cutting theme	
<p>A World Class Economy</p> <p>Make it easier for you to get where you need to go</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete transport studies and infrastructure needs assessment of the main urban areas and incorporate the results in the Local Development Framework
Support business success by fostering innovation and helping to recruit and retain skilled employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 6200 additional jobs by 2011 • Improving educational achievements
Improve local services and opportunities in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a review of planning policy through the local development framework • Establish improved support initiatives for existing rural services to assist ongoing viability • Encourage the creation of new services to rural areas to meet established demand and gaps in provision
Develop the unique characters of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and engender a sense of pride, belonging to the community and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2012 complete environmental enhancement schemes for Parsons Street, Banbury
Secure housing growth that meets the Government targets and the needs of the District through an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve an annual average rate of new homes constructed of 600, at least 100 of which are affordable.
<p>Healthy and thriving communities</p> <p>Help you feel safe in your home and community, working to reduce further very low levels of crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2012 reduce crime by 5% and achieve a perception of feeling safe in Cherwell by 80% of residents

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
Make it easier for you to lead a healthy and active life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation in active recreation by 1% per annum • Improve all age mortality rates in Banbury
Co-ordinate, improve and provide more diverse and accessible health provision and advice through improved education, partnership working, better local access and increased choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local health care and social service provision meet the needs of the local population particularly in relation to local accessibility • Continue determined efforts to retain the Horton Hospital's status as a District General Hospital.
<p>Environment and climate change</p> <p>Protect our environment, wildlife habitats and the countryside, by working with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve a measurable improvement to biodiversity
Keep streets and open spaces clean and free from litter, graffiti and abandoned vehicles and well maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2012 achieve 80% resident satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness
Help you recycle so we can reduce the amount of landfill waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2012 recycle 55% of household waste • By 2012 reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 5000 tons

Find out more at www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Oxford

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
<p>A World Class Economy Managed and sustainable economic growth</p> <p>Improved position in the retail hierarchy</p> <p>Affordable housing</p> <p>Skills and employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the Northern gateway site for employment uses • Regeneration of the West End of the City and implementation of the West End Cultural Strategy. Creating an estimated 1,000 new homes and 5,000 jobs • Ensure the development of 1,200 new and affordable homes in the City (NI 154 and 155) • % population qualified to level 2 and level 3 (tbc)
<p>Healthy and thriving communities</p> <p>A thriving place to live and visit</p> <p>Improve life changes and life expectancy</p> <p>Reduce homelessness</p> <p>Reduce crime and the fear of crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that 85% of people are satisfied with their neighbourhoods (NI5) • Raise the levels of adult participation in sport by 4% (NI 8) • Increase benefits take up by 20% • Reduce the age mortality gap between the best and worst areas within the City by % (tbc) (NI 120) • Aim to reduce the use of temporary accommodation for the homelessness to below 50 households (NI 156) • Reduce the number of assaults with injury in domestic violence incidents, all alcohol related crime and violence • Reduce concerns about anti-social behaviour (N1 21)

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
<p>Community cohesion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide positive activities for young people in the most deprived areas of Oxford by investing £120,000 in free holiday activities for 5-19 year olds. • Number of people from different backgrounds who believe that they get on well together in their local area (NI 1)
<p>Environment and climate change</p> <p>Pollution / mitigation</p> <p>Adaptation</p> <p>Congestion</p> <p>Reduce waste</p> <p>Improved public realm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the Council's CO2 emissions by 800 tonnes per annum (% reduction on 2005-06 levels (NI 185). (Getting Our House in Order – Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation plan maps a way to meeting our target of 25% reduction of CO2 emissions by 2010/11 and 3% year on year beyond 2010/11 • Provide £100,000 of fuel poverty grants that will improve energy efficiency and the health and comfort o residents. • Develop a Climate Change Action Plan (aim for level 3 of NI 188 by 2010/11) • Access to services, transport/cycling/walking(NI 175) • Reduce domestic landfill by 45% (NI 191 and NI 192) • Improve the quality of our streets so that 90% reach the national quality standard (NI 195) • Achieve the Green Flag for 5 of our parks

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Find out more at www.oxfordpartnership.gov.uk

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

South Oxfordshire

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
A World Class Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the vitality of town centres and prospects for rural businesses • Supporting the establishment of new small businesses to increase productivity
Healthy and thriving communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the supply of homes, including affordable homes • Promoting health lifestyles • Tackling antisocial behaviour
Environment and climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving environmental resources • Maintaining and improving the quality of the natural environment and landscape

Find out more at www.southoxon.gov.uk

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The Vale of White Horse

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
<p>A World Class Economy</p>	<p>- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment:</p> <p>Addressing economic needs; Building on our economic strengths, and Maintaining and enhancing the health and vitality of the Vale’s market town centres.</p>
<p>Healthy and thriving communities</p>	<p>- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier communities; • Improving quality of life for older people; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer communities; • Fostering a greater sense of community; • A good understanding of local need; • Involving young people; • Helping those without cars to access jobs and services; • Affordable homes; • Good quality homes; and • Access to good quality green spaces, sport, cultural and leisure facilities
<p>Environment and climate change</p>	<p>- effective protection of the environment and wise use of natural resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A low carbon Vale; • Living with extreme weather conditions; • Using resources wisely; • Reducing waste and increasing recycling; • A high quality natural and historic environment; • Protecting the natural environment, and • Enhancing the built heritage.

Page 213

Find out more at www.thevalepartnership.org.uk

West Oxfordshire

District Priorities	Local Actions and Targets
<p><u>A World Class Economy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining economically prosperous and vibrant towns and villages • Campaigning to improve the transport infrastructure including the provision of public transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation in regular volunteering by local people • Increase in the number of communities developing community-led plans • Maintain and increase the number of retail businesses in the District’s principal towns and villages • Increase the economic value of the Visitor Economy (tourism and wider hospitality) to West Oxfordshire • NI 177 Bus journeys originating in the local area • NI 175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
<p><u>Healthy and thriving Communities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and improving the health and wellbeing of all residents in West Oxfordshire • Further reducing crime and nuisance and the fear of crime across the District to improve the quality of life in our neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N1 120 – reduce the gap in all age, all-cause mortality by 10% in 2011 • N1 8 – increase in adult participation in sport by 4% by 2012 • Maintain our position within the top quartile in terms of low levels of all crime per 1000 population within the Thames Valley Force (March 08 baseline) • Maintain the current percentage of the population who are not afraid of crime during the day and night (baseline Neighbourhood engagement 07/08) • Contribution to achievement of the District Council’s target for provision of new

Oxfordshire 2030 DELIVERY PLAN

Page 215

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting individuals and young families who want to stay in the area that they grew up in • Addressing the specific challenges of living in rural West Oxfordshire in terms of access to services and facilities • Supporting and assisting young people to make the transition from childhood to adulthood • Supporting the elderly to maintain their independence and health 	<p>affordable housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of households purchasing under Homebuy or discount market housing schemes with the benefit of financial assistance • Reduction in the percentage of potentially homeless 16 and 17 year olds who actually become homeless • Increase in the number of joint initiatives that seek to improve rural access to services • NI 110 Young People's participation in positive activities • Conduct annual strata surveys of young people to understand issues they face • Number of individuals registered in primary care with acquired +65 mental health problems • NI 139 – people over 65 who say that they receive the information assistance and support needed to exercise choice and control to live independently PSA17
<p><u>Environment and climate change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping West Oxfordshire as a clean, beautiful place of high environmental quality whilst seeking to reduce the causes of and adverse impact of climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 195 Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness – 96% of litter inspections to be grade B or above by 2012 • N1 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – reduce reported incidents of fly-tipping by 10% by 2012 • N1 188 Adapting to climate change – to achieve level 3 by 2010

Find out more at www.westoxon.gov.uk

Plans and Strategies

The priorities will be delivered through a range of plans and targets will be incorporated within partner's corporate plans. Contact District Local Strategic Partnerships for further information on local action plans/parish plans.

Countywide plans:

Local Area Agreement
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
Race Equality Scheme
Comprehensive Equality Policy
Disability Equality scheme
Oxfordshire Structure Plan
South East Plan (central Oxfordshire sub region)
Emergency Plan
Local Transport Plan
Economic Development Strategy for Oxfordshire
Rural Framework
Carbon Management Programme
Joint Municipal Waste Strategy
Oxfordshire Supporting People Strategy
Public Health Strategy for Oxfordshire
Commissioning strategy for older people
Children and Young People's Plan
OCC Corporate Plan
Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan
Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership

Sub-regional plans:

Structure Plan
Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Key regional plan:

South East Plan
Regional Housing Strategy
Regional Economic Strategy
Regional Transport Strategy

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
Whole document Oxford centric, north of county not reflected	Amendments made, consider this is now largely acceptable.	Page 15 – current position – first para – last sentence amend to read ‘...motorsports (Banbury is a sub regional hub and other areas in North Oxfordshire), and publishing industries.’ Page 24 – first para very Oxford centric. Include reference to historic market towns, Cotswold and ironstone villages.	Done		
Document refers to SE region needs to recognise north of county borders East Mids, West Mids	Amendments made, specifically on Cherwell page and p12 - first para – talks about neighbouring areas		Done		
P3 Foreword reads as though document belongs to county council and is form one source, not in spirit of partnership	All LSP Chairs to sign.				
P6 Bloxham is on map with cities	Bloxham still on map. Really point of reference.	Ask for Bloxham to come off the map on p8.	Not done.	Ask for Bloxham to come off map on p6.	Done
P7 doesn't mention migration stats	Not amended and no explanation.	Page 9 -Inward migration to Cherwell is significant. In 2001 7.5% of the population considered themselves to belong to a group other than white British; by 2006 this had grown to 10.7%. Our research and experience demonstrates that this growth has come and continues to come from migrant workers from Polish and other Eastern European communities. This also needs to be reflected on page 20 – current position – second para – need to include the % in Banbury and Didcot (Banbury Grimsbury ward has 10.9%). But white non British are also a significant community in Cherwell.	Not included, suggests add into Cherwell section – it is already there so suggest no further action.	Page 18, 7.3, change to read ‘...13% in the city of Oxford with 10.9% in the Banbury Grimsbury ward and a sizeable population in	Done

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
P9 Healthy and thriving communities: focus housing, congestion as opposed to transport	Comments around congestions run throughout the document, in most cases it has been amended to be less Oxford centric and include reference to trunk roads and market towns. But suggest amendment to p17.	Page 17 – ‘we pledge to’ – change last bullet point to read ‘Tackle traffic congestion across Oxfordshire, particularly on trunk roads and around market towns , Oxford City and other hotspots’.	Didcot? (page 18, 7.3) in new version. Done	Didcot...’	
P11/12 worried if go to specifics rather than county averages	Hard as some Cllrs OK with averages and others not!				
P11/12 with boundaries, a lot of services in north of district are cross border e.g. Horton Hospital document doesn't reflect this 2 counties visions feed in to Oxfordshire pct and an Oxfordshire vision is not helpful	Cherwell page makes this clearer and p12 – first para mentions ‘health services’ and ‘neighbouring areas’.				
P11/12 School catchment is cross border issue which is not reflected	As above.				
P12 landfill and waste not covered	Mentioned in ‘environment and climate change’ theme.				
P12 Affordable housing not defined in document	Wording has been changed – more about housing being unaffordable.				
P12 Traffic congestion , access to Oxford focussed on access to other market towns ignored	Suggested amendments largely taken onboard.				
P13 Focus on high tech	Not amended and no	Page 15 – ‘key issues include’ – first bullet point	Done		

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
industry our focus in Banbury is on mid tech e.g. manufacturing to enable employment of local people, employment needs to be suitable for workforce we are producing from our local education system	explanation. Page 30 – Cherwell page mentions mid and high tech.	add in reference to mid tech industries so read ‘...our mid and high technology businesses.’			
P15 ‘well above national avg not qualified, doesn’t say by how much ratio of housing supply to demand to be improved by. Education achievement letting down county should be targets to improve	We would expect this sort of detail in the delivery plan, although measures are in delivery plan targets aren’t but there is a link to OP website.	Make clearer that delivery plan includes measures and that the targets and resources are detailed in separate action plans that can be found on the Oxfordshire Partnership website (assuming this is the case).	Not done, suggests that ‘the detailed action plans are currently in development and once these are finalised they will be available on the Oxfordshire Partnership website.’ Not sure that clear enough, the delivery plan contains measures not targets.	Add a footer on each page in the delivery plan to say ‘ Detailed action plans and targets will be available on www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk once they are available ’	Not done
P17 sense of community no mention of conservation areas to promote sense of place	Not included, comment said that this wasn’t considered critical.				
P19 Youth, volunteering and deprivation should be specific mention of supporting youth groups	Not included. Volunteering generally part of LAA. Comment above around funding could help to address this point.				
Environment and climate	Quite a lot of change made				

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
change should be worded as adaptation to it as it is going to happen anyway	to environment and climate change section to better reflect adapting to as well as minimising climate change.				
P26 Need to mention protecting high value landscapes from wind turbines	Not mentioned. Environment and climate change section talks about 'preserve and enhance the character of our city, our market towns and villages' and 'enhancing the quality of the natural environment, landscapes and biodiversity', also mentions 'the use of renewable sources of energy also needs to be explored'. Is more needed?				
Market Towns initiative had its day and done a disservice to villages	n/a				
P16 needs to mention town and parish councils as the closest elements of government to the people, bottom up small government needs to be emphasised	More is mentioned about town and parish council – especially on page 6.				
Large No. in No Oxfordshire not registered with a GP	Not mentioned and no explanation.	Need to include reference to the fact that within north Oxfordshire there are a large number of people not registered with a G.P. This is evidence by the PCT reasons for the new health centre in Banbury.	Not included, suggests should be part of Cherwell section.	Page 29, 10.10, second bullet, add 'Registration with G.P.s is low in parts of north Oxfordshire.'	Done
Targets need to be achievable	Agreed. Assumption that as targets have come from the various partnerships that they are. The delivery				

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
	plan doesn't include all targets and LAA information only lists measures.				
Document needs glossary	Not included, but hopefully less relevant now that in clearer English.				
P26 Homelessness in Oxford needs to be mentioned, Oxford City need to mention, access to city needs to be mentioned	Not included. Need to be careful as wanted less Oxford centric. The Oxford City response doesn't mention homelessness.				
Why is Cherwell mentioned in Sq km when city and others in sq miles?	Will put in sq miles!	Page 30 – first line to read '...Cherwell covers an area of 590km2 (228 square miles)...'	Done.		
The links between the District LSPs and the delivery of the Oxfordshire 2030 Pledges and Targets are not clear.	Made clearer.	The links between the District LSPs and the delivery of the Oxfordshire 2030 Pledges and Targets are still not clear or strongly enough represented in the Strategy.	Response: 'there is further work to be done by district colleagues in terms of strengthening the local distinctiveness section and the delivery plan, which will then ensure that this is represented in the strategy'.	A diagram showing how District LSPs link into Oxfordshire 2030 and the delivery plan would be useful.	Not done
		There are still not clear links between the statistical evidence, pledges and actions.	Response: 'we feel that the current position section makes this link – a website link has been	Agreed difficult at this time but could not a very simplistic diagram listed 'thematic partnerships' as a block be included?	Not done

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
			<p>added within the strategy if further information is required on the evidence base'. Suggest leave as is.</p> <p>Response: a model has not been included as the review of partnerships is still underway ..we will include a diagram when this has been agreed'.</p>	<p>Otherwise these important links could be lost.</p>	
<p>Page 6 – contact details</p>		<p>The links between Oxfordshire partnership, Thematic partnerships and District LSPs needs to be clearly set out.</p>	<p>Format changed, no longer requires named contact.</p>	<p>Page 43 – add email address as well as website address: community.planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</p>	<p>Done.</p>
<p>Page 6 - find out more about your Local Strategic Partnership</p> <p>Page 16 – economic regeneration</p>		<p>Page 6 – Find out more about your LSP – second sentence – amend to read ‘ The local ambitions of the five District LSPs have fed ...’</p> <p>Page 16 – last bullet point before ‘workforce skills’ add ‘Banbury traditionally has a manufacturing base and needs to attract mid and high tech industries’.</p>	<p>Done.</p>		<p>Done.</p>
			<p>Suggests reference to Banbury has been included – but made it sound like Banbury and Bicester have similar needs – not sure this is true, suggest</p>	<p>Page 14, 6.10, third bullet point, take out ‘and Banbury’, but add new bullet point that reads ‘Developing the Banbury economy by attracting mid and high tech industries’.</p>	

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
Page 21 - typos			Banbury needs a separate bullet point. Done		
Page 22 – more emphasis?	With the Horton in mind, under the pledges we asked for 'ensure local provision of key health services'. The draft now says 'defend access to local services particularly in rural communities' – suggest we also ask for 'ensure local provision of key health services'.	Page 21 – para starting 'Participation in culture...' – last word on second line needs to read ' identity '. Second to last line needs to put ' VCS ' out in full. Last para before 'democratic change' not clear what it means. In Banbury there have been large numbers of immigrants who have integrated well in schools and in the town. Page 22 – additional pledge to read ' ensure local provision of key health services '.	Done Para taken out.	Page 21– additional pledge to read ' ensure local provision of key health services '.	Not done.
Page 25 - clarification		Page 15 – managing the impact of climate change – para 3 – line 6 – make clear that Oxfordshire Waste Partnership includes the 5 Oxfordshire Districts and the County Council. Also recognise that whilst recycling rates matched the best in Europe this was largely	Partially done – mentioned who on OWP but not credited us with recycling – suggest		

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
Page 28 – re-stress previous comment.		because of Cherwell. Page 28 – first bullet point – in Cherwell white working class males tend to be the lowest performers and some BMEs are actually very high performers. The point needs to better reflect the diversity of the county.	sufficient. Not done, suggests include as part of Cherwell section. Probably out of context there so leave as is.		
Page 31 – Cherwell page		Page 31 – bullet point starting ‘make it easier for you to get..’ – change second sentence to read ‘It should be noted that whilst those in the southern end of the district look towards Oxford most in the north look towards Banbury.’	Done		
Delivery Plan					
P5 Junctions 9 and 10 should be mentioned as also traffic congestion	Not included, no explanation.		Done.		
P6 mention funding for youth groups	See comment above – need better links to where information about funding can be found.				
P8 resist violent extremists	More is included about violent extremism.				
P9 doesn't mention exams and qualifications	The relevant NIs (many of which are in LAA) are included – again this might be a signposting issue to targets.				
P3 many different cross border issues, some partners may want to act alone	Cross border issues are referred to in actual strategy – see above. Partners acting alone is n/a as this is a partnership				

(Note, page numbers vary with subsequent drafts)

Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments

Comments from Executive on 1 September 2008	Oxon 2030 initial response	Further comments made	Oxon 2030 response	Final comments made	Oxon 2030 response
	document and only partnership activities are to be included.				
Economy issues are oxford centric	The document is now much less Oxford centric.				
P9 area committees are not in all areas and don't always work we don't want them here, document written based on oxford	Agreed area committees not all areas – they are mentioned as this is what Oxford City has rather than Town and Parish Councils.				
P10 Participation with diverse communities should be through parish and town councils	Not included. Looks like information is missing for this pledge.	Page 12 – pledge 8 – more information needed here, need to include the importance of Town and Parish Councils in delivering this pledge.	Response 'we will note the importance of town and parish councils in delivering this pledge'. Suggest this is sufficient.		
Children's centres need to be properly resourced, town and parish councils have to top up a present	Not an issue for the delivery plan – but better signposting to resources would pick this up – see above.				
P11 reducing temporary accommodation, but need to be able to cope	This should be an issue for the Housing partnership to consider – better signposting to action plans should help – see comment above.				
P11 public transport need to ensure cross boundary	Picked up in Strategy on page 12 – first para.				
Nothing in actions about 3,000 military personnel in Bicester not picked up as a minority	Military personnel now included in both strategy and delivery plan.				

Agenda Item 10

Executive

Consultation and Engagement Strategy

2 February 2009

Report of Chief Executive and Community and Corporate Planning Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents a final version of a consultation and engagement strategy and action plan for Cherwell District Council and outlines the steps the council needs to take to meet the requirements of new legislation in this policy area.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To identify any additional actions or initiatives to be included in the strategy and action plan.
- (2) To recommend to Council the adoption of the consultation and engagement strategy and action plan as council policy and the preferred approach to improving consultation and community engagement, to delivering our commitment to be an Accessible, Value for Money Council and to meeting the statutory requirements of the Duty to Involve in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- (3) To request an annual progress review of the strategy and action plan to be received by the Executive.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Cherwell District Council has a record of effective consultation and engagement with the local community. This currently takes place across the council in all service areas and covers issues around customer satisfaction and service development. In addition, our service and financial planning framework and partnership work aims to identify and address needs within the Cherwell community.
- 1.2 Recent policy developments (including new legislation and the Comprehensive Area Assessment) mean that councils and other public bodies are being required to improve their approach to community consultation and engagement. This includes requirements to demonstrate we have consulted and acted on the basis of the results and to work increasingly closely with partners to consult, engage and demonstrate a clear understanding of the needs of the local community.
- 1.3 Our Strategic Priority to be an Accessible, Value for Money Council commits us to being easy to contact, approachable and responsive, seeking the views of customers about our services, maintaining transparent and public decision making and listening to views and comments from the local community. This strategy will help us to deliver our commitments within the corporate plan. The strategy also helps us to meet our commitments under Theme 10 of the Cherwell Community Plan as it also provides a framework in which to improve engagement with harder to reach groups.

Proposals

- 1.4 To update the council's existing consultation framework, to include a number of documents and activities: a medium term strategy to develop and improve our current approaches; a three year action plan to meet the strategy's objectives; a charter that clearly outlines our commitment to consultation and the standards that consultees can expect; toolkits; support and guidance for managers and officers undertaking consultation; and a clear approach to working with our partners to consult with the local community.
- 1.5 It is proposed that the strategy and action plan is based on six objectives. Cherwell District Council will:
 1. Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement.
 2. Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council.
 3. Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation.
 4. Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice.
 5. Ensure our consultation is open, accessible and inclusive.
 6. Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.

1.6 The strategy also outlines a series of principles that should underpin all future consultation to ensure quality and value for money. These principles are explained more fully in the consultation strategy attached as Appendix 1.

1. Purposeful
2. Robust
3. Accessible
4. Communicated and Coordinated
5. Used
6. Proportionate

1.7 Appendix 2 outlines the actions that will deliver the objectives outlined in the strategy. These cover a three year period.

Conclusion

1.8 The business benefits of adopting the consultation and engagement strategy as proposed in this paper, and the supporting appendices, go beyond meeting statutory requirements. They reflect and develop the Council's current commitment and approach and include:

- A clear statement of our commitment to consultation and engagement and an overview of the standards the public can expect when we undertake consultation.
- Support for Members in terms of better information about community needs and also improved opportunities to be involved in consultation.
- Closer alignment between service and financial planning and community needs as expressed through robust consultation and engagement opportunities. This will include the provision of an evidence base for service developments and growth bids.
- A clear set of standards and requirements for managers in terms of service consultation and support to help them fulfil this. Support will include consulting with harder to reach groups.
- Improved coordination of consultation across the Council and in conjunction with partners. This will ensure consultation results are timely, improved sharing of information and the reduction of consultation fatigue.
- Improved access to consultation for members of the local community. Consultations will be better planned and publicised. This will include better online access.
- Better value for money by working with others to procure consultation and share results.
- By adopting clear principles and standards the quality of our consultations will improve.
- A programme of corporate consultation that can be used to underpin the Council's strategic framework including setting the budget and the corporate plan and understanding customer satisfaction trends.

Background Information

2.1 Our Current Approach

Currently all councils have a statutory duty to consult on major policy decisions and specific areas of activity or service delivery (for example in planning). To meet this requirement we undertake a local annual satisfaction survey, the BVPI surveys (now the place survey), and complete a detailed qualitative programme of budget consultation. We also consult widely with regards to medium term strategies and the Community Strategy. In addition, service managers undertake specific and necessary consultation to inform service development.

Our current approach is comprehensive; we are committed to undertaking consultation and use a variety of techniques, we are part of a county wide group that jointly procures government required questionnaires to improve value for money and quality and we are developing fora to help improve community engagement.

We have also signed up to the Oxfordshire Compact which sets consultation for consultation and engagement with the voluntary and community sector.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 New statutory requirements

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007) places a Duty to Involve upon us. This duty is a specific requirement that we (and all Best Value Authorities) must fulfil with regards to consultation and engagement.

The requirement comes into force in April 2009 and Appendix 3 to this report explains the implications of the new duty in greater detail. Whilst the duty does not require us to undertake any specific consultation events we will be required to demonstrate that are proactive and coordinated in our approach to consultation (both across the council and with partners). It also requires us to feedback the results of consultation to those who have taken part and take action as a result of consultation (or be able to demonstrate that we have considered consultation results and can account for why we have not acted upon them).

In order to fulfil this duty we will need to ensure we have robust approaches to the issues outlined below. The consultation and engagement strategy aims to address them:

- Accessibility - using appropriate methods and ensuring we talk to groups that are sometimes considered harder to reach for many reasons, for example economic, social, cultural, geographic, health, time etc.
- Proportionality - balancing the benefits and costs of consultation with the significance of the issue

- Partnership working – to ensure we are joined up across the district, learning from our partners, better value for money
- Coordination - ensuring our consultation activities are part of an integrated approach across the area
- Timing - when to consult, making sure the results can feed into service planning and development, making sure we avoid consultation fatigue

3.2 The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

Our response and approach to these new requirements will be measured through the CAA (the inspection regime that replaces the CPA (comprehensive performance assessment) from April 2009. One of the key questions that will be considered as part of this assessment is the extent to which local priorities express community needs and aspirations. As such we will have to demonstrate that we have robust arrangements in place to collect, listen to and act upon the results of community consultation and engagement.

As part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment an annual Use of Resources assessment will be undertaken. This judges the effectiveness of the organisation in terms of the extent to which it meets the criteria outlined in the key lines of enquiry (KLOEs).

These KLOEs require a number of activities and achievements in terms of stakeholder consultation and involvement. These include consultation around setting the budget, setting priorities on the basis of local need, consulting with people in terms of how they would like to access information about the council and its reports, policies and services, consulting with service users when designing and commissioning services, using information (including customer information) to improve service performance and working with partners to ensure information about community needs is effectively and safely shared.

3.3 Working in partnership

In addition to the requirements of the CAA already identified in this paper the assessment will also consider how effectively we work in partnership to engage the community and understand community need. We already work with partners to improve our understanding of community needs (for example as part of the Community Planning Partnership and the Safer Communities Partnership) and this strategy will help us to develop this work.

3.4 The Cherwell Community Strategy – Focus on People (Theme 10)

Theme 10 of the community strategy identifies specific actions aimed at improving accessibility and engagement with younger people, older people, people with disabilities and people from black and minority ethnic communities. This strategy will support these actions by improving our engagement with groups of people we find hard to reach and improving consultation resulting from equality impact assessments.

There is also a clear requirement to effectively consult and engage the community as outlined in the equalities standard and our own equalities

polices. This is with regards to the impact council polices have on different communities in the district (through equality impact assessments).

3.5 Service and Financial Planning

The proposed strategy will build upon the work undertaken during 2008 and further integrate consultation into the service and financial planning process. This means identifying consultation needs early on (as part of service plans) effectively planning and resourcing them and making best use of consultation outcomes to inform our service strategies. It will also ensure that there is a corporate consultation plan and programme to inform key strategies and activities such as the corporate plan and budget.

3.6 Value for money

An improved approach to consultation and engagement will support improved value for money in a number of ways. A clear strategy and action plan underpinned by additional support for managers will reduce duplication, improve procurement of research services and reduce the amount of time spent undertaking consultation work.

The outcomes of consultation should also result in improved services, focused on service users' requirements and therefore providing better value for money.

3.7 As a result of these issues it is recommended that the Executive adopt the proposed Consultation and Engagement Strategy as council policy. It is also recommended that the Executive receive an annual update regarding the progress and implementation of this strategy.

The Executive is also invited to identify any additional issues, actions or initiatives to be included in the strategy and action plan.

Consultations

External The Equality and Access Advisory Panel considered issues around communication, consultation, engagement and participation and a public meeting on 1 December as part of the equalities impact assessment for this strategy.

Internal The Community Links officer group has reviewed the strategy and the council's approach to consultation has been considered by EMT.

Implications

Financial: None beyond current budgets set for 2009/10. The action plans for subsequent years will require resources to ensure it is implemented. These will be drawn from the Community and Corporate Planning budget.

Comments checked by

Legal: The new community strategy will meet the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, particularly the Duty to Involve. It will also provide a framework for emerging legislation around the 'Communities in Control' White Paper.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer, 01295 221686.

Risk Management: Without the adoption of a new strategy there is a risk that the business benefits outlined in paragraph 1.8 will not be realised. In addition there is a risk that we will not meet the standards required by the new legislation or that we will not meet the standards outlined in the CAA.

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

Equalities Approaches to consultation and engagement have been discussed by the Equality and Access Advisory Panel and one of the actions in the strategy is to develop guidance on improving consultation with harder to reach groups.

Comments checked by Grahame Helm, Head of Safer Communities and Development 01295 221615

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Strategic priority 4 – Cherwell: an accessible, value for money council.

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Barry Wood
Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy
Appendix 2	Draft Consultation and Engagement Action Plan
Appendix 3	Duty to Involve Briefing Note
Background Papers	
Report Author	Claire Taylor, Community and Corporate Planning Manager
Contact Information	01295 221563 claire.taylor@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Cherwell District Council

Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2009-2012



Contents

Introduction and purpose of the strategy	3
Scope of strategy	3
Timeframe for strategy	3
Performance and review	3
Strategic Aim	4
Strategy Objectives	4
What is consultation?	4
Why does the council consult?	5
How does the council consult?	6
Who does the council consult?	6
Quality and standards	6
Cherwell Consultation Principles	7
Contact details	8

Introduction and purpose of the strategy

This strategy sets out a broad framework for how Cherwell District Council proposes to consult and engage with local people and communities, including residents, people who work in the district, local businesses and the voluntary and public sectors. This framework will be used as the basis for a medium term action plan to guide the work of the Council in this area during the period 2009-2012.

As part of the strategy a charter will be developed that clearly and concisely outlines what members of the public and other stakeholders can expect from the Council in terms of the consultation and engagement activities that we undertake.

Guidance, training and 'toolkits' will also be developed to ensure that Council employees have the necessary support and training to meet the objectives in this strategy.

Scope of strategy

The strategy outlines our general approach and commitment; it does not replace any statutory or formal consultation processes that we currently undertake, for example in relation to planning, licensing or any appeals processes.

The strategy and action plan covers Cherwell District Council services, decisions and processes and does not commit partner agencies to its objectives and actions at this stage. However, it is recognised that working in partnership is an important part of this approach and one of the aims of the strategy is to develop joint strategies to improve consultation and engagement with partners. As such the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership will be asked for its views on this document.

Timeframe of strategy

This is a medium-term strategy covering the period 2009/10 (April 2009) to 2011/12 (March 2012).

Performance and review

An annual performance report will be published that reviews our performance against the strategic aim, objectives and actions outlined in this document. The content of the strategy and action plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis taking into account new policy developments and changes in local requirements, areas identified for improvement and national policy initiatives and ensure these are reflected in new actions as required.

Performance, in terms of implementing the action plan, will be reviewed by officers on a quarterly basis as part of the Community and Corporate Planning Team's service plan.

Strategic Aim

Cherwell District Council is committed to consulting the people and communities of Cherwell and developing strategies and services that take into account local priorities. Consultation and community engagement helps us to ensure that we are responsive to local needs and aspirations.

This consultation and engagement strategy will provide the Council with a consistent, corporate and agreed approach to how we consult the people and communities of Cherwell and use the results to inform our policy, strategy and service delivery.

The aim of the consultation and engagement strategy is to ensure the delivery of high quality consultation and effective engagement across the Council. The people and communities of Cherwell will have confidence in our activities and consultation and engagement will produce robust results that can inform service development and council policy.

This aim supports the delivery of the Council's strategic priority "Cherwell – An accessible, value for money council".

Strategy Objectives

Our objectives are to:

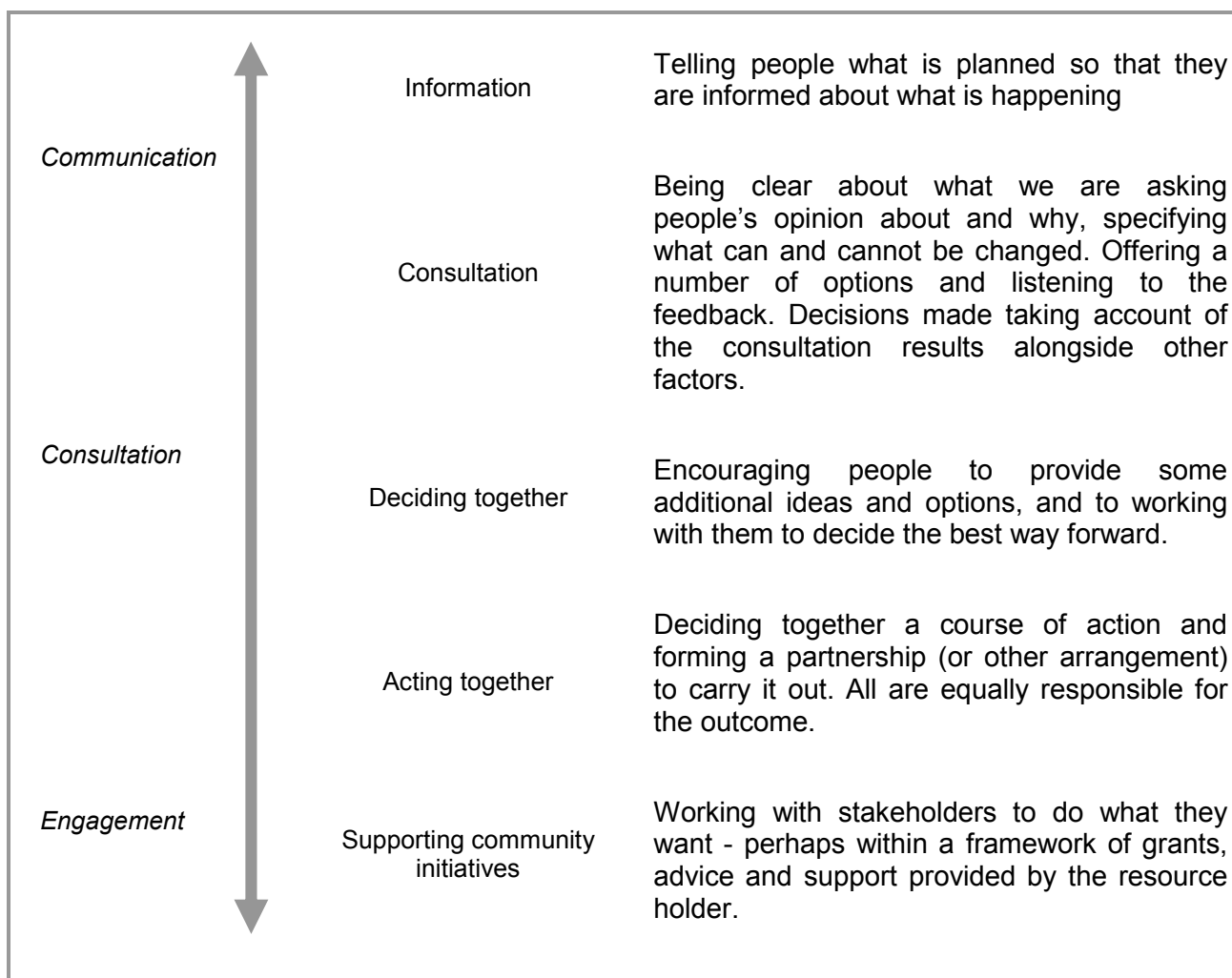
1. Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement
2. Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council
3. Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation
4. Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice
5. Ensure our consultation is open, accessible and inclusive
6. Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcomes

What is consultation?

The concept of a ladder of consultation or participation is well known (e.g. Arnstein's model in 1969). This approach sees consultation as a continuum moving from the most basic information giving to more complex and interactive modes of engagement. David Wilcox (1994) <http://www.partnerships.org.uk> identifies a number of stages that is useful for local authorities and those working in community consultation activities. (See figure 1)

This strategy aims to support consultation and engagement activity in each of these stages, using techniques that are appropriate for the kind of consultation or engagement required.

Figure 1: From Communication to Engagement



(See <http://www.partnerships.org.uk>)

Why does the council consult?

The main purpose of consultation and engagement is to ensure that our services reflect the needs of the local community. This requires us to actively undertake consultation to inform strategy, policy, service development and the allocation of the council budget. Key requirements include:

- To support the role of Councillors in understanding the needs and wishes of the Cherwell community
- The need to inform the community strategy and provide a solid knowledge base for developing services and service strategies
- To measure customer satisfaction and opinion in relation to service delivery and be able to track changes over time and in relation to service changes
- To measure issues around quality of life, such as the fear of crime
- To measure LAA targets and other performance indicators
- To improve the delivery and take up of our services
- To support bids for resources or the allocation of resources

How does the council consult?

The council has a good record of using different ways to consult people and communities, including surveys online and by post, workshops, focus groups, formal methods such as the publication of draft policies and strategies and consultative forums.

We are committed to using consultation and engagement methods that are inclusive and appropriate for the target audience. The council is also keen to consult in partnership with others and works with partners to jointly commission consultation. This strategy will help to improve our techniques and methods (with the aim of improving response and participation rates) and also increase the amount of joint projects we undertake with partners.

The council will publish planned consultations and the method being used to undertake the consultation or engagement event on the consultation pages of the website (www.cherwell.gov.uk).

Who does the council consult?

Before embarking upon consultation it should be clear who the target audience is. For example service users, potential services users, the families/carers of service users, council tax payers, partners, local businesses, other public agencies and the voluntary and community sector. The target audience and purpose of the consultation may have an impact on the consultation methods and techniques chosen.

Within these broad categories we recognise that there may be people or groups that are less likely to take part in consultations for a number of reasons for example they may have language or other accessibility requirements, they may not use many council services, they may be busy or spend a lot of time outside the district. These groups are often called 'harder to reach' and different approaches are usually required to establish and maintain contact with them, so that their views are not overlooked. This strategy will help improve the council's approach to consulting and engaging with groups that have sometimes been seen as hard to reach.

Quality and standards

There are a number of standards that we will be working to. These include the Oxfordshire Compact Consultation Code, for consultations involving voluntary and community sector organisations, government set standards for consultations such as the place survey and good practice standards such as those laid out by the Market Research Society or the Consultation Institute.

As part of the strategy a clear statement or charter regarding our principles and standards will be produced.

Cherwell Consultation Principles

1. Purposeful

Consultation is the cornerstone of the Cherwell Community Strategy, the medium term strategies flowing out of it and the Council's Corporate Plan. Consultation should be undertaken when we have a good reason, informing or developing service delivery, council policy or strategy. Consultation must be targeted and well-focussed, with clear objectives.

2. Robust

Consultation should be of good quality, meeting our required standards. We should be clear about the purpose and scope of the consultation and how its outcomes will be used. We must consult at a formative stage rather than later on in the process and provide people with information to allow informed response. The council will employ external expertise as necessary and support staff to undertake effective consultation.

Efforts will be made to ensure that information collected is in a standard format in order that it can be easily retrieved using a standard set of demographic categories and put to use by all council departments and partners. This contributes to reducing the need for new consultations and research.

3. Accessible

Consultations should use methods that appropriate to the people who need to participate. Consultations should allow all interested parties to have their say and give them adequate time to do so. Consideration should be given and steps taken to engage with groups we find hard to reach or those who may be unlikely to participate in traditional consultation methods. Consideration should be given to people who find it harder to participate in consultation and engagement activities for any reason, factors may be social, economic, cultural, geographical, health related, age related or time availability.

4. Communicated and Coordinated

Consultation activities should be appropriately communicated and integrated into the service and financial planning framework. Co-ordination of consultation activity should take place both across the council and with partner organisations to avoid duplication of effort, to share knowledge and provide better value for money.

5. Used

Proposals to carry out consultation must include a clear explanation of the information needed in order to ensure that all consultation activity is of value and relevance. Consultation findings should be reported clearly and outcomes of consultation must be clearly fed back to consultees and stakeholders; this includes the results of consultation and action taken on the basis of consultation findings.

6. Proportionate

Consultation expenditure will be proportionate to the scale of the service or theme being researched and the significance of the issue. Consultation should demonstrate value for money and be conducted in a coordinated way to avoid duplication of effort (both within the council and across partnerships) and consultation fatigue.

Contact details:

For more information about this strategy, the supporting action plan or the guidance and toolkits contact the Community and Corporate Planning Manager.

For information about planned consultation and engagement events have a look at the consultation calendar on our web pages.



01295 221563



consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk



www.cherwell.gov.uk



Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House,
Bodicote, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4AA

Objective 1: Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement

Objective 1: Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Complete Consultation and Engagement Strategy and three year action plan to be signed off by Executive	Report to Executive	February 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
	Annual Update Reports (Performance review of the strategy and consultation/engagement activity)	March 2010 March 2011	
	Bring forward next version of the strategy	March 2012	
2. Promote new strategy and action plan within Cherwell District Council and the LSP(Local Strategy Partnership)	Raise awareness of consultation and engagement strategy and statutory requirements (e.g. Comprehensive Area Assessment, Duty to Involve) by publishing the Council's commitments, standards and policies. Develop a charter to clearly state our standards to the public.	Charter July 2009 Ongoing 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager, Community Planning Assistant
	Managers event (EMT) to publicise strategy	January 2009	
	Item in Cascade about consultation and engagement, review success and consider an annual item or place in CDC annual report.	November 2009	
	Article in Inside Cherwell about consultation and engagement	April 2009	
3. Develop consultation arrangements and opportunities to support	Monthly managers update and reminder for the consultation calendar	February 2009, ad hoc briefing notes when policy change requires	Community and Corporate Planning Manager,
	Regularly brief Members on planned consultation and opportunities for involvement	June 2009, ongoing, quarterly	

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2009-2012

Objective 1: Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
Members in their roles	Setup Member led consultation activities, road shows and public consultation days.	First events to relate to sustainable community strategy in summer 2009. March 2009	Community Planning Assistant Members of consultation group
	Work with Communications Member Champion to consider a consultation role and how to work more closely with Members		
	Work with Democratic Services to ensure the Forward Plan and council reports make clear reference to consultation.	October 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager, Democratic Services Manager
	Establish a protocol with parish councils to coordinate consultation and prevent overload or consultation fatigue with the parishes.	October 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager, Rural Development & Countryside Officer
4. Set up consultation workshops and training for officers and members	Evaluate Members' training needs with regards to consultation	April- July 2009	Community Planning Assistant, democratic service manager, HR
	Evaluate staff training needs with regard to consultation		
	Set up training events.	September 2009	Training Manager

Objective 2: Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council.

Objective 2: Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Establish an internal network of consultation practitioners to help develop and implement the consultation strategy	Establish Internal Consultation Group.	March 2009	Community Planning Assistant
	Facilitate quarterly meetings of Consultation Group to share best practice, develop skills and discuss consultation issues.	Quarterly	
	Promote Consultation Group as a central resource for consultation and engagement advice	June 2009	
2. Use internal Consultation Group to coordinate consultation activity	All major consultation activity to be discussed and agreed by this group. All consultation events to be published on the online consultation calendar	June 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
3. Provide tools for staff and managers to undertake effective consultation.	Procure software to facilitate online surveys, discussion groups (interactive consultation), and a single portal for Cherwell consultation including a consultation calendar.	May 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
4. Establish clear support and guidance arrangements for employees undertaking consultation work	Publish consultation checklist	July 2009	Community Planning Assistant
	Publish a toolkit to support consultation (Consultation Toolkit)	February 2009	
	Develop an online corporate question bank of questions used in surveys	December 2009	
5. Establish Consultation database (list of contacts to	Identify the consultation groups (addresses and contact details to local organisations and groups	July 2009	Community Planning Assistant

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2009-2012

Objective 2: Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
communities, groups - who might help/support/ take part in consultation processes)	Update on regular basis	Quarterly	
6. Establish a three programme of corporate consultation to underpin corporate, service and financial planning.	Develop a single approach to Corporate Customer Satisfaction and Budget Consultation with a 3 Year framework contract to deliver improved value for money and better information to support service and financial planning. This framework should be adaptable to meet the needs of any emerging policy from the communities in control white paper.	April 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
7. Deliver annual round of corporate consultation	Annual surveys –residents priorities, customer satisfaction and budget/investment/savings priorities (budget consultation)	August 2009 August 2010 August 2011	

Objective 3: Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation.

Objective 3: Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Develop cross county arrangements to help ensure that consultation and engagement activities are well planned, publicised and do not lead to consultation fatigue.	Participate in county wide consultation group, including joint procurement where appropriate.	Ongoing quarterly	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
	Develop arrangements for an Oxfordshire wide consultation portal to help Cherwell residents to access district and county wide consultation events from a single web page.	April 2010	
	Promote a partnership approach to consultation and engagement via the county wide consultation officers group (possibly expand to include partners)	November 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
2. Commission the Place Survey	Commission and deliver survey in partnership with County Council and all Oxfordshire District Councils.	April 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
	Commission subsequent place survey's in partnership	2010/11	
3. Establish a joint Consultation strategy with the Cherwell Community Planning partnership	Agree an approach to community engagement and consultation that will underpin the delivery of the new Sustainable Community Strategy and inform future Cherwell priorities for the LAA. This should also take account of the statement of community involvement.	December 2009	Community and Corporate Planning Manager

Objective 4: Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice.

Objective 4: Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Put in place and publicise a set of quality standards and apply them to all consultation and engagement exercises	<p>Identification of officers from each service area to be responsible for consultation and engagement and participate in the internal officers group.</p> <p>All consultations to be registered with the Community Planning team to enable them to be publicised on the online consultation calendar. All consultations to follow the consultation process outlined in Consultation Toolkit and Consultation Checklist.</p>	<p>March-April 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>	Community Planning Assistant and the internal officer consultation group
2. Provide comprehensive advice and guidance to other departments and in the area of consultation.	<p>Publicise Consultation and Engagement standards to managers as laid in the consultation and engagement strategy.</p> <p>Work with the Human Resources Training Manager to ensure that opportunities are available to support officers who need to develop consultation and engagement skills.</p>	<p>March 2009</p> <p>July 2009 (and ongoing as part of appraisal action plans)</p>	Community Planning Assistant
3. Quality assure our approach to consultation and engagement.	<p>Review approach to consultation and engagement strategy using CAA key lines of enquiry (Health Check) and comparison with other similar organisations.</p>	Annual as part of the strategy's performance report	Community and Corporate Planning Manager; Improvement Team, Audit
4. Externally review our approach.	<p>This will be undertaken through a variety of means, including the CAA Assessment / IDEA peer review / Equalities Peer Review / Annual Use of Resources Assessment</p>	Annual	Community and Corporate Planning Manager; Improvement Team, Audit

Objective 5: Ensure our consultation is open, accessible and inclusive.

Objective 5: Ensure our consultation is open, accessible and inclusive.

Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Carry out an equality impact assessment for the proposed strategy	Take item to Equalities and Access Advisory Panel for public discussion.	December 2008	Community and Corporate Planning Manager
	Circulate strategy, action plan and charter to stakeholders for comment.	March 2009	Community Planning Assistant
2. Develop clear support arrangements for service managers to address the requirements of equality impact assessments.	Develop standard equalities monitoring questions for surveys	June 2009	Community Planning Assistant
	Set up and maintain the Equality and Access to Services Advisory Panel	Quarterly	
	Explore developing specific consultation fora including disabled groups, faith groups, older, younger people and BME groups where required	April 2010	
	Compile and publish council-wide consultation plan including timetable (Consultation Calendar)	June 2009	
3. Promote engaging with hard-to-reach groups	Feature regular consultation articles in Cherwell Link magazine.	September 2009	
	Establish needs of officers in terms of consultation and engagement support consultation group	September 2009	Community Planning Assistant Consultation Group
	Establish a programme of 'knowing your community' events for staff to highlight issues around engagement with hard to reach groups	Quarterly event.	
4. Help members of the public and stakeholders to access our consultation and	Update good practice guidance for consulting with hard-to-reach groups	April 2009	
	Ensure all consultation and engagement activities have a clear officer lead who can provide advice and support for those stakeholders who would like to get involved.	May 2009	Community Planning Assistant Consultation Group

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2009-2012

Objective 5: Ensure our consultation is open, accessible and inclusive.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
engagement events	Establish generic consultation email available for public	March 2009	
	Ensure that the council's plain English policy is applied to consultation	August 2009	

Objective 6: Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.

Objective 6: Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.		
Goal	Action	Completion Date
1. Ensure there are effective arrangements in place for feeding back the results of consultation to those who have taken part.	Prepare and reproduce a standard paragraph on the front of all consultation documents, explaining the consultation purpose and how the outcomes will be used.	February 2009
	Develop a standard template for feeding back consultation findings.	February 2009
	Publish actions taken as a result of consultation on the council's web pages.	August 2009
	Work with the customer services team to develop a feedback mechanism on customer comments, compliments and complaints.	August 2009
2. Use the results of the 2008/09 Place Survey to inform council and partnership activity.	Host workshops for staff and managers to feedback the outcomes of the corporate consultation programme	Annually September
	Disseminate results to CDC managers and partners; identify actions to take as a result of the survey.	April – July 2009
3. Undertake the corporate consultation programme to inform service and financial planning	Ensure the results of the Place Survey are fed into the new Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell.	June 2009
	Undertake customer satisfaction and budget consultation as part of an annual programme. Highlight how results are informing the budget and council priorities throughout budget setting process.	Annual programme to be completed by end August each year.
4. Ensure services use consultation and engagement evidence as part of service planning.	Develop the service plan templates to ensure that customer feedback and evidence from consultation and engagement work drives service plans and bids for service development or growth. (Planned consultation to be identified in all service plans)	Annual, to be undertaken as part of service planning.

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2009-2012

Objective 6: Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.

Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
5. Ensure services use consultation and engagement evidence as part of developing new strategies.	Refer to consultation and engagement evidence in key medium term strategies and publications.	As new strategies are developed	Community and Corporate Planning Officer

THE DUTY TO INVOLVE

A BRIEFING NOTE

This note provides an overview of the statutory requirement for local authorities to engage, involve and consult with its citizens. It is drawn from the guidance that accompanies the Act.

Legislative Requirements

The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty of Best Value (BV) on councils to continuously improve and requires that, in making arrangements to secure continuous improvement, we consult with people who are who are likely to use services or have an interest in the area.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill 2007 (pt 7 section 138) develops this requirement and places a 'Duty to Involve' upon all BV authorities from April 2009.

What is the 'Duty to Involve'?

The duty requires authorities to take steps they consider appropriate to involve '*representatives of local persons*' in the exercise of any of their functions, where they consider that it is appropriate to do so. It specifies three ways of involving that need to be covered in this consideration:

- **providing information** about the exercise of the particular function
- **consulting** about the exercise of the particular function; and/or
- **involving in another way**...

Within the context of the duty the term 'representatives of local persons' refers to those likely to be affected by, or interested in, a particular authority function. The term 'local persons' is not simply a reference to local residents, formally elected or nominated members of the community, such as councillors. It also covers those who work or study in the area (including those who work for the authority); visitors; service users; local third sector groups; businesses; bodies such as parish councils; and anyone else likely to be affected by, or interested in, the function.

What is the duty trying to achieve?

The activities we undertake to meet the duty will depend upon our circumstances. Appropriate engagement should become standard practice throughout authorities, central to service delivery, policy and decision-making. Authorities should be able to demonstrate, that they:

- understand the interests and requirements of the local community
- use their understanding to ensure information, consultation and involvement opportunities are provided on the right issues, targeted at the right people, and accessible
- have an appropriate corporate approach to providing information, consulting and involving in other ways that flows throughout their organisation – from strategic policies into individual service delivery – and that they work with partners where appropriate
- local people will feel that the authority provides relevant and accessible engagement opportunities and will know how to get involved, either directly or through their elected representative
- local people will recognise that the authority's policies reflect this involvement and services are tailored to local needs, even though difficult choices in service provision need to be made.

What we already do

CDC already undertakes consultation and engagement with stakeholders and local residents. At the corporate level examples include the annual satisfaction survey, annual budget consultation, and the BVPI (now 'place') survey. Consultation and community engagement activities are ongoing across the council. For example, our work with the voluntary sector, customer research and the Govmetric system, consultation with service users when we draft new policies and strategies, our work with parish councils and consulting on the local development framework.

This duty is not a new policy direction rather a requirement to consolidate and improve the way we currently do things.

Implications for CDC

Our ability and track record for consultation and engagement will be measured as part of the new CAA (comprehensive area assessment) inspection regime. This will include how effectively we work with partners to consult, share results and take action to address issues that emerge.

Whilst we already do a lot of good quality consultation and engagement work what we do across the whole council (and in partnership) hasn't always been co-ordinated and the results shared. So, while we meet the basic requirements of the act, there are several areas we need to develop.

Areas for Improvement

We need to ensure:

- our consultation and engagement is effectively planned, co-ordinated and meets the strategic needs of the organisation
- we use appropriate techniques to consult with people
- our consultation and engagement is timely, undertaken at a point where it can have a genuine impact of the decision or development
- we share consultation results with partners to help improve planning
- we routinely engage with service users to help plan service developments
- we understand the needs of our community and groups that may be harder to reach within our community
- we make changes to our services as a result of consultation
- we feedback the results of our consultation to those who participated, *including* what has changed as a result
- we work with councillors to involve them in consultation and engagement activities

Applying the duty

The duty to involve applies to all services, functions and important decisions. The authority must take steps to fulfil this duty and decide who it would be appropriate to inform, consult or involve. In considering how to fulfil the duty, we should aim to involve 'representatives of local people' as much as possible. We should not shy away from involving people in difficult issues, but will need to be clear in such circumstances about how much influence over decisions is being offered, people need to understand what role and influence they have in any consultation process.

In meeting this duty, authorities should consider:

- **Privacy:** ‘representatives of local persons’ should not be involved in individuals’ personal matters e.g. individual cases. However, it might be appropriate to inform, consult and/or involve in the policy development around these issues.
- **Previous engagement or involvement** (either by the authority or others), this should be used to inform the next stage of involvement with the public so as to avoid duplication and to help move any engagement forward.
- **Possible benefits and costs** authorities should consider the predicted benefits of informing, consulting and/or involving against the costs of that involvement.

Roles and responsibilities

Corporate responsibilities – the community and corporate planning team will be responsible for providing support to managers and staff in relation to consultation and engagement, they will prepare a strategy, action plan and guidance and will undertake corporate consultation for example satisfaction surveys and budget consultation. They will also work with the LSP to help develop a partnership approach to consultation and engagement.

Managerial responsibilities – service managers will need to ensure that they continue to undertake appropriate consultation and engagement activities as part of their general service development work including; service planning, major projects, equality impact assessments, value for money reviews, changes to service, service strategies etc.

Contacts

Claire Taylor, Community and Corporate Planning Manager, Telephone: 01295 221563

Agenda Item 11

Executive

Draft Budget 2009 – 2010

2 February 2009

Report of Strategic Director Customer Service and Resources and the Chief Accountant

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Council is required to produce a balanced budget for 2009/10 as the basis for calculating its level of Council Tax. It has to base that budget on its plans for service delivery during the year, recognising any changes in service demand that may arise in future years. The first draft was reported to the December 1st 2008 Executive meeting and a second draft to the January 12 2009 Executive meeting. The information has now been updated to reflect changes since then and, subject to any further changes Members may wish to include tonight, this final draft will be presented to full Council on 23 February 2009.

This report is public

****Please note the appendices to this report are to follow****

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1) to approve the changes to the draft budget since 12 January 2009 and consider the draft revenue budget (detailed in Appendix 1) in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities;
- 2) to agree the approach to the overall capital programme and 09/10 expenditure profile (detailed in Appendix 2);
- 3) to note the latest MTFS financial forecast (detailed in Appendix 3);
- 4) request officers to produce the formal 09/10 budget booklet on the basis of Appendices 1-3;
- 5) recommend ,subject to any further changes Members may wish to include tonight, the updated draft budget for adoption by the Council on 23 February 2009 (as a key decision);
- 6) recommend that the draft service plans be endorsed;

Executive Summary

- 1.1 The budget will form the financial expression of the Council's service delivery plans for 2009/10; the allocation of resources against agreed service priorities is necessary in order to achieve its strategic priorities.
- 1.2 There is a statutory requirement for the Council to set a balanced budget by 11 March 2009 and this draft budget is the penultimate part of that process.

- 1.3 The current economic climate presents unprecedented challenges in meeting spending priorities without placing undue burden on local taxpayers. The Council's successful approach to improving value for money and securing efficiencies on an ongoing basis provides the foundation for further significant cost reductions in the coming year, over and above contributions secured to date in excess of £2.8million.
- 1.4 As a result the draft budget presented illustrates further progress in securing further efficiency savings to reduce the funding gap identified in the previous draft from £43k to a balanced budget.
- 1.5 The level of council tax being proposed is analysed in Appendix 1.

Background Information

2.1 Service Plans

Copies of the Service Plans for 2009/10 are available on the Council's intranet site <http://intranet/improvement/draftserviceplans.cfm>.

2.2 Process

The delivery of a balanced budget representing value for money to local residents is the fundamental objective of the service and financial planning process. This centres on the preparation of service plans, which are developed not only to deliver the Council's corporate objectives and priorities, but also to demonstrate how the published service targets, representing the Council's commitment for delivery in priority areas, are to be achieved. The budget is the financial expression of these plans, within the context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The programme involves elected Members, the Council's senior managers and, in many service teams, operational staff. The views of the public, our community partners, the voluntary sector and the local business community are all actively sought through structured channels during the programme, and these views are reflected in the process of service prioritisation and resource allocation.

The draft budget is based on the latest forecast out-turn position, rather than the current year budget, and managers have had to justify their service and budget proposals through a robust challenge process from senior managers and elected Members.

The entire capital programme has been subject to review and re-profiling and has emerged with a clearer focus on service priority; although it is still felt that there is further work to be undertaken in this area.

2.3 Changes in the Revenue Budget Since 12 January 2009

The draft budget presented in December 2008 presented a funding gap of £0.7million. As a result of internal efficiencies this gap was reduced to £43k. The budget presented in this report benefits from further efficiencies and is balance. All changes since 12 January 2009 are analysed in Appendix 1.

2.4 2009/10 Capital Programme

The capital programme is analysed in Appendix 2 and includes a reconciliation of the movements since December 1st 2008.

2.5 The Future

The Council has successfully managed the budget challenges, previously forecast for 2009/10. It can be seen from the Medium Term Financial forecast in Appendix 3 that the coming years present even further challenges which in the main relate to the rapid decline in investment income due to interest rates. The Council's commitment to reducing its future dependency on investment income has already secured cost reductions in excess of £2.8m over the past 2 years. This strengthens its position to meet the forecast challenges of future years.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 This report presents a final analysis of the Council's draft 2009/10 Revenue and Capital Budget. The details in Appendix 1-3 will form the basis of the budget booklet to be presented to Council on 23rd February to support the setting of Council Tax.

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

- Option One** To review draft revenue and capital budget to date and consider actions arising.
- Option Two** To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information.

Consultations

Executive 12/01/09
Corporate Management Team 07/01/09, 14/01/09 and 21/01/09

Implications

Financial: Financial Effects – the significant financial effects of the budget are identified in Appendix 1. Any decisions made in relation to ongoing expenditure or income in the budget for 2009/10 will have repercussions in future years when current forecasts indicate the financial environment is likely to become increasingly difficult. The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget and could incur the intervention of the Secretary of State if it failed to do so.

Consideration of this item will fall within the provisions of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and Members affected by those provisions should declare accordingly and refrain from voting on the matter.

Efficiency Savings – Our Medium Term Financial Strategy requires efficiency savings and we have a NI target of 3.1% in 2009/2010. The draft budget presented includes a significant level of qualifying efficiencies which will enable the Council to meet its target.

Comments checked by Julie Evans, Strategic Director for Customer Service and Resources , 01295 221595.

Legal:

There is a statutory requirement for the Council to set a balanced budget by 11 March 2009 and the draft budget is part of that process.

Comments checked by Julie Evans, Strategic Director for Customer Service and Resources, 01295 221595.

Risk Management:

The significant risks and assumptions associated with the draft budget are outlined in Appendix 1 and a risk provision has been considered. On a broader front, if due consideration is not given to matching scarce financial resources carefully against properly assessed service priorities, the Council may fail in achieving its strategic priorities and in its duty to demonstrate value for money.

Comments checked by Julie Evans, Strategic Director for Customer Service and Resources, 01295 221595.

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 1-3 to follow separately

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Revenue 2009/10 Budget and Analysis 3
Appendix 2	Draft 2009/10 Capital Programme
Appendix 3	Draft Medium Term Financial Forecast 2009/10 to 2013/14
Background Papers	
2008/09 Budget Booklet 2008/09 Capital Programme Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget Guidelines 2009/10 Budget Booklet – to be presented at Council 23 February 2009	
Report Author	Karen Curtin, Chief Accountant
Contact Information	01295 221551 karen.curtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Agenda Item 12

Executive

Performance Management Framework 2008/2009 – 3rd Quarter Progress Report

2 February 2009

Report of the Chief Executive and Head of Improvement

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report the Council's performance against the Performance Management Framework for the period October – December 2008.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1) To note the progress made on delivering against the Corporate Scorecard and the other performance frameworks appended to this report.
- 2) To note the responses to the issues raised in the 2nd quarter report and to seek further information in the next quarterly Performance Management Framework report if required.
- 3) To agree that in the next quarterly report there will be an update on the impact of the economic downturn on:
 - a) The Council's ability to deliver the 2008/09 corporate targets of 400 new homes and the creation of 200 gross new jobs and the impact on our targets in these areas for 2009/10.
 - b) The income received through building control, planning applications and land charges during 2008/09, the projections for 2009/10 and the proposals for responding to a sustained drop in income as embodied in the 2009/10 budget. .
 - c) The progress of key development projects such as Banbury Canalside, Bicester Town Centre and South West Bicester.
- 4) To agree that in the next quarterly report there will be an update on the following:
 - a) The target for reducing acquisitive crime by 5% is unlikely to be met and current projections suggest a 2% reduction will be achieved. (Note: The Performance Scrutiny Working Group has identified this as an area of

concern and are proposing it should be subject to review through the scrutiny process. The progress of this work will be reported as part of this update).

- b) The increase in recorded violent crime (although involving a small number of incidents this has risen by 25% over the last quarter).
- c) The amount of waste sent to landfill. This is expected to be reduced by a minimum of 1400 tonnes but with the real possibility of further improvement to achieve the annual target of 1500 tonnes.
- d) The worsening performance on flytipping and prosecutions.
- e) The time taken to process minor and other planning applications. These met 59% and 71% of the respective performance targets and are rated Red and there has been a slight deterioration in the performance of both since the last quarter. (Note: The Performance Scrutiny Working Group has identified this as an area of concern and are proposing it should be subject to review through the scrutiny process. The progress of this will be reported as part of this update).
- f) The delay in introducing the Food Waste Recycling Service. . It is now likely to be Autumn 2009 before the delayed local food waste processing facility is built by the County Council.
- g) The increase in the number of days lost through sickness from 3.58 per full time employee a year to 6.31.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This is a report of the Council's performance as measured by the Corporate Scorecard for the period October - December 2008. The Corporate Scorecard is made up of the Council's priority performance targets and covers seven areas of performance. These are performance against the Community Plan, the Corporate Plan promises, National Indicators, Best Value Performance Indicators, finance targets, human resource targets, and customer satisfaction targets. We also report the latest results of inspections of the Council for information. More detailed supporting information is attached showing the performance on delivering all the Corporate Plan, the performance against each of the National Indicators and Best Value Performance Indicators, and the delivery of the Corporate Improvement Plan, the strategic service projects and the revenue growth bids agreed for 2008/09.
- 1.3 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 the successes and exceptions reported in appendix two.

Proposals

- 1.5 We ask the Executive to note the significant progress made in delivering our objectives. In particular:
- Under the national Use of Resources inspection regime we have improved our score (the scale is one to four) for Financial Reporting from two to three and for Value for Money from two to three. At the same time the Audit Commission recognised our combined annual report of finance and performance as an example of notable practice.
 - The Audit Commission has released the national comparative figures for performance against Best Value Performance indicators for 2007/08. This shows we achieved 74% of BVPIs in the top half of performance nationally compared with 68% in 2006/07.
 - The Council is making effective use of the Disabilities Facilities Grant to provide housing for vulnerable people and 140 completions are projected for the year.
 - In the last quarter the number of families living in temporary accommodation, 92, fell to under 100 for the first time. This has now been reduced to 77 families.
 - The investment in additional waste bins will be complete with the installation of the final batch in January. Also the new street cleansing vehicles arrived in November and these make emptying bins easier.
 - The Street Cleansing Service is now operating to additional hours in urban areas.
 - The improved performance on processing major planning applications. In this quarter the service met its target of processing 85% of applications within the Government target of 13 weeks.
 - The Council is now on track to meet its target of reducing CO2 emissions by 4% from the 2006/07 baseline.
 - An 'on-street' survey shows 89.6% public satisfaction with green spaces and public areas against the target of 71% set at the start of the year.
 - The new one stop shop was opened in Banbury to schedule in October.
 - The refurbishment of Bodicote House is proceeding to plan and budget. We are exploring options to increase income by letting Old Bodicote House and the Town Centre Offices in Banbury.
 - Since the last quarter overall satisfaction with customer service when contacting the Council has increased from 90% to 95%. This includes 100% satisfaction with telephone contact and 92% for face to face contact.
 - With our partners we agreed a new three-year Community Safety Strategy agreed.
 - The effective management of our revenue and capital budgets and the saving of £170,000 to date this financial year through improved procurement.
- 1.6 There are a number of issues identified in this report that are recommended for priority action or further monitoring of performance. These are:
- The ongoing impact of the economic recession on our ability to meet targets for the provision of new homes and jobs and the reduced income for Building Control, Development Control, and Land Charges.
 - The target for reducing acquisitive crime by 5% is unlikely to be met and current projections suggest a 2% reduction will be achieved. (The Scrutiny Performance Management Working Group are proposing Overview and Scrutiny consider this issue in more detail).

- The worsening performance on flytipping and prosecutions.
 - The amount of waste sent to landfill. This is expected to be reduced by a minimum of 1400 tonnes but with the real possibility of further improvement to achieve the annual target of 1500 tonnes.
 - The increase in recorded violent crime.
 - The delay in introducing the Food Waste Recycling Service. It is likely to be Autumn 2009 before the delayed local food waste processing facility is built by the County Council.
 - The time taken to process new benefits claims and changes in circumstances (see progress report in section 2.1).
 - The processing of minor and other planning applications are still rated red, meeting 59% and 71% of the respective performance targets, and there has been a slight deterioration in the performance of both since the last quarter.
 - There has been an increase in the number of days lost through staff sickness from 3.58 to 6.31 (though seasonal illnesses will have made a significant contribution to this increase).
- 1.7 The Performance Scrutiny Working Group has reviewed the Quarter Two Performance Report and will consider this report on 9 February 2009. It will be making proposals to the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board on the 17 February that the following issues should be considered in more detail. These are:
- The increase in acquisitive crime.
 - The processing of minor and other planning applications and the potential loss of income because of the economic downturn.
 - The amount of waste sent to landfill.
 - The progress on delivering service standards for all front line services.
 - The progress on delivering the Equalities Action Plan.

Conclusion

- 1.8 This report shows the Council is continuing to deliver against the majority of its priorities and has in fact improved overall performance since the last quarterly report. The report identifies a number of areas where performance is not at the level required. Where there is significant and is likely to continue into the future then this is reflected in the recommendations of the report.

Background Information

2.1 Issues Raised in 2nd Quarter Performance Report

Executive 17 November 2008 agreed that further information be provided on a number of issues as set out below:

1. The impact of the economic down-turn on delivering:

a. The 2008/09 corporate targets of 400 new homes, including a minimum of 100 units of social housing, and the creation of 200 new jobs.

New Homes. The ability to deliver 400 new homes during 2008/09 has been affected by the slowdown in the housing market and the consequent reluctance of house builders to continue building. This trend is being seen across the country as a direct consequence of the credit crunch. Within Cherwell it should be noted that in the nine months to December 2008, a total of 320 completions had been recorded. This figure includes 48 completions which have been identified as a result of the recent comprehensive monitoring checks undertaken to produce the Council's statutory Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The survey covered very small sites which have not recently been visited. It is therefore possible that the target of 400 will be achieved by the end of the year. This issue was considered in detail by Executive on 1 December 2008. The impact of current economic conditions on housing delivery will become more pronounced in coming months and needs to be carefully monitored. Comprehensive monitoring information will not be available again until the next full survey for the AMR (it is not cost effective to undertake this major survey frequently). However it will be possible to update on trends by checking progress with major sites. These sites contribute the majority of completions.

Within the 320 completions are 57 units of affordable housing. This is out of a total of 64 new affordable houses provided in the year to date, the remainder of which have been provided by other means (primarily acquisitions of existing private sector housing for social rented use under the council's initiative with registered social landlords. A number of other new affordable housing schemes are due to be completed in the period up to March and it is expected that the target of 100 new affordable homes will be achieved this year. Executive on 12th January considered a detailed report on the delivery of affordable housing in the current economic climate and members are directed to this report for more information on this matter. Currently the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is considering how to bring forward the supply of affordable housing in rural areas.

New Jobs. 652 new jobs are believed to have been created in the district in the year to 31 December 2008. These are spread across many companies, and are mostly as a result of new businesses or relocations, with relatively few due to expansion. There are no major new employers. 672 jobs are believed to have been lost, again through numerous small closures or contractions. There were no major individual losses or closures in the period. The situation is likely to worsen next quarter with closures such as Woolworths, and others outside the district which may have a knock-on effect, such as Aston Martin.

b. The income received through building control, planning applications and land charges and the budget implications of rising costs (fuel for example).

Building Control. For the first three quarters of 2008/09 the cumulative and actual Building Control income has been as follows:

Period	Budget	Actual	+ % over budget
April to June 08	104,678	122,971	+17.4%
April to Sept 08	205,708	242,246	+17.8%
April to Dec 08	337,008	315,335	-6.4%

The downturn in the economy, and in the building industry in particular, has clearly had an affect over the past few months. The market is very volatile and the best projection at present is that the outturn will be some £45,000 (or 9%) below budget. This includes the revised fees and charges that were introduced from 1 November 2008. It should however be noted that the budget is managed on a business basis and to date it has been possible to reduce costs to match reduced income. Budget issues for 2009/10 have been taken into account in the current budget recommendations.

Planning Applications. As at 31 December 2008 the planning fee income was 21% below budgeted levels with an expected shortfall over the year of £277,000. Comparing year on year March to December (2007/08 & 2008/09) actual fee income is up 2% from £571,000 to £586,000. However this comparison is needs to be seen in the context of budget expectations of higher levels of income arising from a significant national fee increase in the year. It is unlikely, based on discussions with developers, that the situation will improve greatly in the final quarter with no significant planning applications expected. Budget issues for 2009/10 have been taken into account in current budget recommendations.

Land Charges. The income projected in the budget for 2008/09 was £317,000. Given the impact of the economic downturn this was revised down to £160,000 in September 2008. There has been a significant increase in the use of personal searches which has impacted on income because cost recovery is not permitted. Searches generally have declined in line with the property market. This includes personal searches which have declined sharply more recently. The cumulative income at 31st December 2008 was £125,000. With income remaining at about £11,000 to £12,000 a month the income target set in September should be achieved.

Fuel. The current estimate for the year end overspend on fuel is £40,000. The unit price of fuel has fallen to 80p/litre against a budget price of 85p a litre. The overspend on fuel may reduce further if oil prices fall below \$40 a barrel. However conflict in the Middle East has caused oil to rise back towards \$50 a barrel and this will obviously impact on retail prices.

c. The progress of key development projects such as Banbury Canalside, Bicester Town Centre, and South West Bicester.

Banbury Canalside. The site allocation has been included as one of the reasonable alternatives in the Local Development Framework. The next stage is to produce detailed planning guidance. The preparation of this is in hand and will continue for some months. Whilst dialogue with the principal landowners continues there is little that can be done prior to the confirmation of the flood alleviation scheme.

Bicester Town Centre. The Executive 12 January received an update report. This showed very encouraging progress is being made on the delivery of the scheme, despite the difficult economic conditions. Sainsbury have agreed to acquire the town centre retail development from Stockdale and the Council agreed to allow Sainsbury exclusivity on the scheme until December 2009.

South West Bicester. Planning permission has been in place for some time. Discussions on detailed implementation are underway, but indications are that economic conditions will prevent an early start on the development. This is the site, approximately 1500 dwellings, that has the most significant impact on housing delivery over the next few years.

2. An update on:

a. The time taken to process minor and other planning applications.

The reasons for the fall off in performance in this area of work were explained in some detail in the 17 November PMF Executive report. Those reasons are still the cause of current performance. The recent decline in workload is a factor that assists, but decisions have been made to freeze vacant posts to reduce costs and this clearly cancels out that gain. There is also a continuing exceptional workload related to the RAF Upper Heyford case (completion of the Inquiry has been significantly delayed). Progress is being made to improve speed of processing, but recovery cannot be achieved quickly as the Council has to work within resource constraints. Nevertheless the backlog of minor/other planning applications has now largely been cleared. This in effect suppressed improved performance in the October - December quarter (455 applications cleared in total). We have reduced the applications currently in hand by over 25%. This will allow performance to improve in the final quarter of 2008/9. It should be noted that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group is proposing this performance be subject to review through the scrutiny process.

b. Increasing the visitor numbers to Banbury Museum.

Banbury Museum is the third most visited museum in the South East outside London (Source: Contribution of Museums, Libraries and Archives to the Visitor Economy, MLA July 2008).

The One Stop Shop installation within the Museum Shop and Tourist Information Centre, that took place in September and October, adversely affected the visitor figures for a two month period. Firstly the automatic counter was damaged during September and substantially under-recorded the number of visitors. Secondly, the unsightly and noisy works deterred visitors from entering the Museum.

New figures from November and December have been very encouraging, the museum receiving over 43,394 visitors over this two month period. These

figures do not include One Stop Shop users and exceed the same period in 2006/07 by 1,367.

c. Addressing the 2.1% rise in crime overall and not meeting the target for reducing acquisitive crime and the timetable for producing the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.

Whilst performance has improved in the third quarter, the Police do not expect to achieve the year-end target for reducing serious acquisitive crime by 5%. This issue has been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the chairman is considering asking a Task & Finish Panel to review this on completion of their work around antisocial behaviour. The timetable and process for producing an Antisocial Behaviour Strategy will also be influenced by the findings of the Task & Finish Panel together with the planned value for money review of Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour.

d. Improving the average time to process new benefits claims.

We are currently in negotiations with an outsourcing company to provide extra resources to deal with the increasing number of claims for benefits. We hope to have that resource in place in the next couple of weeks. The service has also employed additional temporary staff to help with the extra work in the short term. They will stay until the new contract is up and running.

e. Reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.

The current estimate is that landfill tonnages will be around 29,500 tonnes for 2008/09. This is around 1600 tonnes less than 2007/08. An apparent effect of the recession is reducing, by a small amount, the tonnage in the green bins.

f. The progress on delivering Nightsafe Bicester.

Nightsafe Bicester was formally launched on 10 December 2008. A "Spikies" campaign was run in the three urban centres, including Bicester, to raise awareness amongst the licensed trade and general public about the risks of spiking drinks. Spikies are plastic toppers that fit into the necks of bottles to prevent anything being dropped into them. Feedback from local licensees was very positive.

g. The financial impact of the Government's free swimming programme for over 60s and under 16s.

Following further information received regarding the Government's free swimming initiative the Executive decided not to participate as the costs to the Council would be substantial and unaffordable.

2.2 Overview of Performance

The performance against the Corporate Scorecard is shown in appendix one.

The successes, exceptions and issues reported by officers, including those from individual service plans, are shown in appendix two.

The performance against all the targets in the Corporate Plan is shown in appendix three.

The performance of each of the National Indicators is shown in appendix four.

The performance of each of the retained Best Value Performance Indicators is shown in appendix five. Full details are in appendix eight.

In addition to the Corporate Scorecard we also monitor our performance in delivering key corporate and service developments.

The progress made on delivering the Corporate Improvement Plan is shown in appendix six.

The progress made on delivering the Strategic Service Projects is shown in appendix seven.

The progress made on delivering the proposed outcomes of the 2008/09 Revenue Growth Bids is shown in appendix eight.

2.3 **Corporate Scorecard – Community Plan**

Progress in delivering the Community Plan is measured against 29 targets. These include a 'top ten' list of priority actions that Cherwell Community Planning Partnership has agreed for the year. They include targets for the Cherwell area and not just those that the district council is responsible for delivering. Information was only available for 18 of these, of which 17 were Green and 1 Amber. The remainder are largely dependent on information from surveys which have been completed but not yet reported.

Successes

- Consultants working on the review of the Sustainable Community Strategy are working on a review of all information and are on track to produce theme papers by the end of January.
- We are continuing to develop the links between the Community Plan and the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Issues

- Although there have been some initial delays with a cardiovascular disease project in the most deprived wards in Banbury Health Trainers are now working with clients.

2.4 **Corporate Scorecard – Corporate Plan and Corporate Plan Promises**

There are 55 targets in the Corporate Plan, 16 of which were highlighted as our service promises for 2008/09 in the council tax leaflet which was sent to every household in Cherwell. Of these 42 are Green, 9 Amber and 2 Red. Performance against two targets, which are also Corporate Plan Promises, will be measured by customer satisfaction surveys. Full details are in appendix three.

Successes

- Under the national Use of Resources inspection regime we have improved our score (the scale is one to four) for Financial Reporting from two to three and for Value for Money from two to three. At the same time the Audit Commission recognised our combined annual report of finance and performance as an example of notable practice.

- In the last quarter the number of families, 92, living in temporary accommodation fell to under 100 for the first time. This has now been reduced to 77 families.
- The Council is making effective use of the Disabilities Facilities Grant to provide housing for vulnerable people and 140 completions are projected for the year.
- Nightsafe Bicester launched on 10 December.
- New three year Community Safety Strategy agreed.
- All six Neighbourhood Action Groups established with community representation.
- Grants allocated to improve 17 village halls.
- An 'on-street' survey shows 89.6% public satisfaction with green spaces and public areas against the target of 71% set at the start of the year.

Issues

- The impact of the recession on achieving targets for delivering new homes, including affordable housing and new jobs (see details above).
- The introduction of sub regional Choice Based Lettings has been delayed from March till June due to delays in installing new software and partnership negotiations.
- The target for reducing acquisitive crime by 5% is unlikely to be met and current projections suggest a 2% reduction will be achieved.
- The amount of waste sent to landfill. This is expected to be reduced by a minimum of 1400 tonnes but with the real possibility of further improvement to achieve the annual target of 1500 tonnes.

2.5 Corporate Scorecard - National Indicators

National Indicators have replaced Best Value Performance Indicators as the statutory requirement for reporting the Council's performance. We are required to report performance against 32 National indicators, 10 of which will be measured by an annual survey. 10 indicators are Green, 4 Amber and 6 Red (data is not available for 2). Full details are in appendix four.

Successes

- The improved performance on processing major planning applications. In this quarter the service met its target of processing 85% of applications within the Government target of 13 weeks.

Issues

- The worsening performance on flytipping and prosecutions.
- The processing of minor and other planning applications are still rated red and there has been a slight deterioration in performance since the last quarter (see details above) .
- The time taken to process new benefits claims and changes in circumstances (see also Best Value Performance Indicators where the measure of performance is more specific).
- The increase in recorded violent crime

2.6 Corporate Scorecard - Best Value Performance Indicators

We have retained selected Best Value Performance Indicators as they provide a useful means of comparing delivery with other councils and against our own historical performance levels. There are 39 retained Best Value Performance Indicators. This is three less than in the previous two quarters as we have removed three Development Control Best Value Performance

Indicators. This follows clarification nationally that means these are identical to the National Indicators for this service. 22 indicators are Green, 10 Amber and 6 Red (with no data available for 1 due to technical reasons). Full details are in appendix five.

Successes

- The performance on removing graffiti has improved significantly and has moved from Red to Green status.
- An increase in the overall number of visitors to Banbury Museum.
- The improved performance in recovering Housing Benefits overpayment and reducing the amount outstanding.

Issues

- Conservation Area Appraisals are still at Red status because this was identified as a major project requiring concerted attention and moving to green will take at least another year. Excellent progress is being made but there is still a large backlog. Progress has slowed recently due to the increased complexity of the assessment process on a number of more controversial conservation area designations and appraisals.
- There has been a slight drop in the number of pupils visiting Banbury Museum.
- The time taken to process new benefits claims and changes in circumstances, current performance is rated Red for both.

2.7 Corporate Scorecard - Financial Performance

There are four finance targets. All are rated Green. This is a significant improvement on Quarter Two when 2 were Green and 2 Amber.

It should be noted we have met our Corporate Plan Promises to keep the Council Tax increase below inflation.

Successes

- The end of year budget outturn is forecast to be within agreed budget tolerances.
- The performance on spending the sports centre modernisation budget has improved dramatically. The performance for the rest of the capital budget has changed from Red to Green with 70% of the budget to date delivered.
- £174,000 of procurement savings identified to date against a full year target of £260,000.

2.8 Corporate Scorecard – Human Resources

Three Human Resources indicators are monitored: staff turnover; days lost through sickness; and workforce capacity. 2 are Green and 1 has moved from Green to Amber.

Issues

- There has been an increase in the number of days lost through sickness from 3.58 days lost per full time equivalent in the second quarter to 6.31 days in the third quarter. This has been influenced by seasonal sickness (cold and flu) which usually affects the 3rd Quarter return. Human Resources are focussed on improving the management of sickness absence. This includes training on the application of the new sickness policy which comes into effect on 1 April 2009.

2.9 **Corporate Scorecard – Customer Feedback**

There are three customer satisfaction targets included in the Corporate Scorecard covering: satisfaction with customer service; feeling safe; and feeling well informed. The first of these is monitored continually through the Customer Contact Centre. The other two will be established through annual surveys.

Successes

- Since the last quarter overall satisfaction with customer service when contacting the Council has increased from 90% to 95%. This includes 100% satisfaction with telephone contact and 92% for face to face contact.

2.10 **Corporate Improvement Plan**

Executive 7 July 2008 agreed the 2008/09 Corporate Improvement Plan. The priorities of the Plan are: embedding the culture of performance management; delivering value for money throughout the organisation; understanding and responding to the diverse needs of the communities that make up the District; developing partnership working; and engaging all our staff in the process of continuous improvement. There are 44 items in the Corporate Improvement Plan, 34 are Green, 9 Amber and 1 Red. Full details are in appendix six.

Successes

- Under the national Use of Resources inspection regime we have improved our score for Financial Reporting from two to three (the maximum is four) and for Value for Money from two to three.
- The Audit Commission has released the national comparative figures for performance against Best Value Performance indicators for 2007/08. This shows we achieved 74% of Best Value Performance Indicators in the top half of performance nationally compared with 68% in 2006/07.

Issues

- The improvement targets for a basket of retained Best Value Performance Indicators is scored Red overall. This is the result of a minor deterioration in the collection of National Non-Domestic Rates; the increase in the number of days of staff sickness; and a drop in the number of pupils visiting Banbury Museum. Both the latter issues are picked up elsewhere in this report.

2.11 **Strategic Service Projects**

These are 11 projects underway that although service-based are of corporate significance because of the resources involved, their impact on the Council's reputation or their contribution to delivering the Council's corporate priorities. 8 of the projects are Green and 3 Amber. Full details are in appendix seven.

Successes

- The Bodicote House refurbishment is on time and budget. The refurbishment of the Town Centre Offices will be completed by the end of March.
- The joint County and Cherwell Banbury Cultural Quarter Working Group held its first meeting.
- The technical group advising the Department of Communities and Local Government on the eco-town process has been wound up following the completion of major pieces of joint technical work. The outputs are now

being reported and are assisting in the Council's campaign against the Weston Otmoor proposal

Issues

- The progress on the Banbury Flood Alleviation Scheme has been delayed as we await the date for the compulsory purchase order inquiry. The delay is procedural and is not expected to affect the overall progress of the scheme.

2.12 2008/09 Revenue Growth Items

Councillors agreed 21 revenue growth items for 2008/09. The delivery of the outcomes promised for these extra resources are monitored. Of the 21 items 18 are Green, 2 Amber and 1 Red. Full details are in appendix eight.

Successes

- The Planning Enforcement Team is fully utilising Uniform to manage the enforcement process and has achieved much improved management of cases – including customer feedback and speedier responses where actions are required. Planning Committee has received detailed reports on this aspect of the Planning Services Improvement Plan
- An additional £60,000 of grant funding given to support advice centres and seniors clubs.
- The investment in additional waste bins will be complete with the installation of the final batch in January. Also the new street cleansing vehicles arrived in November and these make emptying bins easier.
- The Street Cleansing Service is operating to additional hours in urban areas.

Issues

- The delay in introducing the Food Waste Recycling Service. It is likely to be autumn 2009 before the delayed local food waste processing facility is built by the County Council.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The purpose of the report is to show the Council's performance against the performance measures in the Performance Management Framework. From this information the Executive can make an overall judgement about the progress the Council is making in meeting its objectives and identify the achievements it wishes to celebrate and the areas where action is required to improve performance.

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. |

Consultations Not Applicable

Implications

Financial:

Financial Effects – The resources 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. The Performance Management Framework is designed to improve financial management, including the avoidance of overspending and underspend, and the achievement of efficiencies. We monitor the progress against the Council's targets for annual efficiency savings and report performance through the Performance Management Framework.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Chief Accountant, 01295 221551

Legal:

Maintaining National Indicators is a legal requirement.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, 01295 221686

Risk Management:

The Performance Management Framework is designed to assist the Council in managing and monitoring delivery of its strategic objectives and improving customer satisfaction. Services are required to maintain their sections of the risk register, and update their risks no less frequently than quarterly. The service manager should address the risks associated with performance issues. The framework may show that performance is not achieving desired levels. Managers can address this by re-assessing the level of performance required, the priority it should attract, and the level of resource available. A failure to identify and improve key drivers of customer satisfaction through an effective Performance Management Framework is one of the Council's strategic risks.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & 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.

Data quality issues with individual indicators are set out within the combined exceptions/successes report (appendix 2) giving Executive additional information on

the reliability or accuracy of the data. This combines actions taken by individual accountable officers in services and also the improvement team as part of their data quality overview.

Comments checked by Neil Lawrence, lead officer on data quality, 01295 221801

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

The Performance Management Framework covers all of the Corporate Plan Themes

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Debbie Pickford - Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Improvement

Document Information

Appendix	Title
Appendix 1	Corporate Scorecard 2008/2009
Appendix 2	Successes, Exceptions and Emerging Issues
Appendix 3	Corporate Plan
Appendix 4	National Indicators
Appendix 5	Best Value Performance Indicators
Appendix 6	Corporate Improvement Plan
Appendix 7	Strategic Service Projects
Appendix 8	2008/09 Revenue Growth Items

Background Papers

Report Author	Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement
Contact Information	01295 227959 mike.carroll@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Corporate Scorecard

April - December 2008

Total GREEN	16	18
AMBER	7	6
RED	4	3
NO DATA (N/A)	2	2

Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Quarter Two	Quarter Three
Working in Partnership					
Cherwell Community Plan	Community & Corporate Planning	Quarterly	Only data for 18 out of 29 indicators available, 17 of which were Green and 1 Amber.	A	A
Corporate Plan Promises					
A district of opportunity					
Create 200 new jobs in the District (gross)	Economic Development & Estates	Monthly	Total new jobs created in the district now amount to 652 since 1 April. However, in that period 672 are known to have been lost.	G	G
Bring to market 400 net new homes	Planning & Affordable Housing	Annual (informed by provisional quarterly monitoring)	Running total now 368. Good performance in Q3 (204) assisted by progress on some housing allocations. Improved monitoring resources have also enabled some previously unrecorded completions on very small sites to be identified. Target of 400 should now be met.	R	A
Complete 100 new affordable homes	Housing Services	Quarterly	64 affordable homes completed against a target of 58.	G	G
Enhance Kidlington village centre by replacing the street furniture	Urban & Rural Services	Quarterly	Successful consultation process undertaken and support identified for materials to be used for street furniture. Press release to be made once we have progressed and are more certain with procurement. Portfolio Holder report to sign off equipment selection due January 2009.	G	G
A safe and healthy Cherwell					
Reduce acquisitive crime in the District by 5%	Safer Communities & Community Development (Thames Valley Police)	Quarterly	Thames Valley Police unlikely to achieve this target - latest projections suggest a 2% reduction.	A	R
Progress against the Sports Centre Modernisation Programme	Recreation & Health	Monthly	Progressing in accordance with agreed timescales.	G	G
Support new and improved healthcare services in Bicester and surrounding area	Recreation & Health	Quarterly	PCT procurement process delayed. OJEU advert to be placed in mid January.	G	G
Support provision of the best possible services at the Horton Hospital	Recreation & Health	Quarterly	Better Health Care Programme pursuing four workstreams involving Board and Forum members. Health needs assessment complete. Interim service arrangements largely in place.	G	G
A cleaner, greener Cherwell					
Ensure 90% of streets and parks are clean	Environmental Services	Four monthly	On track - litter score very good, detritus score lagging but will improve in the next quarter.	G	G
Achieve a recycling rate of 49%	Environmental Services	Quarterly	Recycling rate on track for 49.5% - 50%.	G	G

Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Quarter Two	Quarter Three
Reduce waste going to landfill by 1,500 tonnes	Environmental Services	Quarterly	Reduction in landfill tonnage will be in excess of 1400 tonnes, may hit 1500 tonnes.	R	A
Reduce the council's CO2 emissions by 4% from the 2006/2007 baseline	Environmental Services	Quarterly	Reduction appears to be on track.	A	G
An accessible, value for money Council					
Provide 10 new service access points in rural locations	Customer Service & Information Systems	Quarterly	Three kiosks and four PayPoints are being implemented currently.	G	G
Keep our Council Tax increase below inflation	Finance	Annually (at beginning of year)		G	G
Delivery against the Equalities Action Plan	Safer Communities & Community Development	Monthly	Remains on track for target achievement by year end.	A	A
National Indicators					
Performance against the National Indicator Suite (CAA)	Improvement Team	Monthly	10 of 20 NIs (50%) where data available have scored Green.	R	R
Performance against the former Best Value Performance Indicator Suite	Improvement Team	Monthly	22 of 38 BVPIs (58%) where data available have scored Green.	R	R
Financial Performance					
Percentage variance on revenue budget expenditure against profile (+2% / -5%)	Finance	Monthly	We are forecasting an overspend of £200k against budget - within budget tolerances.	G	G
Percentage variance on capital budget expenditure against profile (+2% / -5%). Capital ₆ : Sports Centre Modernisation Capital ₆ : Other Capital Projects	Finance	Monthly	SCM programme catching up - 95% of periodic budget delivered.	A	G
			97% of budget to date delivered. Service Heads to be encouraged to deliver.	A	G
£ in efficiency savings against a target of £260,000	Finance	Monthly	£174k of procurements savings YTD identified contributing to £260k target for full year.	G	G
Combined measure of growth bid outcomes achieved	Improvement Team	Quarterly	20 of 21 (95%) Growth Bids have achieved Green or Amber.	A	A
Human Resources					
Staff turnover	Human Resources	Quarterly	Quarter 3 = 2.4%.	G	G

Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Quarter Two	Quarter Three
Number of days lost through sickness	Human Resources	Quarterly	See BV12. Q3 Outturn was 6.31 days against target of 6.00. Increase due to seasonal sickness absence - flu, colds etc. Increased focus on management of SA, training in the application of new SA Policy effective 1 April 2009 is now underway.	G	A
Workforce capacity	Human Resources	Quarterly	Quarter 3 = 90.8%.	G	G
Customer Feedback					
Ensure that at least 90% of our customers when asked are satisfied with our customer service when contacting the Council	Customer Service & Information Systems	Monthly	95% satisfaction overall. 100% over the phone, 92% face to face.	G	G
Ensure that at least 78% of residents when asked say they feel safe at home and in the community	Safer Communities & Community Development	To be determined	No data available until completion of Place Survey and/or Oxfordshire Citizens Panel.	N/A	N/A
Ensure that 70% of our customers when asked feel well informed about the Council	Communications	Annual	Annual customer satisfaction survey.	N/A	N/A

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)	Community & Corporate Planning	Annual	Satisfaction survey completed. General trend of improvement. Overall satisfaction: 2006 = 60% 2007 = 65% 2008 = 67%. Some areas of weakness around Anti-Social Behaviour, CCTV, communications and contact.		
Service Satisfaction Surveys (for information purposes only)	All Services	To be determined	No information at present		
Inspection Scores					
Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance	Previous rating	Current rating
CPA / CAA	Improvement Team; Community & Corporate Planning	Annual	Re-categorisation inspection in November 2008.	Good	Good
Use of Resources	Finance	Annual		3	3
Direction of Travel	Improvement Team; Community & Corporate Planning	Annual	Details to follow.	Average	Average
Data Quality	Improvement Team; Community & Corporate Planning	Annual	Latest assessment March 2008.	2	2
Equalities Impact Assessment	Safer Communities & Community Development	Annual	We are working towards increasing our performance against the Equality Framework for Local Government, aiming to achieve a category 3 rating by end of 08/09.	N/A	N/A
Investors in People	Human Resources	Annual	Retained accreditation meeting 8/10 indicators.	Awarded	Retained

Performance Management Framework 2008/2009

Successes, Exceptions and Emerging Issues

October - December 2008

Successes – Corporate Plan – 2008/2009 Action Plan Targets

Strategic Priority	Action	Success
District of Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver improved community information to rural communities • Spend £300,000 on investing in better quality housing for vulnerable people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions internally with Customer Service and Access to Services Manager taking a lead role. • The Disabled Facilities Grants budget has been committed in the first three quarters with the help of £250k additional budget & £60k transferred from the discretionary budget. That equals 104 jobs approved at a value of £740k. This added to the approved budget carried forward from 07/08 will give a projected spend for 08/09 of £938k equalling approximately 140 completions.
District of Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers in temporary accommodation reduced to 101 units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77 households were recorded as living in temporary accommodation for December 2008.
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the NightSafe initiative in Bicester • Implement a new Cherwell Community Safety Strategy • Complete the District-wide coverage of NIM Representatives from local communities • Local community survey carried out by NAGs to identify current local concerns • Support and improve 17 village halls through grant aid funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NightSafe Bicester launched on 10 December 2008. • New 3-year strategy agreed by CCPP and Executive, and published on website. • All six neighbourhood action groups established with community representation. • All NAGs have identified their top three priorities through community surveys. • Grants allocated but not claimed until work/projects completed.

Strategic Priority	Action	Success
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 10 county wildlife site surveys Maintain at least 71% resident satisfaction with green spaces and public areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites inspected and reported on by BBOWT. Satisfaction rating of 89.6% achieved.
An Accessible, Value for Money Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-launch town centre offices in Banbury and Kidlington Introduce a single, centralised customer complaints process Produce a combined annual report of performance and finance Provide rural customers with more ways to access our services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Banbury facility opened as planned on October 6 2008 (the refurbished Kidlington office opened in September 2008). This is now in place with associated online form and new leaflet. Some teething issues as we try to avoid double recording. Achieved. This secured a level 4 score in the Use of Resources assessment and was confirmed as an example of "notable practice" by the Audit Commission. Have now received PayPoint contract details; met with and discussed possible sites with ORCC and Village Shops worker. Now planning to go out and discuss with individual identified shop owners.

Successes - Service Plans

Service	Success
Customer Service & Information Systems	<p data-bbox="1137 920 1166 1317">Customer Service & Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Workshop held to demonstrate new equipment packages and the new modern.gov committee system. Exit survey work completed at all local offices: 495 interviews completed with customers as they left the office. Draft report received. In twelve months since November 2007 power consumption by the server room has fallen from 138 kw/month to 87 kw/month.

Service	Success
Legal & Democratic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee management system procured and implemented.
Environment & Community	
Recreation & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local democracy week involved 5 Cherwell secondary schools which included over 500 young people putting their questions to local councillors and a trip to the Houses of Parliament to meet Tony Baldry MP and put questions to him.
Planning, Housing & Economy	
Building Control & Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Control satisfaction ratings remain high at 91% and 92% for each part of the service. Justified complaints remain low, 10 received altogether, and there have been 7 compliments.
Development Control & Major Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process improvements have been made to the following. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Delegated Reports - Now refined more appropriate to the task and will fit with revised PINS Householder fast-track appeals. Planning Committee refined - New structured report format - Revised officer presentation - Update reports now quarterly. Decision sign off process now altered to marry dispatch date to date of decision now saving 3/5 days processing time and extra recording sheets. A framework has been drafted in association with Legal & Democratic Services to facilitate public speaking at the Planning Committee in the new municipal year. This allows for the constitution change to be recommended and the Planning Committee to be consulted on the format.
Housing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Housing Services Equalities & Diversity Group was launched in October 2008. Housing Services has designated a senior manager as an "Equalities & Diversity Champion" who chairs the working group, and represents the Service on the Corporate Officer Group and Equality & Access advisory panel for customers. To support the corporate plan aim of "give advice and support to find a home if you are without one", a Homebuy event was held in Bicester during October for customers to explain the range of Homebuy products available. Housing Services staff attended the event and held a "housing advice stall" to ensure customers received up to date information about housing products. The Private Sector Housing Team successfully prosecuted a private sector landlord for overcrowding. A round table discussion was held between officers of Housing Services and Charter Community Housing, Sanctuary Group and Sanctuary Care to share ideas and initiatives on housing management and housing development. This meeting helped to develop our strong working relationships and mutual understanding.

Service	Success
Chief Executive's Services	
Improvement Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes of VfM Reviews for Property Management, Fees and Charges and Street Cleansing reported to Executive. • Implementation of Housing Services VfM Review has resulted in Cherwell leading a local pilot group for trialling a proposed benchmarking scheme. • 74% of our BVPIs were in the top half of performance nationally for 2007/08 compared to 45% in 2002/03. • CAA Action Group established and priority Action Plans produced for Improving Data Quality and Management of Partnerships. • Achieved score of 3 for KLoE Value for Money.

Successes – National Indicators

Service	Success
Planning, Housing & Economy	
Development Control & Major Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 157a % Major planning applications decided in 13 weeks: The planning improvement plan has ensured that a high level of performance is now sustainable with regard to major applications. This should be considered in the context of the Upper Heyford Inquiry and the impact that it had on the major developments team.

Successes – Best Value Performance Indicators

Service	Success
Customer Service & Resources	
Exchequer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BV 79b(ii) Housing Benefit Recovered: Outstanding: September performance should have been green. The brought forward figure was incorrectly entered. This has now been corrected.

Successes – Strategic Service Projects

Service	Success
<p>Business Services</p>	<p>Customer Service & Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation Review and Refurbishment: Overall the project is on target in respect of timescales and budget allocation. Learning from phases 1&2 has enabled more effective planning of ongoing phases in closer liaison with the contractor. Town Centre Offices will be cleared of debris early in the new year to enable refurbishment works to commence for completion by the end March 2009.
<p>Planning & Affordable Housing Policy</p>	<p>Planning, Housing & Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The technical group to inform CLG on the eco town process has been wound up following successful completion of the major pieces of joint technical work (CDC/OCC/Parkridge/CLG and others).

Performance Management Framework 2008/2009

Exceptions

Exceptions – Corporate Plan – 2008/2009 Action Plan Targets

Strategic Priority	Action	Exception
<p>District of Opportunity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve 400 new homes including a minimum of 100 affordable homes • Complete land assessments for business sites in the Local Development Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing impact of credit crunch. As reported in September the provisional figures for the first two quarters reflect the impact that the credit crunch is having on housebuilding rates nationally. It also reflects pre-existing delay on sites such as Bankside and former RAF Upper Heyford. The 2008 AMR will review the projections for 2008/09 onwards. The 2007 AMR's projections were made before the credit crunch began to seriously affect housebuilding. • Currently (December 2008) this is having less impact upon completions of affordable housing than on overall delivery of market homes. • Further assessment of employment land needs to be commissioned to support LDF however resource pressures (particularly owing to additional eco town work) have meant that this project is slipping. It is expected that any additional work can be completed by early 2009/10 and will not delay Core Strategy timetable.
<p>District of Opportunity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete transport studies and infrastructure needs assessment for Banbury and Bicester. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITLUS work progressing well, however some capacity issues owing to Halcrow (transport consultants) being required to undertake work (for CDC) on eco towns. Also, some additional modelling required for Banbury.

Strategic Priority	Action	Exception
District of Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Choice Based Letting to be a countywide scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Choice Based Lettings project is nearing completion however delays in implementation of new software will result in the project slipping from March until June 09. This is due to the software supplier Abritas not being able to resource the sub regional project until June 2009.
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Thames Valley Police to reduce theft from vehicles, robbery and household burglary by 5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thames Valley Police projecting that they will not achieve the 5% crime reduction target. This is being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. <p>Latest projections (December 2008) suggest a 2% reduction.</p>
Cleaner, Greener Cherwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 1500 tonnes by 31 March 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1400 tonnes minimum predicted to date with the real possibility of further improvement to reach the annual target.

Page 282

Exceptions - Service Plans

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
Environment & Community		
Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel likely to still be overspent but unit price now 88p/litre compared to the budget price of 85p/litre. Oil prices still falling so this overspend area may fall to around £50k 	
Safer Communities & Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consortium approach to CCTV maintenance procurement has collapsed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC will now progress a tendering exercise as part of the upgrade contract.

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
Safer Communities & Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thames Valley Police projecting that they will not achieve the 5% crime reduction target for serious acquisitive crime. This is being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. By end of December, all crime had risen by just 0.2% but measured as crime per 100,000 population had fallen from 58.08 in 2007 to 56.83 in 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance to be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Urban & Rural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near miss incident in Bus Station requires review of procedures. Accident in Spiceball Car Park likely to lead to legal action by claimant. Risk review undertaken and Council position is to defend our position. 	
Planning, Housing & Economy		
Building Control & Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Control income is currently predicted to be £40k below budget. This is being mitigated by the non-filling of a vacant post and reduced consultancy support costs. The income situation is quite volatile and this may result in a marginal deficit on the BC trading account this year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite reduced Building Control income the overall BCES budget is predicted to be £20k surplus due to measures taken in this and other services.

Exceptions – National Indicators (RED Indicators)

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
Environment & Community		
Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This NI measures both fly tipping and enforcement actions. Fly tips are very slightly up 437 v 427 (in 2007/08). This is assessed as unchanged by this NI. Enforcement action good but less successful prosecutions this year than last. Hence an assessment of 3 rather than a 1.
Safer Communities & Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI 15: Serious violent crime rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual crime has reduced by 33.3% (70 in 2006, 51 in 2007, 34 in 2008). Need to review baseline and target with Thames Valley Police.

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
Safer Communities & Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI 16 Serious acquisitive crime rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thames Valley Police are projecting year end performance at 2 - 3% reduction against target of 5%. Performance to be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Planning, Housing & Economy		
Development Control & Major Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI 157b % Minor planning applications decided in 8 weeks NI 157c % Other planning applications decided in 8 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a purge on applications that were out of time this has resulted in performance that is both below national standards and those set out in the service plan. However by the end of December 2008, the outstanding caseload across the team had been reduced by 30% meaning that improvement should be achieved for the final quarter of 2008/9. The backlog of applications is now a level that is consistent with high performance. The minor alterations in process have assisted in keeping performance at a level that has been achieved during the year so far despite clearing the majority of the out of date applications.
Planning & Affordable Housing Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI 154 Net additional homes provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparator of 681 for the year (170/171 per quarter) is based on expected supply from deliverable and developable sites from 2007 Annual Monitoring Report (revised projections are included in the 2008 AMR). The cumulative figure for the year so far reflects the impact that the credit crunch is having on housebuilding rates nationally. It also reflects delay on sites such as Bankside and former RAF Upper Heyford. However, 3rd quarter net additional housing completions were relatively high at 204 (provisional only as confirmed figures are agreed with OCC annually). This has resulted from development activity on a further two of the Council's non-statutory housing allocations (16 units completed at Arncott and 22 at Milton Road, Bloxham), a further 18 homes at Hanwell Fields, and the completion of 20 on a site identified in the Council's Urban Housing Potential Study 2005 (the former Sunlight Services Laundry at

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
		Bicester). Improved monitoring resources have also enabled 48 completions to be recorded against older planning permissions (i.e very small sites which have not recently been visited).

Exceptions – Best Value Performance Indicators (RED Indicators)

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
Customer Service & Resources		
Exchequer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BV 78a Average time for new claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average days for new claims have improved slightly even though the caseload continues to increase. <p>We are currently in talks with an outsourcing company to undertake the additional work created by the increase in benefit claims. We hope to have that in place by the end of January 2009.</p>
Exchequer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BV79b(iii) Housing Benefit Overpayment: Written Off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of write offs are due to be completed within the next few weeks.
Environment & Community		
Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BV 216b Information on contaminated land (% of sites of potential concern) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigations carried out at the end of 2007/08 have shown that the figure used for the number of potentially contaminated sites used for the calculation of this indicator during the year was incorrect. This has impacted on the accuracy of performance reported during 2008/09, and so re-calculated data has now been entered retrospectively onto the performance management system. We are also reviewing the target for 2008/09.
Recreation & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BV 170a Visits to/usage of museums per 1,000 population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a negative, unavoidable, impact on Museum and TIC visitors during the recent work to the TIC/OSS.

Service	Exception	Proposed Action / Update
<p>Planning & Affordable Housing Policy</p>	<p>Planning, Housing & Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BV 219c % of Conservation Areas with published Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure is below target because of the large number of conservation areas in the district and (historically) insufficient resources to undertake appraisals. There is now an increased staff resource to undertake reviews and a commitment to complete these as part of a 4 year programme. (NB: Earlier CA character appraisals did not include management plans (which is why the figures are different for this PI and BV219a.05).

Performance Management Framework 2008/2009
Emerging Issues

Emerging Issues – Corporate Plan – 2008/2009 Action Plan Targets

Strategic Priority	Action	Success
<p>District Of Opportunity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch and implement a new Cherwell Rural Strategy. • Enhance the village centre environment of Kidlington through the replacement of the street furniture. • Deliver £200,000 funding for transport infrastructure through developer contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation period closed. Briefing made to CCPP. Parish Liaison meeting 12 November. Executive 17 November 2008. Further final report to Executive in January 2009. • Successful consultation process undertaken and support identified for materials to be used for street furniture. Press release to be made once we have progressed and are more certain with procurement. Portfolio Holder report to sign off equipment selection due January 2009. • The s106 agreement for Bicester Town Centre is currently with Sainsbury's legal team for final ratification. When this is completed funding in principle will be in place, however this needs to be tempered by the current economic climate and its potential impact on a site start that would trigger payments. Smaller payments have been cleared through the s106 process in December 2008, again these are dependant on the schemes starting on site.
<p>A Safe and Healthy Cherwell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest significantly in technology (CCTV) to improve crime detection rates and deter crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TVP planning major refurbishment works at Banbury Police Station which could delay capital programme to upgrade CCTV suite.

Strategic Priority	Action	Success
An Accessible, Value for Money Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the proportion of total customer interactions that are handled online to 14% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are still using the definition of online customer interaction that was agreed in 2006/07. This will be reviewed and re-baselined this year so we will end with two figures - one as we will measure going forward, and one as close to the same criteria as used in 06/07 as we can.

Emerging Issues - Service Plans

Service	Emerging Issue	Proposed Action / Update
Recreation & Health	<p>Environment & Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful launch of TIC/OOS but sales continue to be adversely affected. 	
Development Control & Major Developments	<p>Planning, Housing & Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continued economic downturn has resulted in a significant drop in major strategic planning applications being submitted to the Council. This in turn impacts on the Council's ability to deliver the wider benefits associated with such development. Despite significant planning fee income in December the outlook with regard to the remainder of the financial year is bleak. As such, steps have been taken to plan for a reduction in fee income in 2009/10. This work resulted in the reduction of consultancy staff from 3 to 1, with an overall plan to remove dependency on such staff completely. 	

Corporate Plan 2008/2009 Action Plan April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
Cherwell: A District of Opportunity			
DCP01.1.1 Present and consult on choices about major development locations in the District	G	G	Public consultation on "options for growth" now completed. Information currently being analysed.
DCP01.2.1 Complete land assessments for business sites in the Local Development Framework	A	R	CMT Exception Further assessment of employment land needs to be commissioned to support LDF however resource pressures (particularly owing to additional eco town work) have meant that this project is slipping. It is expected that any additional work can be completed by early 2009/10 and will not delay Core Strategy timetable.
DCP01.3.1 Contribute to the creation of 200 new jobs in the District	G	G	Total new jobs created in the district now amount to 652 since 1 April. However, in that period 672 are known to have been lost.
DCP01.4.1 Complete transport studies and infrastructure needs assessment for Banbury and Bicester	A	A	CMT Exception ITLUS work progressing well, however some capacity issues owing to Halcrow (transport consultants) being required to undertake work (for CDC) on eco towns. Also, some additional modelling required for Banbury.
DCP01.4.2 Deliver £200,000 funding for transport infrastructure through developer contributions	G	A	CMT Emerging Issue The s106 agreement for Bicester Town Centre is currently with Sainsbury's legal team for final ratification. When this is completed funding in principle will be in place, however this need to be tempered by the current economic climate and its potential impact on a site start that would trigger payments. Smaller payments have been cleared through the s106 process in December, again these are dependant on the schemes starting on site.
DCP01.5.1 Achieve 400 new homes including a minimum of 100 affordable homes	R	A	CMT Exception See comments from September and the ongoing difficulties in response to the credit crunch. Currently this is having less impact upon completions of affordable housing than on overall delivery of market housing.
DCP01.6.1 Expand Choice Based Letting to be a countywide scheme	A	A	CMT Exception The Choice Based Lettings project is nearing completion however delays in implementation of new software will result in the project slipping from March until June 09. This is due to the software supplier Abritas not being able to resource the sub regional project until June 09.
DCP01.6.2 Temporary Accommodation Strategy approved	G	G	The Temporary Accommodation Strategy has been approved and published.
DCP01.6.3 Numbers in temporary accommodation reduced to 101 units	G	G	CMT Success 77 households were recorded as living in temporary accommodation for December 2008.

Corporate Plan 2008/2009 Action Plan April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
DCP01.7.1 Spend £300,000 on investing in better quality housing for vulnerable people	G	G	CMT Success The Disabled Facilities Grants budget has been committed in the first three quarters with the help of £250k additional budget & £60k transferred from the discretionary budget. That equals 104 jobs approved at a value of £740k. This added to the approved budget carried forward from 07/08 will give a projected spend for 08/09 of £938k equalling approximately 140 completions. Report to February Executive.
DCP01.8.1 Launch and implement a new Cherwell Rural Strategy	A	A	Parish Liaison meeting held in November. Webpage dedicated to parish News/Business. Access provided to webcast of the Parish Liaison meeting. Coordinated distribution of parish council correspondence/information.
DCP01.8.2 Deliver improved community information to rural communities	A	G	Design work is virtually complete, and tender documentation will be ready on time.
DCP01.9.1 Complete the design of the environmental enhancement scheme for Parson's Street Banbury	G	G	Successful consultation process undertaken and support identified for materials to be used for street furniture. Press release to be made once we have progressed and are more certain with procurement. Portfolio Holder report to sign off equipment selection due January 2009.
DCP01.9.2 Enhance the village centre environment of Kidlington through the replacement of the street furniture	G	G	
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell			
DCP02.1.1 Ensure at least 78% of residents say they feel safe at home and in the community	No Data	No Data	No data available until Place Survey and/or Citizens Panel.
DCP02.1.2 Work with TVP to reduce theft from vehicles, robbery and household burglary by 5%	A	R	CMT Exception Thames Valley Police unlikely to achieve this target - latest projections suggest a 2% reduction
DCP02.1.3 Invest significantly in technology (CCTV) to improve crime detection rates and deter crime	A	A	CMT Emerging Issue TVP planning major refurbishment works at Banbury Police Station which could delay capital programme to upgrade CCTV suite.
DCP02.1.4 Introduce the Nightsafe initiative in Bicester	A	G	CMT Success Nightsafe Bicester launched on 10 December 2008.
DCP02.1.5 Implement a new Cherwell Community Safety Strategy	G	G	CMT Success New 3-year strategy agreed by CCPP and Executive, and published on website
DCP02.2.1 Complete the District-wide coverage of NM Representatives from local communities	G	G	CMT Success All six neighbourhood action groups established with community representation
DCP02.2.2 Local community survey carried out by NAGs to identify current local concerns	G	G	CMT Success All NAGs have identified their top three priorities through community surveys

Corporate Plan 2008/2009 Action Plan April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
DCP02.3.1 Support the provision of the best possible services at the Horton Hospital	G	G	Better Health Care Programme pursuing four workstreams involving Board and Forum members. Health needs assessment complete. Interim service arrangements largely in place.
DCP02.3.2 Support new and improved health care services for Bicester and surrounding areas	G	G	PCT procurement process delayed. OJEU advert to be placed in mid January.
DCP02.3.3 Implement a new Cherwell Public Health Strategy	G	G	Health Strategy adopted.
DCP02.4.1 Help increase participation in active recreation by 1%	G	G	Increase in participation remains on target. Latest figures from Sport England show increase in participation in Cherwell.
DCP02.4.2 Prepare a funding and delivery plan for a Bicester multi-sports village	G	G	Project plan agreed by Executive but progress likely to be affected by slow down in housing markets/sales.
DCP02.5.1 Invest £15m in rebuilding or refurbishing our sports centres	G	G	Progressing in accordance with agreed timescales.
DCP02.6.1(a) Support and improve 12 existing community centres/organisations through grant aid funding	G	G	Provision of grants and advice.
DCP02.6.1(b) Support and improve 17 village halls through grant aid funding	G	G	CMT Success Grants allocated but not claimed until work/projects completed.
DCP02.6.2 Provide 820 formal and informal recreation opportunities for young people	G	G	Good progress being made. On target.
DCP02.6.3 Increase the numbers of older people participating in group activities by 3%	G	G	There are now 10,749 participants in group activities.
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell			
DCP03.1.1 Ensure at least 90% of our streets and parks are clean at any one time	G	G	On track - litter score very good, detritus score lagging but will improve in the next quarter.
DCP03.1.2 Extend the cleaning times of all urban centres	G	G	Cleaning being carried out in the urban centres into the early evening.
DCP03.2.1 Increase our recycling rate to 49% by 31 March 2009	G	G	Recycling rate on track for 49.5% - 50%.
DCP03.2.2 Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 1500 tonnes by 31 March 2009	R	A	Reduction in landfill tonnage will be in excess of 1400 tonnes, may hit 1500 tonnes.
DCP03.3.1 Undertake 10 county wildlife site surveys	G	G	Completed last month.
DCP03.4.1 Reduce the Council's carbon dioxide emissions by 4%	A	G	Reduction appears to be on track.
DCP03.5.1 Inform all residents on actions individual households can take to reduce carbon emissions	G	G	Leaflet widely available and has been distributed to more than 12,000 properties.

Corporate Plan 2008/2009 Action Plan April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
DCP03.6.1 Maintain at least 71% resident satisfaction with green spaces and public areas	G	G	CMT Success Satisfaction rating of 89.6%
Cherwell: An Accessible, Value for Money Council			
DCP04.01.1 Introduce a single, centralised customer complaints process	G	G	CMT Success This is now in place with associated online form and new leaflet. Some teething issues as we try to avoid double recording.
DCP04.01.2 Ensure that at least 90% of our customers are satisfied with our customer service	G	G	95% satisfaction overall. 100% over the phone, 92% face to face.
DCP04.01.3 Increase Cherwell Link to four editions per year	G	G	Fourth edition distributed. 2009 schedule includes four issues.
DCP04.02.1 Secure level 3 and work towards level 4 status in the national equality standard	A	A	Work plan agreed to reach level 3 by year end
DCP04.03.1 Baseline our existing complaints resolution performance	G	G	Not certain all previous complaints recorders have provided their evidence but for those that have, last year's performance was 100%.
DCP04.04.1 Achieve a score of 3 against the KLoE for VfM in the Use of Resources assessment	G	G	Achieved.
DCP04.04.2 Deliver a balanced, revenue-based budget without calling on reserves	A	G	The prompt and effective cost containment actions taken within the year have impacted positively on areas of earlier concern.
DCP04.04.3 Secure £210,000 in efficiency savings of which £160,000 procurement savings	G	G	£174k of procurements savings YTD identified contributing to £260k target for full year.
DCP04.05.1 Keep our council tax rise to below the rate of inflation for 2009/10	G	G	
DCP04.06.1 Produce a combined annual report of performance and finance	G	G	CMT Success Achieved. This secured a level 4 score in the Use of Resources assessment and was confirmed as an example of "notable practice" by the Audit Commission.
DCP04.07.1 Review the outcome of the One Stop Shop pilot at Bodicote House	G	G	Exit survey of customers as all our local offices provided a wealth of evidence that the new layout is liked and appreciated. Specific feedback from disabled users and through customer feedback cards has or is being acted on.
DCP04.07.2 Re-launch town centre offices in Banbury and Kidlington	G	G	Achieved.
DCP04.07.3 Provide rural customers with more ways to access our services	A	A	Discussion held with a number of interested shops/outlets. These have been plotted and show good spread across the District. Likelihood is 3/4 being up and running this year.
DCP04.08.1 Review the 6 month Webcasting pilot extension	G	G	Achieved.
DCP04.09.1 Ensure that 70% of our customers when asked feel well informed about the Council	No Data	No Data	

Corporate Plan 2008/2009 Action Plan April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
DCP04.10.1 Increase the proportion of total customer interactions that are handled online to 14%	G	G	CMT Emerging Issue We are still using the definition of online customer interaction that was agreed in 2006/07. This will be reviewed and re-baselined this year so we will end with two figures - one as we will measure going forward, and one as close to the same criteria as used in 06/07 as we can.

Number Green and Amber 50 51
 Percentage 96.15% 92.73%

Overall Action Plan Status Amber Amber

National Indicators 2008/2009
April - December 2008

Indicator Description		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
Customer Service & ICT						
NI 14: Reducing avoidable contact: Minimising the proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer	Actual	29.35%	G	13.73%	G	This reporting has not yet settled in and some avoidable contact - especially missed bin reporting - is being recorded as value rather than avoidable contact. Staff training will rectify this but the figure is higher than 13.73%.
	Target	35.00%		35.00%		
Development Control and Major Developments						
NI 157: Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for "major" application types	Actual	76.92%	A	85.00%	G	CMT Success The planning improvement plan has ensured that a high level of performance is now sustainable with regard to major applications. This should be considered in the context of the Upper Heyford Inquiry and the impact that it had on the major developments team.
	Target	80.00%		80.00%		
NI 157: Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for "minor" application types	Actual	60.47%	R	59.01%	R	CMT Exception There has been a purge on applications that were out of time this has resulted in performance that is both below national standards and those set out in the service plan. However by the end of December 2008, the outstanding caseload across the team had been reduced by 30% meaning that improvement should be achieved for the final quarter of 2008/9.
	Target	85.00%		85.00%		
NI 157: Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for "other" application types	Actual	72.02%	R	71.01%	R	CMT Exception The backlog of applications is now a level that is consistent with high performance. The minor alterations in process have assisted in keeping performance at a level that has been achieved during the year so far despite clearing the majority of the out of date applications.
	Target	92.00%		92.00%		

Indicator Description		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
Environmental Services						
NI 185: CO2 reductions from local authority operations	50	No Data (annual)	No Data (annual)	No Data (annual)	No Data (annual)	4% reduction looks to be on track. However data collected this year is base data.
	Target	2008 data to provide baseline	2008 data to provide baseline	2008 data to provide baseline	2008 data to provide baseline	
NI 188: Planning to adapt to climate change	Actual	SCORE = 0	G	SCORE = 0	G	This is a self assessment with a score of 0-4 (4 = highest). A score of 1 is expected by March 2009.
	Target	SCORE = 0		SCORE = 0		
NI 191: Residual household waste per household	Actual	260.55 kg/h/hold	A	386.63 kg/h/hold	A	The target is incorrectly profiled. An end of year performance of around 510kg/household is expected.
	Target	256.46 kg/h/hold		384.69 kg/h/hold		
NI 192: Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Actual	53.43%	G	51.22%	G	Year end recycling rate expected to be around 49.5% - 50%.
	Target	49.00%		49.00%		
NI 194: Levels of air quality - Reduction in NOx and primary PM10 emissions through local authority's estate and operations	Actual	No Data (annual)	No Data (annual)	No Data (annual)	No Data (annual)	
	Target	Baseline data in 2008	Baseline data in 2008	Baseline data in 2008	Baseline data in 2008	
NI 195(a): Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Litter	Actual	4%	G	4%	G	
	Target	6%		6%		
NI 195(b): Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Detritus	Actual	9%	G	10%	G	
	Target	11%		11%		

Indicator Description		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
NI 195(c): Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Graffiti	Actual	1%	G	0%	G	
	Target	1%		1%		
NI 195(d): Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Fly Posting	Actual	0%	G	0%	G	
	Target	1%		1%		
NI 196: Improved street and environmental cleanliness - fly tipping	Actual	tipping down & enforcement up	G	3	R	This NI measures both fly tipping and enforcement actions. Fly tips are very slightly up 437 v 427 (in 2007/08). This is assessed as unchanged by this NI. Enforcement action good but less successful prosecutions this year than last. Hence the assessment of 3 rather than 1.
	Target	1		1		
Exchequer						
NI 180: The number of changes of circumstances which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlement within the year	Actual	2 172	G	4195	A	This is a new Government target. The target has been set using performance figures up to date. The target could alter after the collection of the years data. The complete data will give us a better understanding of the indicator
	Target	2 100		4200		
NI 181: Time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	Actual	12.8 days	G	13.48 days	A	This is a new Government target. The target has been set using performance figures up to date. The target could alter after the collection of the years data. The complete data will give us a better understanding of the indicator
	Target	12.86 days		12.86 days		
Finance						
NI 179: Value for money - total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008-09 financial year	Actual	Report in October	G		No Report for Period	
	Target	£260k (full year)		£260k (full year)		
Housing Services						
NI 155: Number of affordable homes delivered	Actual	40	G	64	G	
	Target	40		58		

Indicator Description		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Actual	104	G	77	G	
	Target	110		102		
NI 187: Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating	Actual		No Data (annual)		No Data (annual)	The United Sustainable Energy Agency will be appointed to undertake the postal survey of fuel poverty. This has been delayed due to procurement reasons. January 1 is the provisional date for the survey.
	Target					
Planning and Affordable Housing Policy						
NI 154: Net additional homes provided	Actual	164	R	368	R	Comparator of 681 for the year (170/171 per quarter) is based on expected supply from deliverable and developable sites from 2007 Annual Monitoring Report (revised projections are included in the 2008 AMR). The cumulative figure for the year so far reflects the impact that the credit crunch is having on housebuilding rates nationally. It also reflects delay on sites such as Bankside and former RAF Upper Heyford. However, 3rd quarter net additional housing completions were relatively high at 204 (provisional only as confirmed figures are agreed with OCC annually). This has resulted from development activity on a further two of the Council's non-statutory housing allocations (16 units completed at Arncott and 22 at Milton Road, Bloxham), a further 18 homes at Hanwell Fields, and the completion of 20 on a site identified in the Council's Urban Housing Potential Study 2005 (the former Sunlight Services Laundry at Bicester). Improved monitoring resources have also enabled 48 completions to be recorded against older planning permissions (i.e very small sites which have not recently been visited).
	Target	341		511		

Indicator Description		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
NI 159: Supply of ready to develop housing sites	Actual		No Data (annual)		No Data (annual)	Not monitored on quarterly basis. Possible near term review of housing expectations may alter percentage.
	Target	rolling target of 100%		rolling target of 100%		
NI 170: Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years	Actual		No Data (annual)		No Data (annual)	Work required to establish baseline - to be ready for annual return
	Target	Low and reducing % based on baseline 2006		Low and reducing % based on baseline 2006		
Recreation and Health						
NI 8: Adult participation in sport and active recreation	Actual		No Data (annual)		No Data (annual)	This data is collected by Sport England via an annual Active People survey in Oct/ Nov with results available following Jan/ Feb. Delivered through CDC Recreation and Sports Development team working with Oxfordshire Sports Partnership, the Local Sports Network and other facility providers.
	Target	1% increase in participation		1% increase in participation		
NI 56: Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6	Actual		No Data (annual)		No Data (annual)	Data will be collected nationally and disseminated to the local PCT. To be reported at year end. CDC Health Strategy and Improvement Officer works closely with the PCT in delivery initiatives across the District.
	Target	Local targets have still to be set by PCT		Local targets have still to be set by PCT		
NI 110: Young People's participation in positive activities	Actual		No Data (annual)		No Data (annual)	Information not yet available. Monitoring will be done through the Oxfordshire Play Partnership of which CDC is an active member. The CDC Play and Young People Officer develops opportunities for young people to participate in positive activities.
	Target	Local targets have still to be set by County Partnership		Local targets have still to be set by County Partnership		

Indicator Description	Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
Safer Communities and Community Development					
NI 15: Serious violent crime rate	Actual	0.2	0.25	R	CMT Exception Actual crime has reduced by 33.3% (70 in 2006, 51 in 2007, 34 in 2008). Need to review baseline and target with Thames Valley Police.
	Target	0.12	0.18		
NI 16: Serious acquisitive crime rate	Actual	4.37	6.34	R	CMT Exception Thames Valley Police are projecting year end performance at 2 - 3% reduction against target of 5%. Performance to be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
	Target	2.04	3.06		
NI 20: Assault with less serious injury crime rate	Actual	3.29	4.74	A	Domestic incidents have increased by 13% whilst non-domestic have decreased by 14.6%. This reflects the increased confidence in reporting domestic abuse.
	Target	3.07	4.6		
NI 35: Building resilience to violent extremism	Actual			No Data (annual)	New multi-agency group now established to include the Council's Community Cohesion Champion.
	Target				
NI 184: Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Actual			No Data (annual)	No data available until Q4. Test reports being run on Uni-form to assess data quality.
	Target				
Urban and Rural Services					
NI 197: Improved local biodiversity - active management of local sites	Actual		Indicator Deleted	N/A	Indicator deleted. Revised guidance from Audit Commission states that "Deira has confirmed the Spatial Level is Single tier and county councils" therefore district councils are not expected to report directly into the EDC.
	Target				

Indicator Description		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance	Comments
Cross-Service Indicator						
NI 182: Satisfaction of business with local authority regulation services	Actual		No Data		No Data	
	Target					

	Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	
Green	8	9	10	31.25%
Amber	3	5	4	12.50%
Red	0	3	6	18.75%
No Data	4	3	1	3.13%
No Data (annual survey planned)	13	11	10	31.25%
No Target	0	0	0	0.00%
No Report for Period	0	1	1	3.13%
Total This Period	28	32	32	
Overall NI Status	Red	Red	Red	

Best Value Performance Indicators 2008/2009
April - December 2008

		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance
BV002a.02 Equality Standard Level	Actual	2	G	2	G
	Target	2		2	
BV008 % Invoices paid within 30 days	Actual	98.22	A	98.25	A
	Target	100		100	
BV009 % Council Tax collected	Actual	58.75	G	87.14	G
	Target	58.5		87	
BV010 % NNDR collected	Actual	60.18	G	86.38	A
	Target	58.5		86.75	
BV012 Days / shifts lost to sickness	Actual	3.58	G	6.31	A
	Target	4		6	
BV078a Average time for new claims	Actual		No Data	31.56	R
	Target	22		22	
BV078b Average time for changes	Actual		No Data	10.4	R
	Target	7		7	
BV079a % Benefit calculations correct	Actual		No Data		No Data
	Target	99		99	
BV079bi.05 % HB Recovered: Overpayment	Actual	76.34	A	79	G
	Target	77.5		77.5	
BV079bii.05 % HB Recovered: Outstanding	Actual	11.65	R	27.52	G
	Target	18		27	
BV079biii.05 % HB O'Pay: Written Off	Actual	0.85	R	1.73	R
	Target	2.5		3.75	
BV082ai.05 % H'hold Waste Recycled	Actual	22.9	A	24.18	A
	Target	24.35		24.35	
BV082aia.05 Tonnes H'hold Waste Recycled	Actual	7426.77	G	11030.56	G
	Target	7225		10837.5	
BV082bi.05 % H'hold Waste Compost	Actual	30.63	G	27.38	G
	Target	22.33		22.33	
BV082bii.05 Tonnes H'hold Waste Compost	Actual	9883.63	G	12490.29	G
	Target	6625		9937.5	
BV091b % of households with two recyclables collected	Actual	100	G	100	G
	Target	100		100	
BV106 % New homes built on 'brownfield'	Actual	50.45	G	59.73	G
	Target	50		50	
BV156 % LA public buildings - disabled	Actual	100	G	100	G
	Target	66.7		66.7	
BV166a % score on Environmental Health checklist	Actual	100	G	100	G
	Target	100		100	
BV170a Visits to/usage of museums per 1000 pop.	Actual	898.03	R	1402.56	R
	Target	1201.82		1813.72	
BV170b Visits to museums in person per 1000 pop.	Actual	776.34	R	1213.27	A
	Target	889.47		1314.91	
BV170c Pupils visiting museums and galleries	Actual	1141	G	2014	A
	Target	850		2100	
BV179 % standard searches in 10 days	Actual	100	G	100	G
	Target	100		100	
BV199a.05 Env. Cleanliness - Litter	Actual	11.36	A	11.23	A
	Target	11		11	
BV199b.05 Env. Cleanliness - Graffiti	Actual	0.95	R	0.47	G
	Target	0.65		0.65	
BV199c.05 Env. Cleanliness - Fly-Posting	Actual	0	G	0	G
	Target	0.4		0.4	
BV203 % Change families in temporary accommodation	Actual	59.35	G	50.77	G
	Target	86		86	

		Quarter Two	Performance	Quarter Three	Performance
BV204 % Planning appeals allowed	Actual	21.05	R	18.18	A
	Target	18		18	
BV205 Quality of Service checklist	Actual	100	G	100	G
	Target	100		100	
BV213 Housing advice: No. case work intervention	Actual	2.25	G	3.15	G
	Target	1.96		2.93	
BV214.05 % Repeat homelessness	Actual	0	G	0	G
	Target	5		5	
BV216b.05 Info. on contaminated land (% of sites of potential concern)	Actual	1.96	R	2.93	R
	Target	25		25	
BV217.05 % Pollution control improvements	Actual	100	G	100	G
	Target	100		100	
BV218a.05 % Abandoned vehicles-investigate	Actual	97.64	G	97.04	G
	Target	95		95	
BV218b.05 % Abandoned vehicles-removal	Actual	79.55	A	82.76	A
	Target	85		85	
BV219a.05 Conservation areas - number	Actual	54	A	55	G
	Target	55		55	
BV219b % Conserv. Areas with up to date Character Appraisals	Actual	27.78	G	32.73	G
	Target	20		20	
BV219c % Conserv. Areas with published Management Plans	Actual	66.67	A	63.64	R
	Target	73		73	
BV225 % score on DV actions checklist	Actual	81.82	A	81.82	A
	Target	82		82	

	Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	
Green	24	20	22	56.41%
Amber	5	8	10	25.64%
Red	5	7	6	15.38%
No Data	4	4	1	2.56%
No Target	1	0	0	
Total This Period	39	39	39	
Overall BVPI Status	Red	Red	Red	

Corporate Improvement Plan 2008/2009 April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
Be Recognised as an Excellent Authority			
CIP01.1.1 Undertake customer Satisfaction Survey	G	G	
CIP01.1.2 Undertake Place Survey	A	G	Survey completed. Weighted data should be available in February/March 2009.
CIP01.2.1 Achieve Excellent CPA Rating	A	A	
CIP01.2.2 Achieve Score of 3 for VfM and Financial Reporting	A	G	CMT Success Latest Use of Resources assessment has improved the rating for Financial Reporting and Value for Money to 3 for each category.
Deliver Value for Money			
CIP02.1.1 Extend the Information Available on Comparable Costs and Service Performance	G	G	Analysis of comparative performance as measured by 07/08 outturn budgets used to determine the VfM programme for the remainder of 08/09. The outcome of the VfM Review of Fees and Charges, Street Cleansing and Corporate Property Management reported to the Executive. All these reviews made extensive use of comparative information on costs and service performance.
CIP02.2.1 Deliver April-September Programme	G	G	
A Culture of Continuous Improvement and Innovation Across the Council			
CIP03.1.1 Monitor the National Indicators	G	G	CMT Success The Audit Commission has published the national comparable performance 07/08 against BVPIs. This shows the council has continued to improve it's performance against BVPIs and achieved a performance of 74% BVPIs in the top half of performance nationally against an anticipated performance of 75%.
CIP03.1.2 Monitor the 42 Best Value Performance Indicators	G	G	
CIP03.1.3 Meet Improvement Targets for the 28 Retained BVPI's	R	R	
CIP03.2.1 Service and Develop Unit Costs and Productivity Benchmarking	A	A	
CIP03.2.2 Research Best Practice to Improve Services	A	G	Best practice research fundamental to successful VfM reviews of Corporate Property Management, Street Cleansing and Fees and Charges. Increased evidence of awareness of best practice shown through the Service & Financial Planning process.
CIP03.3.1 Retain Investors in People Accreditation	G	G	
CIP03.3.2 Identify Further Opportunities for External Recognition	G	G	

Corporate Improvement Plan 2008/2009 April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
Working in Partnership			
CIP04.1.1 Deliver the Partnership Improvement Plans	A	A	Focused actions to deliver the Plan have now begun and anticipate return to Green in January 2009.
CIP04.1.2 Through S&FP Identify Opportunities to Develop New or Existing Partnerships	A	A	
CIP04.2.1 Through S&FP Improve the Management of and Develop More Partnerships	A	A	
CIP04.3.1 Explore Shared Service Delivery for Internal Audit	G	G	Following a VFM review a contracted out option was pursued in partnership with Oxford City Council leading to significant cash savings.
CIP04.3.2 Explore Shared Service Delivery for Revenue and Benefits	A	G	Consultants due to report on outcome of review in February 2009.
CIP04.3.3 Consider Shared Service Options Through S&FP and VFM Reviews	A	A	Work underway to evaluate service options for Corporate Property Management. As reported elsewhere the outcome of the review of delivery of the Benefits Services to be reported to Executive in February 2009.
Recognise the Diverse Needs of the Community			
CIP05.1.1 Research the Local Population and Population Trends	G	G	
CIP05.1.2 Establish a Central Resource for Accessing Population Information	G	G	
CIP05.1.3 Have Regular Population Data Updates	G	G	
CIP05.1.4 Use 3 Year EIA Action Plans to Inform 2009/10 Service Plans	A	A	All services asked to consider implications of EIAs and many actions identified however further work required to both complete the programme of EIAs and translate the outcomes into service actions.
CIP05.2.1 Increase and Improve Our Customer Access Points	G	G	
CIP05.2.2 Develop New Service Standards for 10 Priority Services	A	A	
CIP05.3.1 Increase Engagement with Traditionally Hard to Reach Groups	A	A	

Corporate Improvement Plan 2008/2009 April - December 2008				
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment	
Ensure Decision Making is Based on High Quality Management and Demographic Information				
CIP06.1.1 Roll-out Performance Plus	G	G		
CIP06.1.2 Introduce New Corporate Scorecard	G	G		
CIP06.1.3 Introduce new National Indicators	G	G		
CIP06.2.1 Commission an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey	G	G		
CIP06.2.2 Participate in the cross Oxon Place Survey	G	G		
CIP06.2.3 Deliver the Knowing Our Communities project	G	G	Survey of population and make up of ethnic minority communities commissioned. Report of findings to cross organisational working group in January 2009 and commissioning of second phase of work into community needs.	
CIP06.3.1 Continue Involvement in Current Benchmarking Initiatives	G	G		
CIP06.3.2 Ensure Comparative Information from CIPFA and the Audit Commission is Fully Utilised	A	G	Comparative information from the Audit Commission used to inform the VFM Programme for the second half of 08/09 and used extensively to inform VFM Reviews.	
CIP06.3.3 Use Comparative Information and Best Practice to Inform S&FP and Service Improvement	A	G		
Deliver our service promises and new developments and be efficient in the way we do this				
CIP07.1.1 Monitor, Review and Report Performance through the PMF	G	G		
CIP07.2.1 Introduce a New Human Resources Strategy	G	G		
Recognise our Staff are our Greatest Asset				
CIP08.1.1 Involve Staff at all Levels in the S&FP Process and Continuous Service Improvement	G	G		
CIP08.2.1 Implement the Action Plan Arising from the Staff Survey	G	G		
CIP08.2.2 Continue the Staff Cascade	G	G		
CIP08.2.3 Continue CEX Staff Briefings	G	G		
CIP08.2.4 Double the Size of Inside Cherwell	G	G		

Corporate Improvement Plan 2008/2009 April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
CIP08.3.1 Deliver a Development Programme to Managers Who Report to EMT	G	G	
CIP08.3.2 Align Resources with Learning Priorities	G	G	

Number Green and Amber
Percentage

44
100.00%

43
97.73%

Overall Corporate Improvement Plan Status

Green

Amber

Strategic Service Projects 2008/2009 April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
Strategic Service Projects			
Accommodation Review and Refurbishment	G	G	CMT Success Overall the project is on target in respect of timescales and budget allocation. Learning from phases 1&2 have enabled more effective planning of ongoing phases in closer liaison with the contractor. Town Centre Offices will be cleared of debris early in the new year to enable refurbishment works to commence for completion by the end March 2009.
Banbury Bankside Development	A	A	Further meetings held with key stakeholders, at these meetings there was still a strong commitment to the completion of the s106 agreement.
Banbury Canal-side	G	G	Work is progressing in line with the LDF timetable. There is little scope for action to progress implementation until the LDF is in place, but the Homes and Communities Agency continue to support the council.
Banbury Cultural Quarter	A	G	First Joint CDC/OCC Working Group meeting held. Discussions with Environment Agency commenced. Integrated Lill/Library concept under development
Banbury Pedestrianisation	G	G	Public inquiry held in December and inspector's report awaited. Design work is progressing so that tenders can be invited when we are ready to proceed. Timetable dependant on the process for considering any possible amendments, when the inspector's report is received. Concerns have been raised regarding arrangements for access by market and street traders, to be considered by the Project Board in January.
Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment	A	A	The agreement reached between Sainsbury's and Stockdale regarding the ownership of Town Centre Retail, (the developer) are helpful, and enhance the likelihood of progress being made. However, the project remains amber until revised terms for the development agreement have been agreed.
Flood Alleviation	G	A	Date for the start of the Compulsory Purchase Order inquiry has yet to be confirmed.
Investors in People	G	G	IIP Assessor due to return in Mid January 2009.
RAF Upper Heyford	G	G	Inquiry ongoing with closing now timetabled for March 2009.
SW Bicester Development	G	G	Initial discussions have taken place with regard to the initial reserved matters planning applications, infrastructure and the first 90 dwellings. Initial sketch schemes have been presented, although many design matters are unresolved at this stage.
Weston Otmoor Eco Town	G	G	CMT Success The technical group to inform CLG on the eco town process has been wound up following successful completion of the major pieces of joint technical work (CDC/OCC/Parkridge/CLG and others).

Growth Bids 2008/2009 April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
Planning, Housing & Economy			
DCMD Additional Staffing (particular focus on Enforcement) = £100,000	G	G	The Enforcement team is now fully utilising the Uniform Computer system to record and progress enforcement matters and record statistics. The other staffing elements of the improvement plan have now been shelved due to the financial circumstances of the service.
DCMD Electronic Data Capture = £15,000	G	G	Project ongoing
HS Additional Staffing (Disabled Facilities) = £26,000	G	G	Additional member of staff in place. HIA has been brought in house. Delivery of HIA and DFG programme on course for 2008/9.
HS Additional Staffing (Homelessness) = £100,000	G	G	This grant funding is provided by CLG to support the Council's work to reduce and prevent homelessness in Cherwell. The Council's Homelessness Strategy Action Plan includes projects such as "no place like home", joint commissioning arrangements such as money advice with CAB - this work is funded by the grant and monitored by the Homelessness Partnership.
HS Choice Based Lettings = £18,000	G	G	Abritas system fully integrated. Sub-regional CBL due to go live in early Summer 2009.
HS Foyer Accommodation = £23,000	G	G	This scheme continues to offer a safety net to young people threatened with homelessness or a housing crisis.
HS Spend to Save Initiatives = £0	G	G	No current initiatives.
Environment & Community			
ES Additional Recycling Bins = £12,500	G	G	New Street Cleansing vehicles arrived in late November, these make emptying the bins easier. Rest of the bins due to be installed in mid-late January 2009.
ES Food Waste Pilot Collection Scheme = £30,000	R	R	Still no local food waste processing facilities. Now looks to be autumn 2009 before facilities are built.
ES Pest Control = £10,000	G	G	SDK Environmental performing well. Budget on track
ES Street Cleansing Service = £35,000	G	G	Cover in urban centres operating to extended hours
SCCD Implementation of NightSafe across District = £15,000	A	G	Nightsafe Bicester launched in December to complement Nightsafe Banbury and Nightsafe Kidlington

Growth Bids 2008/2009 April - December 2008			
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Comment
SCCD Public Protection = £36,000	G	G	Public Protection team now fully staffed
SCCD Support to the Voluntary Sector = £60,000	G	G	CMT Success Additional £60,000 grant funding to advice centres and seniors clubs
URS Additional Staffing: In-house ecologist = £18,000	G	G	Need to keep a check on extent to which large schemes require Ecological input and whether these take precedence over the 'business as usual' activities which are the focus of the post.
URS Licensing inspection and enforcement capability = £40,000	G	G	Unit is now involved in proactive enforcement across the range of licensing services. The outcomes of this include much improved joint working with partners; greater presence felt by licensed activities from more frequent inspections; pursuit of prosecutions against license holders that contravene their license.
URS Street Markets = £15,000	A	A	Still awaiting final report and recommendations from Scrutiny.
Customer Services & Resources			
EXCH Internal Bailiffs Service = £75,000	A	G	The main driver for the bailiff project was the introduction of new legislation. The legislation has now been postponed, therefore we no longer need to continue with this project at the present time. We will explore this option again at a later date.
LDS Virtual Clerk Service = £10,000	A	A	Propose to support parishes through the new committee management system Modern.gov and existing administrative support within Legal & Democratic Services. Working with the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils to put forward a bid for IT support to parishes.
Chief Executive's Services			
COM Appoint a Fulltime Designer and Review Printing requirements = £60,000	G	G	Savings being tracked in terms of time. Better idea of total savings will be known if proposal for consolidated design budgets is approved.
COMP Fundamental Refresh of the Cherwell Community Plan = £100,000	A	G	Spend and project milestones both on track.

Number Green and Amber
Percentage

20
95.24%

20
95.24%

Overall Growth Bid Status

Amber

Amber

Agenda Item 13

Executive

Authorisation of Staff – Safer Communities and Community Development

2 February 2009

Report of Head of Safer Communities and Community Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the authorisation of a newly-qualified member of staff.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Authorise Rachel Anne Mason for the purposes of the following legislation:-

Building Act 1984
Caravan Sites Act 1968
Clean Air Act 1956, 1968 and 1993
Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
Control of Pollution Act 1974
Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996
Environmental Protection Act 1990
Factories Act 1961
Litter Act 1983
Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984
Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978
Sunday Trading Act 1994
Water Acts 1973 and 1989
Water Industry Act 1991

- (2) Invite the Council to authorise Rachel Anne Mason for the purposes of the following legislation:-

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963
Breeding of Dogs Act 1973
Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999

Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960
Dangerous Wild Animals act 1976
Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006
Food Safety Act 1990
Health Act 2007
Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976 and 1982
Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993
Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2007
Pet Animals Act 1951
Public Health Acts 1936 and 1961
Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970
Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964
Zoo Licensing Act 1981

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Officers performing regulatory duties must be authorised in writing by the Council to act on its behalf
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the authorisation for Rachel Mason who has recently obtained the Advanced Certificate in Food Premises Inspection

Proposals

- 1.3 Update the authorisation for the newly-qualified officer to undertake her regulatory duties

Conclusion

- 1.5 This will ensure that the Council undertakes its regulatory duties in compliance with the law.

Implications

- Financial:** There are no financial implications arising from the report.
Comments checked by Karen Muir, Service Accountant, 01295 221545
- Legal:** This report covers all the legislation which may from time to time be enforced by the respective officer. It is critical that valid authorisations are in place to defend challenges.
Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, 01295 221686
- Risk Management:** Without formal written authorisations, staff would not have the right to enter into premises or onto land for routine inspection and any evidence gathered as a result would be open to challenge. The Council could also be considered as acting negligently if it failed to authorise its officers appropriately.
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Theme 1: Improve community safety and reduce the drugs problem

Theme 2: Improve health

Theme 6: Protect and enhance the local environment

Executive Portfolio

Councillor George Reynolds
Portfolio Holder for Community, Health and Environment

Document Information

Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Grahame Helm, Head of Safer Communities & Community Development
Contact Information	01295 221615 Grahame.helm@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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