

Public Document Pack

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 4 July 2011 at 6.30 pm

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

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Also Present: Councillor Leslie F Sibley
Councillor Tim Emptage

Apologies for absence: Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Ian Davies, Strategic Director Environment & community
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer
Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development
Paul Marston-Weston, Head of Recreation & Health
Kevin Lane, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Nigel Bell, Team Leader - Planning and Litigation / Interim Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

15 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Chairman confirmed that he had received no petitions and that he had agreed to Mr Bernie Douglas and Councillor George Parish to address the meeting.

17 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

18 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19 **Response to Department for Transport Consultation on High Speed Rail**

The Strategic Director Planning, Housing and Economy submitted a report which enable Members to agree the proposed responses to the seven questions posed in the Department for Transport's consultation upon High Speed Rail with respect to both the proposed national high speed rail strategy and on the recommended line of route for an initial London to West Midlands section of the railway.

Councillor Tim Emptage, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, addressed the Executive regarding the funding the council had allocated to support its campaign in opposition to the HS2 proposals.

In response to Councillor Emptage's address, the Chairman confirmed that at present up to £50k had been allocated and should additional funding be required, the request would be submitted to Full Council for consideration.

Mr Bernie Douglas addressed the Executive as Chairman of Villages of Oxfordshire Opposing HS2 (VoxOpp).

The Executive commended the Development Control Team Leader and his team for the comprehensive and high quality report.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed that the Council should make representations in response to Consultation questions 1-3 objecting to the national high speed rail strategy in general accordance with the comments expressed in Section 3 of the report (attached as an annex to these minutes as set out in the minute book), those made by the "51M" group to the Transport Select Committee, and subject to the agreement of the Lead Member for Planning, in accordance with the "51M " group's further comments on this matter.
- (2) That it be agreed that the Council should make representations in response to Consultation questions 4-6 expressing severe concerns about the paucity of information and concerns about several details of the scheme as consulted upon in general accordance with the comments contained in sections 4-6 of the report (attached as an annex to these minutes as set out in the minute book), and subject to the agreement of the Lead Member for Planning in accordance with

any further representations made on behalf of "51M" as a critique of the Appraisal of Sustainability.

- (3) That it be agreed that the Council should make representations in respect of Consultation question 7 in accordance with the comments in Section 4.33-4.34 of the report (attached as an annex to these minutes as set out in the minute book).
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Planning Housing and Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, the final wording of the consultation responses to be made in general accordance with resolutions 1-3 above.
- (5) That the Development Control Team Leader be requested to liaise with Bernie Douglas, Chairman of Villages of Oxfordshire Opposing HS2 (VoxOpp), to circulate the report to villages affected by the HS2 proposals.

Reasons

At its meeting of 7 March 2011 the Executive agreed to join other local authorities along the preferred route to campaign against the proposals. Formal agreement of the Council's responses to the seven questions posed in the Department for Transport's consultation upon High Speed Rail with respect to both the proposed national high speed rail strategy and on the recommended line of route for an initial London to West Midlands section of the railway is required before the consultation closes on 29 July 2011.

20

Armed Forces Community Covenant

The Chief Executive and the Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager submitted a report which provided an update on the Oxfordshire Armed Forces Community Covenant and Cherwell District Council's response to it.

Resolved

- (1) That the importance of the Armed Forces Community Covenant be noted and that officers working across all Council services be requested to ensure there are clear plans in place to deliver the aspirations of the Covenant.

Reasons

The Armed Forces Community Covenant is an important commitment on the part of the District Council to support armed services personnel, their families, children, reservists and veterans. The Council views the local military as an important part of the community and part of the tradition within the District and will continue to work in local partnerships and across the County to ensure the commitments outlined in the covenant are met.

Options

Option One To approve the recommendations.

Option Two To amend or reject the recommendations.

21

Horton General Hospital and Health Sector Changes

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report which sought consideration of the progress and current position regarding the implementation of alternative service models for the Horton General Hospital. It also sought consideration of the radical changes in the health sector and the latest position in changes locally.

Councillor Les Sibley addressed the meeting as Leader of the Opposition. He commended the work of the Council in supporting the Horton General Hospital and queried if a similar progress report on the Bicester Community Hospital could be provided.

In response to the address of the Leader of the Opposition, the Chairman requested officers to submit a progress report on Bicester Community Hospital to their September or October meeting.

Councillor George Parish addressed the meeting at the discretion of the Chairman as a leading campaigner for the Horton General Hospital.

Resolved

- (1) That the good progress in implementing sustainable service delivery models at the Horton General Hospital be noted.
- (2) That the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust be urged to implement as soon as possible the revised model for maternity and gynaecology.
- (3) That the establishment of a Community Partnership Network with membership drawn from local health and social care service commissionaires and providers plus relevant stakeholders be supported.
- (4) That officers be requested to submit a progress report on the Bicester Community Hospital to the September or October meeting of Executive.

Reasons

A key issue associated with the Horton General Hospital (HGH) is the ongoing sustainability of the agreed service levels when the commissioning body and arrangements will be changing. There is a perceived threat that the health sector reforms will provide greater competition from the private sector which could impact on the HGH. By having a stakeholder group which brings together the key commissioners and providers i.e. GPs, ORH & OCC, there

will be a local focus and dialogue on how this works in practice and to attempt to influence the future commissioning of services from the HRH.

A further issue relates to the extent of public involvement in the services and the new Community Partnership Network. Each commissioner and service provider is expected to have their own arrangements for this and it will be important not to duplicate and have clarity of responsibility. Past experience does indicate that there is not wide public understanding of the structure and responsibilities of the current health service. In such circumstances and with so much significant change about to happen, it is important at the very least that the new Network does attempt to improve this position.

The principle behind the Community Partnership Network is to have meetings in public with managed, but considerable public participation during the meeting. This worked well for the previous Forum and it is intended to continue for this new body, thereby allowing wider public participation for the sector issues as a whole.

Options

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Option One | To support the Community Partnership Network. |
| Option Two | To withdraw from involvement in public engagement, communication and changes in the health and social care sector. |
| Option Three | To attempt to engage partially with the health and social care sector through individual organisations rather than a collective stakeholder group. |

22

Value for Money Review of Economic Development

The Strategic Director for Planning, Housing & Economy, the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development and the Improvement Project Manager submitted a report which sought consideration of the findings of the Value for Money Review of Economic Development and the recommendations arising from the report.

Resolved

- (1) That the Value for Money Review conclusion that Economic Development Service is a top performer, making a real difference to Cherwell's businesses and residents affected by the downturn be noted.
- (2) That the Economic Development Service Vision to 2016 (annex to the minutes as set out in the minute book) which sets out a forward looking framework, drawing on the Council's contribution to the emerging Economic Development Strategy be adopted.

- (3) That gross savings of £35,000 with immediate effect, as a contribution towards the Council delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy, be accepted, recognising this reduces the flexibility of the service to undertake economic development activity in the future.

Reasons

Cherwell's Economic Development Service is a top performer, making a real difference to Cherwell's businesses and residents affected by the downturn. The Economic Development Service Vision to 2016 sets out a forward looking framework drawing on the Council's contribution to the new Economic Development Strategy, within which the service can undertake its annual service and budget setting activity.

Agreeing to the level of savings proposed by this review assists the Council in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy, but reduces the flexibility of the service to undertake economic development activity in the future.

23

2010/2011 End of Year Finance and Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Report

The Head of Finance submitted a report which summarised the Council's provisional Revenue and Capital performance for the financial year 2010/2011 and reports on performance against the procurement action plan. The figures were still subject to further validation work to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and proper accounting practices. The report also considered the process and timetable for refreshing our Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Lead Member for Financial Management advised the Executive that the update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy had been delayed due to the budget being refreshed and uncertainty over the government grant. A full update would be provided to the September meeting of the Executive.

The Executive requested that their thanks to the Finance and Procurement Teams for their work during 2010/11, in particular for the progress made in implementing the Procurement Action Plan, be recorded.

Resolved

- (1) That the provisional revenue out-turn position for 2010/2011 detailed in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book).
- (2) That the continued improvement in accuracy and reliability that the Council has made in projecting the year end position through the embedding of the Corporate Dashboard be noted.
- (3) That the provisional capital out-turn position for 2010/2011 detailed in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be noted.
- (4) That the balances on capital schemes which have slipped in 2010/2011 to be carried forward into the 2011/2012 capital programme as set out

in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be agreed.

- (5) That progress against the Councils Procurement Action plan and savings achieved as set out in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be noted.
- (6) That the update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy Update be noted.

Reasons

This report illustrates the Council's provisional performance against the 2010/2011 Revenue and Capital Budget and progress achieved against our Procurement action plan and targets.

Options

- Option One** To review current performance levels and consider any actions arising.
- Option Two** To approve or reject the recommendations above.

24

Performance Management Framework 2010/2011 End of Year Performance Report

The Chief Executive and the Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager submitted a report which presented the Councils performance in 2010/11, as measured through the Corporate Performance Management Framework.

The Executive commended officers for the continued operation of performance monitoring and requested that a one page summary of the highlights be produced for circulation to all Members.

Resolved

- (1) That it be noted that, despite tough performance targets and a challenging economic environment, the Council has met or made satisfactory progress on 97% of the performance targets in the Corporate Scorecard (the basket of priority measures) and met or made satisfactory progress on 95% of the performance targets in the Corporate Plan which sets out activities and targets under each of the Council's four strategic priorities.
- (2) That it be noted that the Council has delivered a challenging programme of improvement projects and value for money reviews. Of the 22 projects and reviews scheduled for 2010/11 21 were completed with good or satisfactory outcomes and only 1 delayed due a changing government policy. The improvement programme has directly contributed to the delivery of savings and efficiencies to balance the Council's budget.

- (3) That the progress in delivering the Council's strategic objectives and the following achievements be noted:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- **Contributing to the creation of new opportunities in the district:** In spite of challenging economic circumstances the Council has focused on supporting local residents and businesses through its activities. The successful job club partnership has continued with targeted events to improve access and an apprenticeship scheme targeted at young people not in education, employment or training has been continued. The Council's work in this area has been recognised as national good practice and its approach cited by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies.
- **Local Housing:** The Council has delivered 370 new homes, 126 affordable houses, including 40 extra care units, maintained the low number of residents in temporary accommodation at 29, and invested £950,000 in better quality housing for vulnerable people including warm front top up grants, and emergency repairs.
- **Regeneration and Growth:** The Council has secured funding to make progress on the Eco Town demonstration projects, worked with developers to begin the Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment Programme, and made progress on Local Development Framework Core Strategy in spite of significant national policy change and reduced resources. High profile projects such as the Miller Road Self-Build scheme are supporting local people to develop new skills and employment opportunities whilst providing affordable housing and work has started on the South West Bicester development.

A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell

- **Waste and Recycling:** The Council has implemented a food waste recycling scheme and exceeded its recycling target. Recycling in Cherwell is now at over 57%.
- **Clean Streets:** The Council has met all its targets for dealing with litter, graffiti, and fly posting, improved enforcement and continued to undertake local environmental 'blitzes' reducing even further the low level of environmental crime. Residents' satisfaction with green spaces in Cherwell has also improved.
- **Climate Change:** The Council has improved its environment credentials by rolling out a new scheme at its depot. This includes greatly improved insulation, low energy lighting and energy saving controls, photovoltaic solar panels, a biomass boiler for heating, a water recycling vehicle wash to save water, together with a much improved fuel installation. This initiative has been short listed for the

Environment and Energy Awards for the Best Energy-Efficient Project 2011.

The Cherwell Climate Partnership has undertaken communications activities to inform local people about the impacts of climate change and further reductions in the Council's Co2 emissions from its fleet and offices have been made.

A Safe and Healthy Cherwell

- **Sports and Leisure:** During 2010/11 there were over 1.2 million visits to Cherwell leisure centres and nearly 700 new participants in activities for older people. The 'Play Well' project has been completed and assessed as outstanding, the 'Get Oxfordshire Active' project (aimed at increasing adult participation in sport) has seen 1840 participants and high levels of satisfaction with the programme. Usage of the Council supported sports sites at the North Oxfordshire Academy and Cooper School have also increased during the year with over 75,000 visits recorded.
- **Reducing Crime and the Fear of Crime:** The Cherwell Community Safety Partnership continues its focus on tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and working to combat fear of crime. Crime figures for 2010/11 show a 20% reduction in serious acquisitive crime and 30% reduction in serious violent crime (in comparison with 2009/10). In relation to fear of crime the residents' survey shows that 88% of residents feel safe in their community and at home up from 82% in 2009/10. In terms of Anti-Social behaviour Thames Valley Police have recorded a 15% drop in incidents when comparing 2009/10 and 2010/11. This has been achieved through effective enforcement and a strong partnership between the local policing team and the Council.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** The Council has continued to work closely with partners to press for the best possible services for the district. A variety of health improvement activities have been delivered including, health trainers working to address health inequalities issues in higher risk wards, the health bus providing a one-stop shop services, increased visits to sports centres and an accessible range of activities such as women only swimming sessions.

An Accessible, Value for Money Council

- **Improving access:** the Council continues to focus on improving access for customers, especially the most vulnerable. During 2010/11 over 60 community groups have been visited by outreach specialists to help improve access. 22 Parish Councils have been supported to develop websites helping to improve local information and the Council has also improved its online access to services with over 100 services now available along with a specialist youth website.

- The Council has also continued to improve its engagement with harder to reach groups, supporting the establishment of a Cherwell Faith Forum with local partners and community representatives, embedding the equalities panel and running a 'Knowing our Community' programme for staff and partners, increasing the number of consultations available on the consultation portal and using consultation techniques to ensure the Council hears the views of vulnerable groups, including older and younger people and people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Innovative examples of consultation this year include developing a greater understanding of fear of crime issues in urban and rural areas, public budget consultation and the Connecting Communities programme in Banbury.
- **Delivering Value for Money:** the Council has delivered its programme of Value for Money reviews, meeting the challenge of significantly reducing the Council's budget whilst minimising the impact on frontline services. As a result the Council has exceeded its public pledge to reduce costs by £800,000.
- The Council's innovative "invest to save" approach of creating a corporate procurement team with annual targets ensuring the operation is both self-funding and provides additional returns has secured cashable savings of £0.9m against a target of £625,000 from April 2008 to March 2011 with £306,000 achieved in year against a target of £225,000. Further non-cashable savings of more than £160,000 and capital savings of some £720,000 have been achieved over the same period. The cumulative total for contracts let for more than a year from April 2008 to March 2011 is £1.5m. The 2011/12 Procurement Strategy and Action Plan further develops the Council's approach to long-term planning and collaboration – particularly with South Northamptonshire Council – allowing the team to continue to be self funded and guarantee year on year savings.

In 2010/11 the Council adopted two additional cross cutting priorities reflecting the importance of the Eco Bicester project and a pilot programme of work which aims to tackle deprivation and disadvantage in Banbury.

- **Eco Bicester:** The Eco Bicester Project is the Council's initiative to develop the town as a housing and employment growth location with improved infrastructure and facilities and a special environmental awareness and protection objective. It encompasses the national Eco Town initiative, with a new Eco Town development proposed at North West Bicester and a number of demonstration schemes around the town. The work is already having an impact in "putting Bicester on the map", with both national level and international interest. It is fair to say that Bicester appears to be at the most advanced stage of planning amongst the four nationally designated Eco Towns.

Over the course of the year the project has continued to make strong progress. Highlights are: approval by all three councils involved in the Strategic Delivery Board of "Eco Bicester - One Shared Vision"; Cooper School, the Garth Eco House, Catholic Church Community Hall demonstration projects approaching completion; award of an additional £3.3M of government pump priming money; the commitment of the Homes and Community Agency additional capital funding to make the early social housing happen; submission of the 400 home exemplar planning application.

There have also been a number of successful consultation and community involvement events including the Eco Bicester Day, the aim of which was to let people know more about the Eco Bicester concept. The event took place in Sheep Street, and outlined some of the things people can do to be more eco-friendly. There was consultation over bus and cycle routes, and more than 200 people completed Love Food Hate Waste pledges.

- **Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation:** during 2010/11 the focus of the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme has been supporting families, children and young people, particularly those not in employment, education or training, referred to as "NEETs". The Council continues to lead the Brighter Futures in Banbury Steering Group, a multi-agency partnership targeting issues of need and health inequalities in Banbury.

The programme is based on a significant review and analysis of the issues facing local communities the group has secured additional funding to increase access to the family intervention project working directly to support the most vulnerable families, to develop a programme to prevent young people dropping out of college or employment, increased community engagement and access to services, public health campaigns and steps to address issues such as anti-social behaviour.

The programme is piloting improved multi-agency working and learning points will be rolled out across the rest of the district in the coming year. A full annual review of this programme has been undertaken was reported to Executive at its meeting on 23 May 2011.

- (4) That officers be requested to report in the first quarter report of 2011/12 on the following items where performance was below target or there are emerging issues:
- **Delivery of the Rural Strategy:** A small number of activities programmed for 2010/11 have slipped and will be picked up in 2011/12. This area will be kept under review and a progress report given in the next quarterly briefing.
 - **Reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill:** At year end this measure is reporting amber. The target of reducing the amount

of waste sent to landfill by 4000 tonnes is slightly off track with a reduction of 3700 tonnes. Reducing waste and increasing recycling remain strong priorities for the Council and continued focus will be given to meeting targets during 2011/12. It is worth noting that the national trend for the amount of tonnage is reducing and that Cherwell continues to set challenging targets for waste reduction and recycling.

- **NI 187 (a & b) - Tackling Fuel Poverty:** Both parts of this indicator are reporting red at year end this is not unexpected due to the rising costs of energy and benefits dependency. The housing team have undertaken a survey to increase understanding of the issue and is currently developing a series of anti-fuel poverty actions that will be included in the new housing strategy. Measures such as the £99 insulation deal have also been put in place to help support local residents.

- (5) That officers be requested to produce a one page summary of the performance highlights for circulation to all Members.

Reasons

The report shows the Council's performance against the Corporate Scorecard and Performance Management Framework in 2010/2011. From this information the Executive can make a judgement about the progress the Council is making in meeting its objectives, identify the achievements it wishes to celebrate and the areas where action is required to improve performance.

Options

Option One To review current performance levels and consider any actions arising

Option Two To approve or reject the recommendations

25 **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 item(s) of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 2 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

26 **Value for Money Review of Tourism**

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report which sought consideration of the findings of the Value for Money Review of Tourism and the recommendations arising from that report.

Resolved

That the resolutions as set out in the exempt minute be approved.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Minute Item 19

Executive

Response to Department for Transport Consultation on High Speed Rail

4 July 2011

Report of Strategic Director, Planning, Housing and Economy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable Members to agree the proposed responses to the seven questions posed in the Department for Transport's consultation upon High Speed Rail with respect to both the proposed national high speed rail strategy and on the recommended line of route for an initial London to West Midlands section of the railway.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To agree that the Council should make representations in response to Consultation questions 1-3 objecting to the national high speed rail strategy in general accordance with the comments expressed in Section 3 of this report , those made by the "51M" group to the Transport Select Committee, and subject to the agreement of the Lead Member for Planning, in accordance with the "51M " group's further comments on this matter
- (2) To agree that the Council should make representations in response to Consultation questions 4-6 expressing severe concerns about the paucity of information and concerns about several details of the scheme as consulted upon in general accordance with the comments contained in sections 4-6 of this report, and subject to the agreement of the Lead Member for Planning in accordance with any further representations made on behalf of "51M" as a critique of the Appraisal of Sustainability
- (3) To agree that the Council should make representations in respect of Consultation question 7 in accordance with the comments in Section 4.33-4.34 of this report
- (4) To delegate to the Strategic Director of Planning Housing and Economy , in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, the final wording of the consultation responses to be made in general accordance with recommendations 1-3 above

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Executive considered a report on 7 March 2011 informing them of the Department for Transport's then recently commenced consultation. The Executive resolved to:
- (i) Agree to join with other local authority along the preferred route to campaign against the proposals.
 - (ii) Agree to make available up to £50k from the Planning Control Reserve
 - a) as a contribution towards the fund being formed to campaign against the proposals.
 - b) to fund ancillary work required to assist in the detailed assessment of the impact upon individual properties and amenities
 - c) delegate to the SDPHE and portfolio holder the final distribution of the funding.
 - (iii) to ask the Planning Committee to steer the detailed assessment of impact and to make the Council's representations thereon
 - (iv) to require the SDPHE to bring a further detailed report to the Executive towards the end of the consultation period to enable consideration of the Council's formal response to the consultation.

This report seeks to cover (iii) and (iv) above. The Chairman of Planning Committee has agreed that consideration of this report by the Planning Committee would be repetitious and superfluous.

- 1.2 The Department of Transport issued copious amounts of documentation to assist in considering the consultation.

These are listed and explained at para 2.1 below.

They can be viewed on the library pages of the DFT website (<http://www.highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk>) and a full hard copy set is available in the Members Room.

- 1.3 Conclusions

- Based on the analysis undertaken by the "51M" group of Councils your officers consider that the economic case for the London-Birmingham and Y network proposed is seriously flawed and that the Council should object to the proposals
- There are substantial concerns about the impact of these proposals upon communities and individual properties in the District as set out in Sections 4-6 of this report. Furthermore the Consultation lacks the level of detail necessary for precise impacts upon individual properties to be ascertained. As a result the Consultation is seriously flawed

Background Information

2.1 The Department of Transport has issued a suite of documents to support and explain their case for the proposition of a high speed rail network in the UK and for the specific first phase of the construction of HS2 from London to the West Midlands. The documents are:

- (i) the main consultation document which sets out the case for the national high speed rail network and the national high speed rail strategy in Part 1 and explains the government's proposals for HS2 London-West Midlands.
- (ii) a consultation summary document (which is attached as Appendix 1)
- (iii) the economic case for HS2 (the Y network and London – West Midlands). This deals with passenger demand, the benefits, costs and economic impact of the proposed Y network, presents an economic appraisal and the case for a new conventional speed line and tests their assumptions.
- (iv) the London-West Midlands Appraisal of Sustainability (AOS). This consists of a main report (in two volumes) which provides a scheme description, explains the process policy drivers, sustainability baseline, and looks at a wide variety of sustainability issues ranging from archaeology and biodiversity impacts to noise and vibration and waste generation. The AOS also has six separately bound appendices dealing with 1) the appraisal process, 2) Greenhouse gas emissions, 3) socio-economic report, 4) associated assessment reports, 5) technical reports and 6) preferred scheme and main alternatives. There is also a non-technical summary which I have attached as Appendix 2.
- (v) HS2 Route Engineering Report which describes the proposals section by section of the line. At Appendix 3 I provide the four pages dealing with the section through Cherwell's area. There is also a general description of the proposed railway construction.
- (vi) HS2 Strategic Alternatives Study which provides an explanation of the London to West Midlands rail alternatives and is also an update to the Economic Appraisal.

2.2 In October 2010 the Council resolved that:

"This Council notes the Government proposal for a high speed rail route from London to Birmingham and that the publicised route impacts on villages in this District. This Council believes that there is an insufficient business case for this proposal. This Council therefore instructs officers to prepare a report to the Executive setting out how the Council will campaign with like minded neighbouring Councils to stop HS2".

2.3 In March 2011 a report was presented to Executive. As noted at 1.1 above the Executive agreed to the Council joining a grouping of Councils all along the line whose aim was to oppose the proposal. This group is now known as "51M". The name derives from the cost of this proposal to every constituency in the United Kingdom of £51m. Oxfordshire County Council is not a part of this grouping, but they have recently resolved "to oppose the proposals on the grounds that over £750m will apparently be spent on developing the scheme when that money could provide better value for money by implementing

schemes already worked up that will deliver economic growth across South East England and Oxfordshire". The Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) are also considering their position, and are likely to have concluded similarly by the date of the Executive.

- 2.4 Given the complexity of assessing the business case, which needs specialist transport economic knowledge, and the complexity of assessing some of the technical aspects of the case which are common to all the authorities conjoined as "51M", the group has instructed a range of consultants to prepare reports that provide a critique of the business case, and enable a cogent argument to be deployed. Consultants will also provide the group with other technical reports assisting in the overall consultation response.
- 2.5 Alongside the governments' consultation the House of Commons Transport Select Committee is also looking at the governments' high speed rail proposals. The work of the consultants instructed by "51M" has been first used to make a submission to that Committee. I provide at Appendix 4 the covering letter and main arguments which have been submitted by 51m on this Council's behalf (with the Lead Member's agreement.) to the Transport Select Committee. These arguments were supplemented by a 200 page 15 chapter document.
- 2.6 Further work is underway to add to the above document to complete "51M"'s submissions to the DFT consultation. It is hoped that this will be available during June to enable the Executive to endorse that document as representing this Council's position on the part one questions posed in the consultation. It is also hoped that 51m will provide a critical analysis of the Appraisal of Sustainability in the same timescale.
- 2.7 It will be seen on page 23 of the consultation summary (Appendix 1 of this report) that the government seeks views upon the consultation under seven headings/questions.

1. This question is about the strategy and wider context:

Do you agree that there is a strong case for enhancing the capacity and performance of Britain's inter-city rail network to support economic growth over the coming decades?

2. This question is about the case for high speed rail:

Do you agree that a national high speed rail network from London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester (the Y network) would provide the best value for money solution (best balance of costs and benefits) for enhancing rail capacity and performance?

3. This question is about how to deliver the Government's proposed network:

Do you agree with the Government's proposals for the phased roll-out of a national high speed rail network, and for links to Heathrow Airport and to the High Speed 1 line to the Channel Tunnel?

4. This question is about the specification for the line between London and the West Midlands:

Do you agree with the principles and specification used by HS2 Ltd to underpin its proposals for new high speed rail lines and the route selection process HS2 Ltd undertook?

5. This question is about the route for the line between London and the West Midlands:

Do you agree that the Government's proposed route, including the approach proposed for mitigating its impacts, is the best option for a new high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands?

6. This question is about the Appraisal of Sustainability:

Do you wish to comment on the Appraisal of Sustainability of the Government's proposed route between London and the West Midlands that has been published to inform this consultation?

7. This question is about blight and compensation:

Do you agree with the options set out to assist those whose properties lose a significant amount of value as a result of any new high speed line?

The Case Against a New High Speed Rail Network

- 3.1 The economic case for HS2 is made in the consultation document of that name referred to in para 2.1(iii) above. It concludes that there is a strong case for a high speed rail network based on the Y configuration. They say that a cautious strategic level assessment of the Y configuration shows a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.6. BCR represents the level of benefit per pound spent by government e.g. if a scheme generates £2 for every £1 spent that gives a BCR of 2.0. The London – Birmingham section as a stand-alone proposition falls down to 2.0 (still offering a positive economic case). By their own figures if one excludes wider economic impacts (which are highly unpredictable and difficult to measure) this falls even lower to 1.6.
- 3.2 "51M"s experts however fundamentally disagree with this conclusion. In their analysis the following issues arise:
- a) There are much cheaper incremental alternatives, which can best meet the forecast demand but in a quicker and more responsive manner.
 - b) Demand forecasts are optimistic.
 - c) The rail industry has a poor record of passenger forecasting.
 - d) The level of service provision proposed is over optimistic and undeliverable.
 - e) High speed rail will not achieve modal shift from air and therefore will not achieve the climate change benefits ascribed to it.
 - f) The benefits assumed are too high.
 - g) The scheme will have little impact upon rebalancing the current regional economic imbalances.
 - h) It will have negative impacts upon existing rail users in many cases.
 - i) Little or no justification proven for the Heathrow or HS1 links proposed.

- j) HS2 is critically different to the European examples that DfT rely upon to justify their regional economic case.

In the following paragraphs I seek to expand upon each of these issues/criticisms. More detail can be found in Appendix 4 and even more in the source document of “51M” ’s full submission to the Transport Select Committee.

- 3.3 The DfT’s economic analysis is based upon an unrealistic “do-minimum” comparator to test the business case for HS2 against. There are better alternatives that could have been used as comparators. The chosen approach is contrary to the basic principles of undertaking a business case analysis and has led to a distorted picture as to the need for and benefits of HS2. Issues about the level of passenger growth and the value of time saved are open to subjective judgement. Huge increases in capacity can be produced on the relevant parts of the network with relatively simple and far cheaper steps than HS2, which will address current overcrowding issues earlier than the 2026 opening of HS2. These incremental steps include the impact of Evergreen 3 on providing alternative and almost as quick journeys between Birmingham – London as on the main line, thereby relieving pressure on Euston; changing configuration and lengthening West coast main line trains; managing peak demand through ticket pricing; and undertaking infrastructure capacity improvements at pinch points. These measures could produce over 200% capacity improvement at substantially lower cost (see para 13 and Table 1 in Appendix 4).
- 3.4 Demand growth – The DfT have used assumptions of growth derived from extrapolating forward for 35 years a level of growth for long distance rail travel over the last 15 years which has been unprecedented. Forecasting is inherently uncertain but to take a period of exceptionally high growth is certainly not a conservation approach. A significant error of this type in growth forecasting undermines the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) which would fall to a level below the normal test for government supported projects.
- 3.5 Furthermore, the rail industry has a poor record of forecasting demand for major rail projects. For example on HS1 it was predicted that by 2006 25 million passengers would be using that system, whereas the true figure is only 9 million. It would appear that lessons have not been learned from that mistake. It is considered that the international examples that DfT utilise are not reliable comparisons as they sit differently in high speed and classic rail contexts and should not be used to base assumptions about traffic growth.
- 3.6 Service provision – The business case is based on being able to operate up to 18 trains per hour in each direction, and is said to be based upon technological improvements to signalling systems. Based on experience in other countries the maximum realistic capacity is 12-15 trains per hour. A reduction of this order, together with the use of some of the train paths for trains to/from Heathrow and to enable connection to HS1 will significantly reduce the available range and frequency of HS2 services between London and West Midlands. This reduction in train numbers will have a major impact on the business case. Concern is also expressed about the reliability of the service when high speed trains are entering the system having been utilised for part of their overall journey on the classic rail network further north. This is likely to result in these trains being late causing severe issues for the high

speed service.

- 3.7 Modal shift – There are no air services from Birmingham to London. Whilst Manchester is served from London other air routes are from further north. Therefore in Phase 1 (London – West Midlands) it is highly unlikely to achieve any shift, and even on the Y only Manchester really represents a possibility as the journey time savings from further north are not significant.
- 3.8 Benefits – In the economic case the DfT have assumed that time spent on trains is wasted for business travellers. They have taken no account of modern technology which allows such travellers to use their time on the train productively. This assumption seriously undermines the benefits assigned to HS2 in their business case. £18bn of the £44bn benefits are said to be from the benefit of shorter journey times, of which £14bn is based on business traveller's time. If this benefit is removed the BCR is seriously undermined still further (potentially to less than 1.0 for Phase 1 and 1.2 for the Y system).
- 3.9 Rebalancing the national economy – The DfT emphasises the desirability of rebalancing the economy and reshaping the economic geography of the UK. However it is well established in academic literature that the benefits of high speed rail between regional centres and a dominant capital city are likely to go to the capital rather than the regional centres. Therefore whilst the regional centres may gain something from the new network a significantly greater benefit will be seen in London.
- 3.10 Impact upon existing rail users. Considerable research has been undertaken by Christopher Stokes (a consultant acting for "51M") into the service disbenefits of HS2. In the main documentation submitted to the Transport Select Committee (supporting Appendix 4 to this report) a large number of individual impacts upon West Coast main line services, the West Midlands suburban network, Midland main line, East Coast main line and Great West main line are itemised. As far as Cherwell is concerned it is predicted that there will not be any negative impacts upon the Chiltern Rail service, although I think it can be envisaged that there may be a small diversion of current trade onto HS2, dependent upon the pricing structures of the two lines.
- 3.11 Justification/impacts of HS1 and Heathrow links. The DfT proposal involves linking HS2 to Heathrow and to HS1. The passenger forecasts are far too low to make this an economically viable proposition. Train paths made available for trains going to and from Heathrow and to and from HS1 (i.e. through trains to/from continental Europe) will detract from the number of London – Y network and West Midlands trains, to the detriment of the business case.
- 3.12 It is recommended that the above comments in Section 3, be used as the Council's responses to the first 3 questions in the consultation, together with the endorsement of the 51m comments which will be reported upon when received.

Anticipated Impact Upon Cherwell

- 4.1 The second part of the DfT's consultation concerns the specific proposals concerning the HS2 proposal between London and the West Midlands and seeks opinions about the principle and specification chosen, the route

selection process, the specific route, and about mitigation measures. (Questions 4 and 5 in para 2.7 above).

- 4.2 At Appendix 5 I attach plans showing the alignment being promoted by DfT. Travelling south to north the line would first enter the district for a short section to the north of Godington. The proposed line is generally following the former Great Central railway line, but north of Godington it will deviate further north on new viaducts (approx 3 metres high) over the Padbury Brook. It is assumed, but not confirmed, that the former railway embankment and bridge will remain in situ and thereby shield the village of Godington to some extent.
- 4.3 The route then passes back into Aylesbury Vale DC's area passing the village of Chetwode before passing back into Cherwell to the east of the main part of Newton Purcell village. The line would travel on a raised embankment parallel to, and just to the north of, the former railway embankment. It is not clear if the former railway embankment adjacent will stay or go. The line would then pass over the existing A4421 just to the north of the existing redundant railway bridges and abutments. No information is available whether these former structures will stay or go. The plans submitted with the consultation show a diversion of the A4421 to the north west of the current alignment to pass over the new rail line (8 metres above the new rail height. Long embankments to north and south lift the road to that level. Accommodation works to the existing roadway are needed so that the existing road can still function as the access to houses north and south of the HS2 line and to serve the end of the Barton Hartshorn Road.
- 4.4 Proceeding north-westwards the proposed HS2 line regains the Great Central alignment (albeit in wider cutting) and travels in low cut to the A421. A new bridge to take the A421 across the railway would be needed. The line continues north westwards in increasingly deep cutting passing between Warren Farm and The Oaks Farm. Just short of the Mixbury Lodge to Fulwell Road the line would start to deviate north eastwards from the former railway line remaining in deep cutting as it passes under that road and north of Tibbetts Farm. To the north-east of Mixbury the line would need to come out of cutting and pass over a short viaduct to cross the deep valley of a small brook flowing eastwards to the Great Ouse River at Fulwell. The line would then pass back into deep cutting for 300-400m (8 metres deep approx) before re-emerging onto embankment and viaduct (10 metres high) as it crosses the Great Ouse River heading onto Aylesbury Vale again to pass between Westbury and Turweston and hence into South Northamptonshire Council's area to the north-east of Brackley.
- 4.5 When trying to assess the impact of a new engineering project of this scale there are a whole range of issues that have to be looked at. The proposal will need a full Environmental Assessment (EA) to be undertaken upon it before it is able to proceed to a Hybrid Bill stage. This EA has yet to be done. Consultees are restricted to the information available from the engineering and line drawings, and from the Appraisal of Sustainability (AOS). The AOS, whilst containing some useful information, is lacking the impact information which would be available with an Environmental Statement. This provides the Council, and local residents, with a difficulty. It is not possible to be definite about the degree of impact upon residential amenity, biodiversity etc. without the fuller information. Therefore you will see in the following paragraphs that a repeated statement that more

information is needed and that therefore an objection has to be raised at this time.

4.6 Section 2 of the AOS provides HS2 Ltd's overview of the potential impacts (attached as Appendix 6 to this report). This report will now provide relatively brief comments upon the range of impact issues as they affect Cherwell communities and individuals and environment, before addressing the issues of specification, route selection and mitigation. The issues to be covered are:

- Landscape impact
- Noise and vibration
- Biodiversity
- Cultural heritage i.e. listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeology
- Water resources and flooding
- Highway issues (including footpaths)
- Residential amenity
- Community integrity
- Air quality
- Soil and land resources
- Local economic impacts upon farms and businesses

4.7 Landscape Impact – The Council's Landscape Planning Officer has commented as follows

I have visited all the points at which there is public access to the proposed line and also Fringford and Cottisford due to their association with Flora Thompson.

The line dissects a relatively small area on the eastern side of Cherwell district and although the route physically only occupies 5.5km the visual impacts extend well beyond this.

The landscape character is one of unspoilt undulating arable and pasture land with good hedgerow and associated tree cover. In places there are small to substantial blocks of woodland. A number of small villages are relatively sparsely located within 5km of the line.

Accessible points

1. Godington Footpaths. The line will be on a viaduct at this point as it travels through the valley. From the Cherwell side approaching from Godington there will be some screening provided by the disused rail track which I estimate to be 6m high and has some scrub cover making the screen higher. The power line gantries are likely to be visible. The existence of a disused line very close to a new one may well have the effect of making the area look quite degraded visually as there will be an area of dead ground between the two lines. It would be preferable to remove the original line and utilise the spoil in constructing the new line. Visual Impact substantial

2. Newton Purcell. A sizeable part of the village is within the 500m examination zone of the line. The line is 3.5m above grade with a bridge over track plus power lines. This will necessitate a considerable bridge and engineering works which will be intrusive on a small village which is very close. I would assume that some properties will be too close to be retained as the ground re-modelling required will be considerable. Substantial impact +!

3. Footpath at 627 319 The track is almost at grade here where it runs along the line of the disused railway. Here the impact will be caused by the overhead power lines. The existing track at this point is currently well screened by vegetation but it is not clear if it will be possible to retain this. I think possibly on one side of the track but not

the other as there will be some cutting which there is not at present. Impact moderate to substantial.

4. Footpath at 624 325. the track will be slightly cut in here. Again due to the earthworks required it may not be possible to retain all the existing screening. Impact moderate to substantial

5. A421. The proposed line crosses the A421 by way of a bridge. The landscape is relatively flat and the approach to the bridge along a long straight road. The bridge will rise above the A421 creating a large structure over the road. Substantial impact.

6. Featherbed lane. The line will be in cut, not significantly visible at this point but a new bridge will be required with associated earthworks. Impact moderate to substantial

7. Mossycorner Lane. In cutting as it passes directly past Mixbury with a small length of viaduct before passing into cutting again. Unlikely to be visible in summer due to intervening vegetation. Likely to be visible in winter. The village is just outside the 500m examination zone. Moderate visual impact, possibly substantial in winter.

8. Fringford. The periphery of Fringford is approx 2.7km from the proposed route. I don't think that it will be visible due to intervening vegetation.

9. Cottisford. The periphery of Cottisford is approx 3.7km from the rail route. Due to the topography and intervening tree cover I don't believe the line will be visible from the village.

The line ploughs through valleys and raised ground, from cut to viaduct and back, completely dissecting the landscape and interrupting the landscape pattern.

There will be considerable localised impacts wherever there are substantial sections of cut or fill. In Cherwell the maximum extent of these is 10m. Allowing for 1:5 slopes this could mean cutting or filling for up to 50m either side of the rail corridor. At this stage none of this has been identified and considered. Much less any mitigation of the scars.

There will be very significant earth moving required in the construction process. Roads in the vicinity of the line are narrow country lanes unsuited to heavy traffic. Construction impacts will be considerable due to noise, dust, traffic and visual scaring.

The visual impact of the line will be much greater than shown on the sections as these just illustrate the impact for track levels and does not include the overhead power lines which add further 9-10m of structure above ground. There are also the possibility of noise baffles to reduce the sound impacts creating a landscape impact which will require mitigation in itself.

Mitigation of landscape and visual effects is most effective if it is designed into a project at inception stage as this gives opportunities to avoid, reduce, offset and if possible remedy the effects of the development. Adding on cosmetic measures such as screen planting is likely to be least successful.

The landscape is very sensitive to this development because of its nature and scale. The distribution of visual receptors and the extremely limited scope for mitigation. Accommodating a development like this without a detrimental effect to the landscape character of the area is impossible in my opinion.

It is difficult to assess the scheme at this stage due to limited information. It would be very useful to have the Zone of Visual Influence identified at this stage. The Appraisal of Sustainability Technical report Appendix 5 assumes a ZVI of 3km from

the 100m route corridor. This is a blunt instrument and very much depends on topography. This must be included in the EIA.

This is a major project in terms of size and scale. It will create a significant artificial linear structure in landscape and visual terms and a resulting substantial adverse impact with few if any benefits. Protection and enhancement of the landscape is one of the objectives of the Transport Analysis Guidance. I cannot see how this project achieves these aims.

- 4.8 All of the area of Cherwell through which the line passes is a locally designated Area of High Landscape in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan. This is not recognised in the AOS at all. As described in paras 4.2 to 4.4 the line will be in a mixture of cutting and embankment. The new construction will be a raw feature in the landscape which on-site planting will do little to alleviate in the short to medium term. The impact is not only from the new engineering structures of the line (embankments, cuttings and viaducts) but also from the view of the trains themselves and the overhead gantries. In addition one has to consider the structures that will carry roads and footpaths across the line. In our area the over bridge at Newton Purcell will be particularly obvious as will the viaduct across the Great Ouse River. Of lesser visual significance will be the A421 over bridge and the Padbury Brock viaduct but these are still substantial new structures in the AHLV. With regards to the cuttings if cannot be established, on the basis of the submitted drawings, what the land take will be as some are quite deep around Mixbury. It is therefore difficult to assess the true impact. The Council will need to seek mitigation of these impacts both on and off site.
- 4.9 A further significant consideration in landscape impact terms is the loss of tree cover. The existing cuttings and embankments provide strong linear features containing established trees. Where the existing alignment is being re-used or the line runs close to and parallel to the former line, it is considered that most of these landscape features will be lost. This will cause significant harm. In addition between Newton Purcell and Mixbury the line would run adjacent to and through two plantations. These would be severely affected as landscape features. North east of Mixbury the line has to cross a sharp sided valley on a viaduct between two deep cuttings. This is likely to be a significant feature when viewed from the footpath which runs north from Beaumont Lodge.
- 4.10 A final potential concern relates to the possibility of a site in the district being used as a power take off point. It is known that the HS2 will be electrified and will need connection to the National Grid with suitably located transformer compounds. No information is available about the location of these sites which will also need road access for maintenance. To the east and north of Mixbury an existing high voltage pylon-line crosses the proposed railway and then runs along the former Great Central railway line. At least one pylon would need to be relocated to facilitate the building of the railway. This is at the point where the Mixbury Lodge to Fulwell road crosses the line, and therefore is road served. From seeing such power take-off compounds in Kent when viewing HS1 it is considered that this feature would also be harmful to the visual amenity of this part of the countryside which is classified as being of high landscape value.
- 4.11 Noise and vibration – the AOS identifies 3 or 4 properties at Newton Purcell

as potentially experiencing high noise levels, with further housing nearby potentially eligible for noise insulation (implying relatively high noise levels). The same plans show four properties in Godington, all the remaining properties in Newton Purcell and five outlying properties (Cross Farm, Widmore Farm, The Oaks Farm, Warren Farm (4 properties), Tibbetts Farm, and Beaumont Lodge) as potentially experiencing a noticeable noise increase. It is not explained why the The Oaks Farm, which is located immediately adjacent to the line is not categorised as experiencing high noise levels. Two areas, close to the railway at Newton Purcell, and around Warren Farm are also annotated as “preliminary candidate areas for mitigation”.

4.12 In your officer’s initial view there are two other potential areas for concern. Firstly as mentioned in para 4.9 above to the north east of Mixbury the line crosses a short viaduct between two cuttings. It is thought likely that high speed trains crossing this at full speed will send a pulse of noise up and down the valley to each side, with properties at Mixbury and Fulwell likely to experience this sudden repetitive noise event. This could have a significant detrimental affect. To a lesser extent Fulwell may also experience noise from the much longer viaduct across the Great Ouse River. The AOS recognises the potential for noticeable noise in Westbury, but not in Fulwell.

4.13 The Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour Manager comments:

In their Appraisal of Sustainability document at Appendix 5.4 the HS2 organisation sets out the criteria it proposes to assess the impact of noise and vibration generated by the planned high speed rail project.

In the opening paragraphs of the report the case is made for the use of the LAeq unit of noise measurement to assess and quantify the noise levels produced by trains. A time period of 18 hrs has been chosen as the appropriate averaging period over which the LAeq is to be applied. The 18 hr time period is defined as ‘daytime’ between 06:00 and 00:00 (midnight). It is suggested that the LAeq measure ‘correlates best with the annoyance caused to humans by noise’

Whilst it is accepted that LAeq is a commonly used noise measurement the claim that it correlates as an index of annoyance is to be questioned particularly in the case of rail noise where individual noise events typically involve large amounts of sound over short periods of time followed by periods of time when the ‘nuisance’ is entirely absent. In these circumstances the use of a maximum event noise level such as LAmay may more accurately reflect the noise impact. Equally the LAeq measurement does not accurately reflect the additional impact caused when for example a train emerges from a cutting or tunnel and a nearby sensitive receptor is suddenly exposed to a significant volume of noise. This effect is in part addressed later in the report when the issue of tunnel boom is considered. It is felt that due to the depth of some of the cuttings to be employed this effect or elevated levels of noise could be a problem in these locations.

In addressing ground borne vibration mention is made of the variation in effect that can arise as a result of the underlying geology. Whilst the report is by nature general in its terms it is felt that this point is significant and should have been addressed in more detail with reference being made to specific rather than general local conditions.

Another significant omission is an appraisal of noise impacts on non residential receptors as the affect of noise on the ability for individuals to work productively and effectively should not be under estimated.

In predicting noise levels that are likely to be generated by the HS2 rolling stock reference is made to quantitative noise measurements obtained from a survey of operation of TGV rolling stock. These trains typically operate at speeds up to 300 km/hr yet the aspiration for HS2 is for trains to operate at 360 km/hr or faster. The report does concede that data for aerodynamic noise from trains travelling at 360 km/hr or faster is not currently available and as a consequence modifications to the Calculation of Rail Noise Methodology cannot be made at this time. This shortcoming does call in to question any use of an unmodified model for predicting noise levels.

4.14 Noise from the operation of the high speed railway originates from a number of sources:

- Mechanical noise from motors, fans and ancillary equipment
- Rolling noise from wheels
- Aerodynamic noise from airflow
- Catenary noise from the power pick up from the overhead lines.

The documentation does not provide noise contours so it is not possible to make any accurate assessment of the noise impact upon individual properties. This is a significant failing. We are told such information will not be available until the Environmental Statement is published. This is considered unacceptable. It is worth remembering that the operational times of the railway are proposed to be from 5am to midnight and would ultimately be carrying 18 trains per hour (at peak) in each direction. There will be a lot of noise events and they will start early and run into the night time. Maintenance to the track will take place at night, and may be the occasional source of yet more noise nuisance.

4.15 Whilst noise mitigation is referred to in the AOS no specific proposals are given, and no assumption can therefore be made of the effectiveness of such measures. In your officer's opinion it is considered that lowering the height of the line may assist further around Mixbury/Finmere, with perhaps the use of a "green" (cut-and-cover) tunnel to avoid the deep cuttings. This would have the added advantage of lowering the viaduct over the Great Ouse River. Particular concern is also expressed about the noise impacts at Newton Purcell. As the line is elevated relative to the nearest properties, noise barriers would be the only technical solution, but it is not possible to assess their effectiveness on the basis of the information currently provided.

4.16 Biodiversity. The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the records of species and habitats likely to be affected and comments as follows

*We have the following **records** of species and areas of ecological/ biodiversity interest within 500m either side of the proposed line within Cherwell District:*

Protected Species:

- Water vole (protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as

amended)

- *Badger* (Protected under Protection of Badgers Act 1992)
- *Grass snake* (protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 against killing and injury)
- *Common Lizard* (protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 against killing and injury)

BAP Priority/ Section 41 Species and notable species:

- *Water flax beetle* – Nationally Notable invertebrate
- *Small Heath* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Cinnabar* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Wall* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Shaded Broad-bar* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Basil Thyme* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Wood White* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Dingy Skipper* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Grizzled Skipper* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Small Blue* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Four-spotted* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Figure of eight* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Cuckoo* - BAP/ Section 41 NERC Act species
- *Lebia chlorocephala* (ground beetle) – Nationally notable
- *Stenus butrintensis* – Nationally notable
- *Psallus albicinctus* – Nationally notable B
- *Kingfisher* – amber list bird

The route passes within close proximity to a number of large ponds and lagoons (close to Finmere and Godington). There may therefore be issues with amphibians, most notably Great Crested Newts to be addressed, which could be using areas to be affected as terrestrial habitat. The lagoons may also be important for water birds which could be impacted by disturbance. The route also appears to pass through or directly adjacent to a couple of plantation and woodland areas near Finmere. There may be important nesting birds or roosting bats in these areas which would need to be surveyed for.

Bats – there are no specific records for bats but they are likely to be foraging along the watercourses and hedgerows throughout the area as well as the old LNER railway as this forms a major vegetated corridor across the wider landscape and therefore could be important for commuting and foraging bats, which may be difficult to mitigate for.

We have records of water vole throughout the district and it is likely they are present on some of the other watercourses to be affected (I identified 9 crossings of watercourses of various sizes) in addition to on the River Great Ouse where we have specific records from surveys. Similarly Otters may be present on any of these watercourses.

Badgers are likely to be widespread.

Impacts:

For all these species the principal impacts both during construction and in the long-term when trains are running will be

- *direct destruction and loss of habitat*
- *direct and indirect disturbance due to noise, lighting and habitat*

destruction/modification

- *fragmentation and loss of connectivity of habitats*
- *isolation of populations*
- *potentially direct injury and killing of individuals both during construction and when trains are running*

Protected habitats:

There is only one specifically highlighted habitat in our records namely a District Wildlife Site – the Old LNER railway LN2/3. This was previously of LWS value but has been downgraded due to loss of ecological interest. It still contains Lowland Calcareous grassland of BAP priority habitat quality and is important for butterflies and likely to be important for other invertebrates. There would be direct land loss of this area. BBOWT suggest there is a second area in proximity but I do not have records of this.

The proposed route would necessitate the loss of a number of hedgerow sections which are also likely to be BAP priority habitat and similarly a number of woodland areas which may qualify under lowland deciduous woodland.

The closest LWS is Spilsmere wood 850m to the West. I would not foresee any impacts on this however there may be disturbance from noise if it travels that far.

Likely mitigation required:

Creation of new habitats as a replacement for those lost, potentially fencing during construction and removal of reptiles/amphibians to receptor sites. Replacement bat roosts and bird nesting opportunities. Timing restrictions on work to avoid or coincide with breeding/hibernation times. Bridge designs to cater for bats, otter passes etc...

- 4.17 Attention has already been made above (in para 4.9 above) about the loss of tree cover. There is a potential for further hedgerow loss as well. The Council should be concerned that the level of information provided is currently poor. We will need to ensure that the Environmental Statement is based on current and up to date survey information to ensure compliance with the EEC Directives on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna.
- 4.18 Cultural Heritage – As a generality the AOS significantly underplays the significance of local designation such as conservation areas. Mixbury Conservation Area should have been recognised as a heritage asset. Mixbury also has a Grade II* listed building and the Beaumont Castle Scheduled Monument. Given the distance and intervening land form it is not considered that the impact upon the listed building and Conservation Area is likely to be significant. It is assumed that English Heritage have been asked for their comments upon the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Grade II buildings are recorded, but in our opinion an assessment of their significance should be made and so should an assessment of the impact of the proposal upon them. There are two Grade II listed building in Godington, 8 in Newton Purcell and 4 in Mixbury which

should be taken into account.

- 4.19 Archaeology. Impact information is awaited from OCC
- 4.20 Water and flooding – Detailed consideration will need to be given in the development of the project concerning:
- River crossings
 - Vulnerable flood risk areas
 - Impact upon aquifers and compliance with the water directive
 - Impact upon rivers, streams and ponds
- 4.21 Whilst the AOS maps the flood plains (Padbury Brook north of Godington, the River Great Ouse north of Mixbury/Fulwell, and its small tributary running from Fulwell towards Mixbury) and comments briefly on the aquifer situation the documentation is short on detail information and impact assessment. This will of necessity follow in the Environmental Statement. However, with particular regard to the protection of water quality this makes assessment at this time difficult. This part of Cherwell, together with the adjacent areas of Aylesbury Vale and South Northamptonshire is a high water quality area by virtue of its position at the top of the river catchment area. Article 4.7 of the Water Framework Directive states that there can be no diminution of that high water standard from high to good as a result of development without meeting the provisions of that Article.
- 4.22 Highways and footpaths – Progressing from south to north the following highway crossings are affected by the proposals:
- a) Bridlepath north of Godington – currently passes under Great Central line by underbridge – would need to be accommodated under the new viaduct.
 - b) A4421 Newton Purcell Road currently passes under Great Central line with redundant bridges still in place. Proposal appears to be to leave underbridge but stop through traffic under new line (?). New overbridge with lengthy approach embankments and diversion of line of A4421 to west proposed.
 - c) Bridlepath from Home Farm Shelswell to Finmere crosses line of old railway. No accommodation works shown. Bridge would be required.
 - d) Bridlepath from Widmore Farm to Finmere crosses line of old railway. No accommodation works shown. Bridge would be required.
 - e) A421 near Warren Farm. Relatively recent diversion of road south of old bridge point on embankment. Old bridge works remain. New bridge proposed still further south. Unclear what happens to old bridge works.
 - f) Footpath from Tibbetts Farm to Warren Farm alongside (north) of former railway line. Will need accommodation works associated with (g) below.
 - g) Roadway from Mixbury Lodge to Fulwell. Current overbridge over dismantled railway will need to be replaced.
 - h) Bridlepaths north from Beaumont Lodge and north east from Mixbury Lodge meet and continue to Westbury. The meeting point will be at a deep cutting point on new line. Will need overbridge.

- 4.23 It is considered important to ensure that all existing footpaths/bridlepaths are properly accommodated during construction of, and after the opening of, any new railway line. Members may recall that during the M40 construction, another government promoted scheme, a large number of footpaths were truncated or had significant diversions made to them. These were never replaced satisfactorily. Objections should be raised if assurances are not forthcoming that this will not be repeated as a function of this scheme.
- 4.24 Of particular concern are the proposals relating to the routing of the A4421 across the proposed railway at Newton Purcell. Rather than take the road under the railway as currently the proposal is to divert the road over the line further to the west. No explanation has been given as to why it is not possible to continue with an underbridge. Because of the height of the line relative to surrounding land levels the bridge has to be approached via lengthy and high embankments. These would be harmful to the character and appearance of the landscape. The embankments will also have a significant impact upon the amenity of the two houses on the western side of the A4421 at this point. Indeed it must be questioned whether these will be viable houses after this construction, particularly that one to the south of the railway line, Station House, which will be dominated by the new railway and road infrastructure and suffer high noise levels. The raising of the road will also have the effect of raising the road noise source and may have an effect upon the amenity of the houses in the vicinity. The plans available do not make it plain whether the existing roadway under the railway will remain open; presumably not. This will impact upon community integrity - see later.
- 4.25 The amenity of rural footpaths and bridleways will be fundamentally affected by the proposal. The footpath north of Godington has a particularly remote and tranquil feel to it. This will be lost completely. Similarly the two footpaths/bridleways north and east of Mixbury, which form part of a well used dog-walking loop, will have an entirely different character once the railway is constructed. They will no longer be a source of tranquil remote recreation, but will instead be subjected to the frequent passage of trains travelling at maximum speed. Again similar expressions of concern should be expressed about the footpaths which cross or are close to the line between Mixbury and Newton Purcell.
- 4.26 Residential amenity – The impact of the new railway upon residential amenity is greater than the imposition of noise nuisance at whatever level it is experienced. It is also the affect upon the tranquility of a rural location, or the interruption of a rural landscape by modern transportation infrastructure. This impact affects communities/properties such as:
- Godington – A remote village accessed off of a dead end lane. The village which contains 15-20 properties, is tranquil and unaffected by road noise. It will in the future, if this proposal goes ahead, have significant train noise albeit that the trains will not be visible.
 - Newton Purcell – A small village astride the A4421 and suffering train the noise/disturbance and division by a road carrying relatively high volumes of HGV and other traffic transiting from the A34/M40 to Milton Keynes and the M1. The imposition of frequent train noise is an unreasonable extra burden.

- Warren Farm/The Oaks Farm – A secluded group of former farm buildings and working farm north of the A421. The proposed line charges between them in low cutting. The noise, visibility of the overhead lines/tops of trains and the accommodation works to ensure that the private access road is maintained will have a significant affect upon the whole group, especially The Oaks Farm which will be very close to the line.
- Mixbury – A Conservation Area, which is predominately an old estate village. Despite the relatively close proximity of the A43 and A421 roads the village is relatively tranquil. The train noise which will be apparent will detract from this heritage asset and the residential amenity of villages.
- Fulwell – A remote hamlet in a secluded and tranquil location. Concern is expressed that sudden noise events will result from the proposed track configuration near Mixbury, and longer noise occurrences from the River Great Ouse viaducts which are both up-wind of the hamlet.

- 4.27 Community Integrity – This is an issue where a community is sub-divided by transport infrastructure. It is considered that this is a significant concern in two locations. Firstly, at Newton Purcell. The few properties to the north of the proposed railway line will be segregated from the remainder of the village if the existing route under the Great Central Railway is to be blocked and a long and circuitous journey by foot or vehicle is necessary to get from these properties to the Church, public house, or other houses. This is unfortunate and at the very least consideration should be given to providing a footpath connection under the line.
- 4.28 The second location of concern is at Warren Farm/The Oaks Farm north of the A421. These isolated properties form a small integrated grouping. The railway will split them apart, and unless the accommodation works for the access is well done they will feel dislocated from one another, and the Warren Farm set of properties will be further removed from the main road.
- 4.29 Soil and land resources – None of the affected land is Grade 1 or II so this issue is not significant in Cherwell's case. Some concern needs to be expressed however about the relationship of the proposed line to the Finmere Quarry landfill site. Information will be required to ascertain if there will be any impact upon the usefulness of the cells of that landfill which are nearest to the line. Impacts by reason of vibration or affect upon water table would need technical assessment. This matter will have to be covered in detail in the Environmental Statement. Impact upon the use of cells may have a wider impact upon the landfill resource of the County.
- 4.30 Local economic impacts – In much the same way as a motorway it is possible that a new railway line may cut off one part of a farmer's land from the rest of his land or his farmstead. It has not been possible to establish this type of impact, but it is known that in some locations the farmers make use of the former railway to transit between parts of their holdings. It may be necessary to consider if further accommodation bridges or underbridges are necessary to ensure the continuation of those farm enterprises without detriment to their viability. Such bridges may of course add to the visual harm of the railway by introducing yet more transport infrastructure into open landscape.

- 4.31 There are storage activities being undertaken on the old station site at Newton Purcell. It has not been possible to establish what these are (or indeed if they have planning permission!) but the proposed alignment and the overbridge for the A4421 seems to eliminate this as a business enterprise.
- 4.32 The proximity of the line to the farmhouse at The Oaks Farm seems to call into question its viability as a dwelling. It is believed that this is the only house associated with this farm business. If this enterprise cannot function without a dwelling it may be necessary to fundamentally change the farming enterprise, or consider the construction of a replacement dwelling further from the line.

Mitigation

- 4.33 Question 5 of the DfT's consultation also seeks comments upon the intended approach to mitigation. This is dealt with in 5 paragraphs and one figure in the AOS (Section 9 – which I attach as Appendix 7). This is an understandable and appropriate approach, trying to avoid the need for mitigation as a first step and then proceeding down a hierarchy of minimising impact, abating impact, repairing and compensating.
- 4.34 The AOS contains some generic information about mitigation methods and implementation. There is nothing specific to individual locations. As with other areas this lack of information is unhelpful in formulating opinions about the impact of the proposal upon communities and individuals. Significantly more information, specific to locations is necessary in any next step towards a Hybrid Bill.

Principle and Specification

- 5.1 Question 4 of the DfT's consultation seeks opinions about the principle and specification chosen for the proposal. I comment below about the consideration of alternatives but it is also considered worth seeing if the lessons of the protracted consideration of the HS1 route through Kent are being utilised in this proposal. A fundamental criterion in Kent was that existing transport corridors should be utilised (the HS1 line closely follows the M2 along much of its length). HS2 does not follow this desirable criterion. Whilst the route through Cherwell roughly follows the alignment of the former railway, this has been disused for over 50 years, has largely become re-integrated as part of the rural landscape, and was of course of a much simpler and smaller form of railway engineering. The land taken for HS2 of a minimum of 22 metres with additional width needed for cuttings, embankments and landscaping will create a new strong feature through the landscape. This is unfortunate. However, in Cherwell's case care has to be taken in how strongly this view is expressed as another alignment, say parallel to the M40, could have significantly greater impact upon the District especially in the Cherwell Valley past Banbury.
- 5.2 Aspects of the specification which may require comment relate to:
- Speed
 - Operating hours
 - Frequency of trains
 - Infrastructure design

- 5.3 The speed chosen for the operation (up to 250 mph – albeit max speed of 225 mph upon opening) has a significant effect upon the horizontal and vertical alignment of the railway proposed in that at such speeds the tightness of the radii of corners and the gradients suitable are restricted. The line therefore has to be as straight as possible (free of sinuous bends) and as flat as possible. The scheme has already been amended from that first published in March 2010 to seek to avoid settlements and to minimise the height of viaducts. A lower design speed would facilitate greater sinuosity, allowing greater avoidance of property, but would affect the basic offer of journey time reduction. It is unlikely that any reduction of speed that we encouraged would change the impact of the proposal if they are seeking to generally follow this alignment through Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire.
- 5.4 As noted above when discussing noise nuisance the operating hours of 5am to midnight do give us cause for concern. Both early hours operation and evening/night operation will be at times when the background noise level is low and the consequent impact of the noise generated by the trains will be higher and more harmful to the quiet enjoyment of nearby houses. It is suggested that we make representations to shorten the operating hours.
- 5.5 Noise nuisance is also a function of the frequency of the noise events – the number of trains per hour and per day. The 18 trains per hour in each direction which is proposed at peak hours i.e. 36 trains (less than 2 minutes between each noise event potentially) is considered excessive and unreasonable to endure for the occupiers of nearby properties.
- 5.6 The visual impact of the railway upon the countryside can be reduced by high quality design of bridges and noise mitigation. No information has been provided on this. We will require the highest standards to be utilised so that whenever possible the infrastructure that cannot be hidden from view is attractive and with high quality materials.

The Appraisal of Sustainability

- 6.1 Question 6 of the DfT's consultation asks for comments upon the Appraisal of sustainability. In a number of places comments in Section 4 above included criticism of the availability of information and the need for an increased level of work needed in an Environmental Statement. This lack of information is considered to be a fundamental flaw in the consultation. Whilst seeking the public's and stakeholder's comments upon the economic case and upon the route published insufficient information is available to truly assess the specific impact upon individual communities or properties. If the Minister, after considering the consultation responses, gives the go ahead for a Bill to be formulated the route will have become further fixed and it is unlikely that anymore than cosmetic changes will be able to be made subsequently, and yet other than objecting because the impact cannot be quantified how is an individual, (or the Council looking to act in the best interests of its residents) meant to be able to respond?
- 6.2 Consultants acting for 51m have been instructed to provide an overall critique of the AOS. It is hoped that this will be available before the Executive Meeting.

Compensation Proposals

7.1 The final question in the DfT consultation relates to the compensation proposals which are set out in Annex A to the consultation (not included in the consultation summary). This makes the following statements:

- If, following public consultation, a decision is taken to proceed with the high speed line, at the point the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed the line of the route the next step would be to safeguard the line. The safeguarding of land is an established process within the planning regime in which the Secretary of State directs local authorities to safeguard portions of land for a particular development
- For home owners, the safeguarding area would be the first formal indication of where the land and property might need to be compulsorily purchased in order to build a new line
- Statutory blight provisions would become available to qualifying property owners within a safeguarded area from the date of which any safeguarding directions are made.
- Under Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 people would be entitled to claim for loss of value on their property due to the impact of physical factors from the operation of any new high speed rail line. Physical factors mean noise, dust and vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, artificial lighting, and the discharge of substances onto land. Compensation is available for owner-occupiers of residential properties, small businesses and agricultural units.
- Claims could be submitted once the railway had been open for one year – this allows the actual impact to be understood, and gives time for the impact to be reflected in the property market. It is typical for affected property prices to recover somewhat during this period – as the uncertainty effect disappears.
- Generalised blight is a term used to describe the impact on the property market in a certain area as a result of the perceived impacts of a proposed or planned new development
- Blight of this kind is strongly associated with fear of the perceived impacts from a future development before the actual impacts are known, often coupled with uncertainty as to what property owners who do experience impacts once a development is built would be entitled to claim in compensation.
- The Government recognises that the proposals for a new high speed rail line have inevitably given rise to generalised blight in some areas along the proposed line of route. Experience of past major infrastructure projects has shown that the effect of blight is strongest at the point of most uncertainty and least definitive information
- At this formative stage of the high speed rail proposals there is understandably a considerable amount of fear and uncertainty within communities about what impact a line, if built, would have on the areas along the route, the blight situation in these areas would be expected to improve over time as more became known about plans for any new high speed rail line and more detailed measures were developed to mitigate impacts such as noise. But the Government is aware that if a decision is made to go ahead with a new high speed line, blight may well continue to have a detrimental effect upon the property market in areas along the proposed route.

-
- Because of this, the Government is considering whether additional support arrangements for property owners may be appropriate, if a decision is taken to go ahead with a new high speed line, in addition to those already provided under the statutory blight and compensation provisions.

7.2 The Government is considering the following issues with regard to the need for discretionary support arrangements namely:

- Assisting those whose properties lose significant value
- Enabling the normal functioning of the property market
- Reassuring now that fair compensation will be paid
- Enabling people to stay in their homes and communities
- Avoiding the government owning large numbers of properties

This will be the subject of further consultation early in 2012 if the Minister has indicated that he wishes the process to continue towards a Hybrid Bill.

7.3 Initial comments should be made that the statutory blight provisions (only available to those whose properties are actually on the line promoted) are very restricted and apply to very few, whilst statutory compensation is only claimable once the line has been open for one year i.e. 2027 or thereabouts.

7.4 Given the potential generalised blight that may occur and the significant impact this will have upon the local operation of the housing market and the likely depression of house values of properties perceived to be affected it is vital that some discretionary support arrangement is put in place as soon as possible. This needs to be as generous and easy as possible to enable those who need or want to move can do so without financial loss.

Implications

Financial: Nothing directly arising out of this report. If the proposal continues forward it may be necessary for the Council to instruct consultants to act for it in assessing the details of an Environmental Statement. The "51M" group is likely to continue to oppose the proposals at each stage, and the Council may therefore be asked to make further financial contributions.

The Council has an earmarked reserve of £50,000 set aside to meet any costs related to making representations in relation to HS2. At present there has been no expenditure incurred.

Comments checked by Joanne Kaye, Service accountant
01295 221545

Legal: Nothing directly arising out of this report. It is known that "51M" is likely to consider a judicial review of the Ministers decision to proceed if he reaches that conclusion

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Team Leader Planning
ands Litigation 01295 221687

Risk Management: Nothing directly arising out of this report
Comments checked by Claire Taylor Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager, 01295 221563

Wards Affected

Fringford

Corporate Plan Themes

**A safe and healthy Cherwell
A cleaner, greener Cherwell**

Executive Portfolio

**Councillor Gibbard
Lead Member for Planning and Housing**

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Consultation summary document
Appendix 2	Non-technical summary of Appraisal of Sustainability
Appendix 3	Extract from HS2 Route Engineering Report
Appendix 4	Summary of "51M" submission to Transport Select Committee
Appendix 5	Route plans
Appendix 6	Overview of potential impacts
Appendix 7	Mitigation section of AOS
Background Papers	
Department for Transport consultation papers as set out in para. 2.1 of report	
Report Author	Bob Duxbury, Development Control Team Leader
Contact Information	01295 221821 bob,duxbury@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

FUTURE VISION TO 2016

1. Strategic Context:

Cherwell's Economic Development Service plays a key role, working with employers and partner organisations, to support delivery of the Cherwell Community Strategy's overall Vision to 2030 of "*a diverse economy with opportunities for all, vibrant communities connected by a sense of pride, place and purpose*".

The draft Cherwell Economic Development Strategy to 2016, being developed by partners across Cherwell and led by the District Council, sets out a vision for the aspiration and needs of the local economies of Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and rural areas, as well as Cherwell-wide issues of:

- supporting existing companies to be successful and productive, especially in international markets, aiming to reverse the relatively low-wage local economy
- selective encouragement of inward investment, supporting diversity
- identification of development sites for economic growth
- strengthening technical capacity, leading expansion of high-technology, specialised sectors
- balancing population and business growth with infrastructure requirements
- Overall, maintaining Cherwell as a good place to live and work

Whilst intended as a Strategy delivered by many employers and partners working together, the themes for delivering the Economic Development Strategy directly shape much of the future leadership and delivery role of Cherwell's Economic Development Service:

1.1 Strategy Delivery Theme A: Resilience

- A diverse and resilient economy
- Strong and flexible partnerships that add value by working together
- Maximise the gain from the "green economy" arising from Eco-Bicester
- Responding to the challenge from the Centre for Local Economic Strategies in 2010: '*The catalytic elements are in Cherwell, it just needs gluing together.*'

1.2 Strategy Delivery Theme B: People, Business and Place

Developing People: Our people are our greatest asset in our community, we will:

- create employment
- provide access to employment
- enhance skills
- improve the life chances of people living in some of Cherwell's less prosperous areas
- ensure wages keep pace with local costs of living

Developing Business: Businesses will work with public and social partners, each other to become stronger and more diverse, we will:

- promote business start-ups and entrepreneurship
- develop local procurement and supply chains
- promote business & cluster development
- attract new investment
- develop a "World Class" business community and develop the visitor economy

Developing Place: So Cherwell is an even better place to live, work and play, we will:

- promote employment sites & premises
- manage infrastructure development
- support rural areas and urban centres.

2. Economic Development Service: Vision 2011 – 2016

The service aims to lead and shape delivery of significant elements of the Cherwell Economic Development Strategy to 2016, contributing to its delivery to the best of its ability within available resources.

2.1 Strategic Benefits

By 2016 the Economic Development Service will have contributed towards and be able to evidence a range of **strategic benefits** to Cherwell:

- **Increased resilience and diversity of the business community across Cherwell:** How the economy has become more diverse and resilient over the 5 years of the Economic Development Strategy.
- **Balanced economic development and housing growth:** through promotion of economic development through business advice and support, inward investment and Local Enterprise Partnerships (Cherwell's Corporate Plan 2011/12)
- **Gains from Eco-Bicester:** Demonstrable economic gain from the significant opportunities offered by the exemplar national Eco-Bicester project of 5,000 homes and at least 5,000 jobs.
- **Work with partners to tackle disadvantage in the District:**
 - added value to the Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme (Cherwell's Corporate Plan 11/12).
 - Work with our partners to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training across the district. (Cherwell's Corporate Plan 2011/12).
 - A programme of support for local people into work – such as creation of apprenticeships and co-ordination of Job Clubs (Cherwell's Corporate Plan 11/12).
- **Value added through Partnerships:** The value added by the partnerships in Cherwell that are created or remain in place.

2.2 Local outcomes, measured against baseline data, with annual targets, so that by 2016 we can show we have contributed towards and are able to evidence:

- Numbers of employment opportunities created.
- Increased number of VAT and NNDR registered local businesses.
- Reduced number of young people not in education, employment and training (Cherwell's Pledges 2011/12) – both 16-18 year olds and under 25s.
- Retention of the low level of unemployment, experienced in 2010.
- Increased qualifications among residents of working age – particularly NVQ 3 plus.
- Wage rate levels
- Outcomes focused in priority areas: Bicester Eco Town and Brighter Futures for Banbury Wards

3. Achieving the Vision:

Taking a Strategic Lead for delivering the Economic Development Strategy:

- We will champion the overall delivery of the Economic Delivery Strategy 2016 and respond to the challenge to bringing the catalytic elements in Cherwell together.
- We will commit to deliver annual plans representing Cherwell's contribution.
- We will review progress each year through the Local Strategic Partnership which will hold partners to account for their contribution.

3.1 Strategic Delivery Theme A: Resilience

A1. Supporting the development of a diverse and resilient economy

- We will promote cohesion of the business community through close working with organisations like the Chambers of Commerce.
- We will provide a network of support to local businesses of information, advice and guidance.
- We will connect local businesses together to increase the knowledge of what is available locally.
- We will encourage local procurement and procure locally ourselves wherever we are able.

A2 Leading or contributing significantly to Partnerships that we consider add value:

- We will prioritise the following Partnerships:
 1. Local Enterprise Partnerships – both SEMLEP & Oxford City Region LEP
 2. Cherwell Job Club Strategic Alliance of Partners
 3. Brighter Futures in Banbury Steering Group
 4. Oxfordshire Business Enterprises
 5. Bicester Vision
 6. Cherwell Investment Partnership
 7. Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership
 8. Cherwell Skills Board
- We recognise the networking value associated with Partnerships, and value this benefit in the context of supporting outcomes and delivering benefits.
- We will maximise the gain for Cherwell from Partnerships to which we have agreed to be members, such as drawing on our regional professional and employers' networks.
- Where we lead, we will be clear of the objectives of the Partnership and its aims for the year with appropriate, focussed forward planning and reporting back in the Annual Report.

Future funding of OBE may become an issue as early as April 2012 and Cherwell is already in discussions with key partners. The Council may need to look to alternative partnership funding sources or fill the funding gap from its own resources (as it has done previously).

A3 Maximising the economic development gains from Eco Bicester:

- We will explore joint marketing with P3Eco of Bicester as the eco destination for commercial investment.

- We will use our unique position to promote Eco Bicester to our business contacts, particularly new business start-ups such as to clients of Oxfordshire Business Enterprises.
- We will support our partners to maximise their offer, such as the College's plan for eco skills training centres in Bicester.

3.2 Strategy Delivery Theme B: People, Business and Place

B1 Developing People

(i) Get local people back into local jobs:

- We will co-ordinate Cherwell's Job Clubs and the associated website, while resources allow and until such time as the economic situation improves.
- We will re-focus Cherwell's support for Job Clubs towards "special events":
 - specific employment sectors (e.g. Health & Social Care) or employers
 - specific groups of clients (e.g. young people or graduates)
- We will look to Partners to increase co-ordination of "routine" elements of the regular Job Clubs, particularly developing the offer at alternative venues such as libraries. This will need to be actively considered during 2011/12.

Future funding for Job Club is a key issue to be addressed. The Council will need to seek increased sponsorship, greater self help and also make more of its remaining project budgets available to support this service. It is to be hoped that an improving economic climate will allow a careful re assessment of the form of service needed.

(ii) Careers Advice: improving skills and access to jobs

- We will support local co-ordination of careers advice for the benefit of Cherwell's residents.
- We will work with partners, like JCP and local GPs, to increase resident referrals for support in access skills and jobs.
- We will work with partners to increase local, accessible venues for careers advice.

(iii) Employer Support:

- We will work with employers with local vacancies looking to recruit local people.
- We will co-ordinate special recruitment events for significant opportunities.
- We will work with local employers looking to make redundancies, tailoring the package accordingly, co-coordinating Partners to support employees.

(iv) Supporting Young People:

- We will focus our economic development activity towards supporting young people not in employment, education and training, specifically we will:
 - host Young People's Job Clubs with our partners.
 - encourage employers to take on apprentices and work-based training.
 - We will employ apprentices ourselves.
 - We will support mentoring schemes through the local schools and encourage schemes such as Young Enterprise.

B2 Developing Businesses

- We will support existing businesses in Cherwell, prioritising supporting local businesses ahead of attracting new businesses into Cherwell (inward investment).
- We will increase the profile of what we have to offer existing businesses, recognising the withdrawal of regional Business Link support, such as:
 1. Support and advise local businesses looking to expand or relocate.

2. Host business events & clubs to support business growth, such as the Export Club and Cherwell Investment Partnership.
3. Support new businesses starting up with free, expert advice and information from Oxfordshire Business Enterprises.
4. Promote Cherwell M40 Investment Partnership, its website and Working Group as a portal for businesses to find answers to their queries and help to invest.
5. We will maintain an up-to-date database of businesses in Cherwell and available land and premises.

B3 Developing Place

- We will support Bicester Vision and Banbury Town Centre Partnership as they develop the sense of place and identity of these Towns.
- Offer use of our premises to Partners if it helps our residents affected by the economic downturn, such as Jobseeker Allowance claimants signing-on at Cherwell's Bicester Linkpoint and expert careers advisors from the Government's Next Step Service using the Council's Linkpoints to offer free, confidential careers advice to Cherwell's residents.

3.3 Funding the Vision

The Vision will need to be funded from existing resources. The most significant element of spending is staff costs and discretionary spend on "supplies and services". Some current activities rely on other funding (either internal funds for Job Clubs or external funding for OBE and Job Club expenses). The continued availability of this funding will need to be assessed on an annual basis and will be considered through the annual budget and service planning process.

Draft Revenue 2010/11 Outturn and Analysis

Background

- 1.1 In line with good practice budget monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis within the Council. The revenue and capital position is reported monthly to the Corporate Management Team and formally to the Executive on a quarterly basis. This is the Q4 provisional outturn report for financial year 2010/2011.

General Fund Revenue Budget

- 1.2 The draft General Fund Revenue budget is shown below.

	Adjusted Budget 2010-11 £	Draft Outturn 2010-11 £	Variance £	%
SERVICE EXPENDITURE				
Services				
Corporate Core	4,771,275	4,336,341	-434,934	-9%
Environment & Community Planning , Housing & Economy	10,739,549	10,669,648	-69,902	-1%
Services Total	21,167,574	20,936,645	-230,929	-1%
Capital Charges Reversed	-3,278,962	-3,278,962	0	
Net Expenditure Services	17,888,612	17,657,683	-230,929	-1%
Reserves and Provisions	638,914	956,351	317,438	50%
	18,527,526	18,614,034	86,508	0%
Investment Income	-1,348,753	-1,376,330	-27,577	2%
Government Grant	-10,905,340	-10,905,340	0	0%
Collection Fund	-84,477	-84,477	0	0%
Council Tax	-6,188,956	-6,188,956	0	0%
	-18,527,526	-18,555,102	-27,576	0%
Provisional Underspend	0	58,932	58,932	

- 1.3 The draft outturn presented above illustrates an overall overspend of £58,932 representing a budget variance of 0.3%.

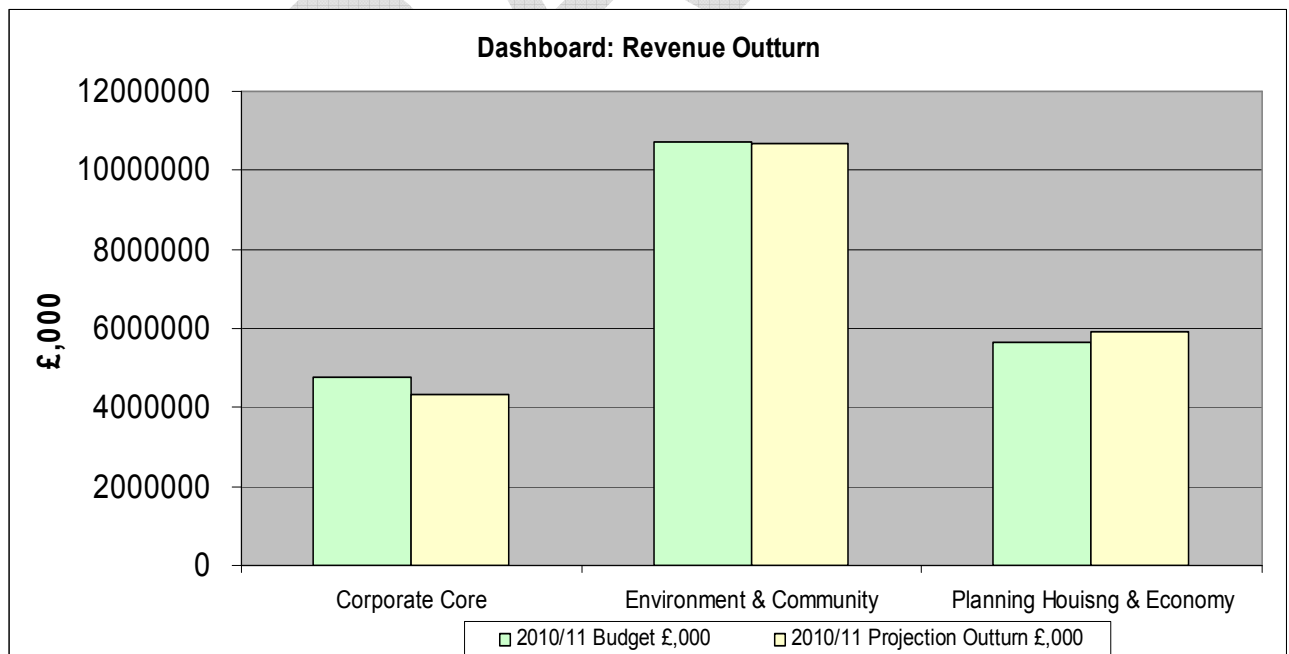
- 1.4 There is an underspend within Service Expenditure of £230,929 – this is shown in detail in the chart below and corresponding table. At the start of the financial year members made it clear that as well as addressing the financial deficit for future years, expenditure in the current year should be reduced where possible in order to replenish general fund balances and provide further one-off funds to deliver future savings as part of the medium term financial strategy.

- 1.5 The Service Expenditure forecast Outturn throughout the year predicted the following:-

- **Quarter 1** £0.07m underspend
- **Quarter 2** £0.23m underspend

- **Quarter 3** £0.36m underspend
- **Provisional Quarter 4** £0.23m underspend

- 1.6 The provisional Outturn at Quarter 4 has moved from our Quarter 3 projection as it takes into account adjustments required to be in line with the requirements of IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards). The council has had to adopt these new accounting principles within its accounts for the first time this year. As such, adjustments have been made in relation to accounting for Grants and Contributions received.
- 1.7 The underspend against budget has arisen through a variety of reasons. With the key drivers detailed on a Directorate level in the table below. In addition to increased income levels and reduced expenditure the movement also represents the outcome of the completion of several value for money reviews that have been undertaken in 2010/11 and delivered in year savings.
- 1.8 In 2010/11 the VFM Review Programme comprised 10 reviews which involved re-visits of previous high cost services as well as reviews of large areas of spend not previously subject to a review. The review areas included Housing, Recreation and Sport, Culture and Heritage, Planning Policy, Development Control, ICT, Urban and Rural Services, Democratic Services, Corporate Strategy and Performance and Customer Services.
- 1.9 The performance by Directorate against budget can be seen in the chart below:



- 1.10 The underspend in services of **£230,929** is split between directorates as follows:

Directorate	2010/11 Budget	2010/11 Projection Outturn	Variance	% Variance	Primary Drivers
	£'s	£'s	£'s		
Corporate Core	4,771,275	4,336,341	-434,934	-9.1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in Court Costs recovered – Finance £108K offset by Increased Rent Allowances (£54K) / Council tax and NNDR Subsidy adjustments (£133k) Legal & Democratic Services – VFM savings (salaries , Fees , Books and Publications etc)/ Additional grant and fee income – net reduction (£296K) People & Improvement – Training underspends (£53K) and JE underspends (£26k) Additional External Audit fees and bank charges £87K
Environment & Community	10,739,549	10,669,648	-69,902	-0.7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in Car Park income £208K Reduction in landscape Agency re-imbursements, car park contributions received and Insurance Income (£178K). Savings in salaries / supplies and services and Maintenance across Safer Communities Urban & Rural services (£84K) Increased landscape maintenance and NNDR £71K Environmental Services – Reduction in Consultancy and Salaries (£116K) Health & Recreation – Increased Sports Centre Management Fees £91K and NNDR £40K offset by Salary Savings/ Increase in grants and course income of (£132K)
Planning Housing & Economy	5,656,750	5,930,656	273,907	4.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFRS accounting adjustments – Eco town and Housing Planning Delivery Grant funding. £385K Reduction in Rental Income in Regeneration and Estates £279K. Reduction in salaries and consultancy in Development Control and Major Developments of (£71K) and increased fee income of (£90K.). IFRS accounting adjustments – Housing - Grant Funding (£129K). Reduction in Salaries and related costs (£35K) Rent Deposits (£45K) and other efficiencies (£48K) Housing
TOTAL SERVICES	21,167,574	20,936,645	-230,929	-1.1%	

1.11 The variance within reserves and provisions can be summarised as follows:-

Reserves & Provisions	Variance	Detail
	£'000's	
Net Reserves & Provisions – unused as at 31-3-2011	237	Created as element of 2010/11 budget – not required.
IFRS transition adjustments	80	Net effect within Reserves and Provisions for IFRS adjustments.
Total – (as detailed above)	317	

1.12 There has been an overall net increase in projected interest receivable / payable of £28K which is related primarily to larger than budgeted cash balances.

Budget Mitigations

1.13 The increased focus on budget monitoring and introduction of the “dashboard” has enabled more efficient use of the Council's resources and enabled action to be taken to promptly identify and mitigate against economic issues.

Investments in Iceland

1.14 Cherwell District Council is one of at least 123 local authorities that have been affected by the collapse of Icelandic banking institutions. The Council has three deposits with the failed Icelandic bank Glitnir totalling £6.5 million. The bank was originally expected to confirm preferential creditor status to all UK local authorities meaning we would see the return of the full investment plus interest and costs during 2009/10.

1.15 However the bank's winding-up board is treating all local authority demands as general unsecured claims which would mean a return of only 29 per cent of the original investment only. All local authorities that have invested with Glitnir have been working with the Local Government Association and law firm Bevan Brittan to resolve this issue over the last 18 months.

1.16 On 1 April 2011 the Council was successful in the Icelandic Court in securing preferential creditor status but there remains the possibility of an appeal against this decision to the Icelandic Supreme Court so the final position cannot yet be stated with certainty.

1.17 The latest estimates provided by CIFPA in LAAP Bulletin 82 published in May 2011 indicate that total assets of the bank only equate to 29% of its liabilities. Therefore, if preferential creditor status is not achieved the recoverable amount may only be 29p in the £ indicating a potential liability of £4.6 million.

1.18 Although the Council remains confident of getting 100% of its investment back a plan was drawn up to deal with any loss via a capitalisation request and use of the Council's reserves. This strategy was been built into the MTFS.

1.19 The Council has written off £4.6million in the 2010/11 accounts – should the decision stand and 100% recovery is made then this will be treated as windfall income in 2011/12 accounts.

- 1.20 We will continue to work with the Local Government Association and Bevan Brittan to achieve the best possible return from our investment within the shortest possible timescales.

Summary

- 1.21 The variances on the revenue are within the Council's stated tolerances and within 2% of budget provision.
- 1.22 The General Fund reserve is adequately funded to meet the overall deficit.
- 1.23 The Council continues to make excellent progress on delivering against its revenue budget. Our financial performance in terms of revenue performance; in the context of the one of the most challenging economic climates of our times is an area we can be proud of. Our performance demonstrates our ability to be nimble in responding to changing circumstances, improved capacity to deliver sizeable capital programmes and effective financial management.
- 1.24 The information in this report is in the format used for budget monitoring purposes and as reported to the Executive quarterly. It does reflect the various accounting adjustments required for IFRS but not those required to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (for example the various pension adjustments required by Financial Reporting Standard 17) nor is it in the same format as the statutory Financial Statement. These statements will be adopted by the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee on 22nd June 2010 and then subsequently approved after audit clearance in September 2011. A detailed analysis of income and expenditure will be included within these accounts.

Draft Capital Outturn 2010/11

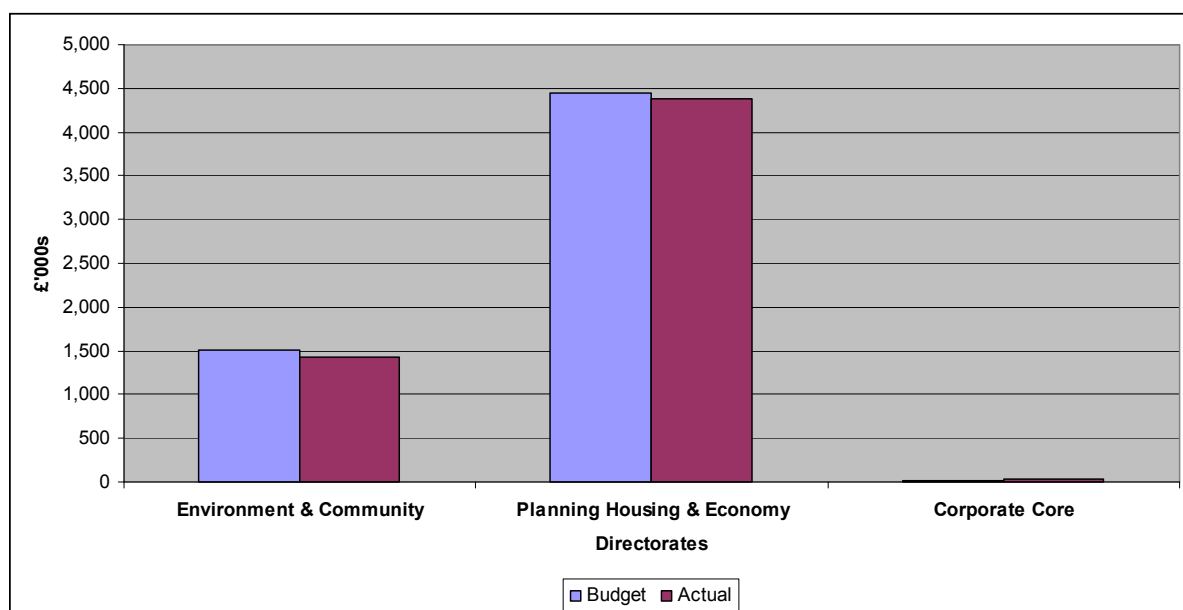
1.1 The adjusted capital budget for 2010/11 equated to £5,981,280 which represents the capital budget approved in February 2010 and all supplementary estimates and capital slippage approved by , (to be approved) the Executive during the year. The adjusted budget can be summarised as follows: -

SUMMARY	£000s
2010/11 Budget (including Supplementary)	15,650
External Funding	635
Total Slippage into 11/12 Capital Programme	-10,337
Total Cancelled Projects	-66
Adjusted 2010/11 Capital Programme Budget	<u>5,981</u>

1.2 The table attached Appendix 9c (i) provides the provisional capital out-turn statement for 2010/11 by scheme and directorate and details the total slippage adjustments for which approval is requested.

1.3 The summary below details at a directorate level expenditure against revised budget and variances arising. It can be seen that, at a net 2% these are within budget tolerances for the Capital Programme.

1.4 This performance against budget, by directorate, can be seen in the chart below :-



1.5 At a Directorate level this can be analysed as follows.

	Budget year to date £000s	External Funding	Total Slippage Required £000s	Cancelled Projects £000s	Total Adjusted Budget 2010/11 £000s	Final Spend 2010/11 £000s	Variance £000s	%
Environment & Community	2,669	0	1,200	51	1,518	1,429	-89	
Planning Housing & Economy	12,880	635	9,072	0	4,443	4,377	-66	
Corporate Core	101	0	65	15	21	26	5	
	15,650	635	10,337	66	5,981	5,832	-149	2%

1.6 The budget variance of £149,522, is within budget tolerances. This is the second successive year that the capital programme has been delivered within budget tolerances and this is as a result of the increased monitoring on the capital programme during the year. The capital programme has been subject to monthly review by Corporate Management Team and 3 reviews by the Executive.

1.7 The capital programme has been financed using government grants, third party contributions, capital receipts and revenue contribution and is analysed by category below:

CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING STATEMENT

	Scheme Cost £'000's
Total Capital Programme Delivered in 2010/11	5,832
Financed by:	
Capital Receipts	4,509
Government Grants and Other Contributions	383
Direct Revenue Financing	333
Use of Reserves	607
	5,832
	5,832

Appendix 9c (i)

Capital Summary 2010/11

	Budget year to date £000s	External Funding	Total Slippage Required £000s	Cancelled Projects £000s	Total Adjusted Budget 2010/11 £000s	Final Spend 2010/11 £000s	Variance £000s
Environment & Community	2,669	0	1,200	51	1,518	1,429	-89
Planning Housing & Economy	12,880	635	9,072	0	4,443	4,377	-66
Corporate Core	101	0	65	15	21	26	5
	15,650	635	10,337	66	5,981	5,832	-149

Capital Detail 2010/11

PROJECT	Budget year to date £s	External Funding	Total Slippage Required £s	Cancelled Projects £s	Total Adjusted Budget 2010/11 £s	Final Spend 2010/11 £s	Variance £s
<u>Environmental Services</u>							
Fuel Tank	0				0	1,520	1,520
Climate Change Initiatives Fund	65,929		59,003		6,926	6,926	0
Vehicle Replacement Programme	421,000				421,000	419,826	-1,174
Environmental Services Waste Mgmt IT System	38,000		1,530		36,470	36,470	0
Fleet Management System	28,000		28,000		0	0	0
Recycling Bottle Banks	25,000				25,000	23,820	-1,180
<u>Recreation & Health</u>							
Village Hall, Recreation Play Grants	104,355		37,685		66,670	62,670	-4,000
Football Development Plan in Banbury	20,000		20,000		0	0	0
Refurb @ Willy Freund Youth Centre	34,000				34,000	34,480	480
PLAY WELL IN CHERWELL GRANT	0				0	10,420	10,420
Banbury Visitor Management Plan	4,000				4,000	4,210	210
Banbury Museum Roof and Building Fabric	4,000				4,000	0	-4,000
North Oxfordshire Academy Astroturf	0				0	3,483	3,483
North Oxon Academy Site Safety & Security	0				0	4,460	4,460
Relaying the Astroturf at Cooper School - Bicester	0				0	2,650	2,650
South West Bicester Sports Village	370,000		348,675		21,325	21,325	0
Athletics Track Refurbishment - North Oxfordshire	30,000		30,000		0	0	0
SCMP - Spiceball Car Park	350,000		248,965		101,035	101,000	-35
<u>Customer Services and Information Systems</u>							
Uniform Modules (Various)	15,000				15,000	15,324	324
Iclipse Software Upgrade	25,000		12,533		12,467	12,467	0
Replacement Air - Conditioning in Data Centre	30,000				30,000	36,136	6,136
Sunray and Mitel Integration (supporting hotdesk)	15,000				15,000	0	-15,000
Telephone Voice Recording	35,000				35,000	0	-35,000
					0		
Telephony Decommissioning + Upgrades to Switches	5,000				5,000	0	-5,000
Telephony support for customer service	5,000				5,000	0	-5,000

PROJECT	Budget year to date £s	External Funding	Total Slippage Required £s	Cancelled Projects £s	Total Adjusted Budget 2010/11 £s	Final Spend 2010/11 £s	Variance £s
TLD Business Continuity	0		6,482		-6,482	3,235	9,717
CDC Website Enterprise License	0				0	23,410	23,410
Virtualisation	42,000				42,000	42,794	794
Data Security (Govt Connect)	25,000				25,000	20,484	-4,516
Self Service Terminals	26,000			24,280	1,720	1,720	0
Online Service Provision via Forms	43,000		20,636		22,364	17,364	-5,000
Scanning at the point of entry	20,000				20,000	12,100	-7,900
System Integration for CRM	50,000				50,000	60,083	10,083
Capita Hosted Payments System	20,000				20,000	23,681	3,681
Encrypted USB keys	17,000				17,000	18,199	1,199
Microsoft Licensing Agreement	110,000				110,000	110,618	618
Upgrade to Localview Fusion Platform GIS	35,000				35,000	12,000	-23,000
Thin Client Extension	150,000		91,469		58,531	58,531	0
Communications Review WAN	58,562		56,300		2,262	2,263	1
Uniform Kirona Mobile Working	15,000				15,000	14,800	-200
Lagan Mobile Working	5,000				5,000	5,000	0
Backup Project	20,000				20,000	21,308	1,308
Autoteller Kiosks	100,000		17,493		82,507	82,507	0
Remote Access DR Project	20,000				20,000	6,586	-13,414
Sharepoint	20,000				20,000	15,200	-4,800
					0		
<u>Safer Communities, Urban & Rural Services</u>					0		
CCTV	0				0	129	129
Replacement Cabling Infrastructure for CCTV	95,000		55,000		40,000	0	-40,000
Community Intelligence Hub	0				0		0
Off Road Parking Facilities - Banbury & Bicester	87,780		23,446		64,334	64,334	0
Circular Walks DDA Works	5,000		2,328		2,672	2,672	0
Street Scene Replacement Programme	0				0		0
Christmas Illuminations	51,000		51,000		0	0	0
Implementation of Banbury Residents Parking	27,000			27,000	0	0	0
Urban Centres Improvements	27,000		15,128		11,872	11,872	0
Car Park Refurbishments	25,000		24,496		504	504	0
Implementing Vehicle Parks Proposals	-50,000		49,500		500	500	0
Environment & Community Total	2,668,626	0	1,199,669	51,280	1,517,677	1,429,081	-88,596
<u>Economic Development & Estates</u>							
Banbury Pedestrianisation	320,000		20,000		300,000	268,792	-31,208
Bicester Cattle Market Car Park Phase 2	324,000		95,000		229,000	214,346	-14,654
Bicester Pedestrianisation	250,000		250,000		0	0	0
Future Regeneration Schemes Prelim. Prof Fees	100,000		100,000		0	0	0
Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment Scheme	40,000		15,000		25,000	19,970	-5,030
Thorpe Lane Depot Refurbishment Scheme	1,113,000		315,186		797,814	797,814	0
Bridge Street Upgrade	0				0	8,882	8,882
Old Bodicote House	871,000		861,000		10,000	8,452	-1,548
Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment	5,000,000		5,000,000		0	0	0
Highfield Depot Repairs	15,000		6,000		9,000	9,152	152
Units 1-7 Thorpe Way Repairs	15,000		15,000		0	0	0
Kidlington High Street Pedestrianisation	25,000		23,000		2,000	1,834	-166
Purchase of Bodicote Park	347,190				347,190	347,190	0

PROJECT	Budget year to date £s	External Funding	Total Slippage Required £s	Cancelled Projects £s	Total Adjusted Budget 2010/11 £s	Final Spend 2010/11 £s	Variance £s
Access to Highfield Depot	22,000		22,000		0	0	0
Town Centre Offices - Roof Repairs	0				0	996	996
Old Bodicote House Garage	0				0	3,568	3,568
Hanwell Fields Community Centre	5,727		5,647		80	80	0
Community Centre Refurbishments - Southwold	28,000				28,000	24,984	-3,016
Eco Town - Energy Saving Schemes	0	168,595			168,595	168,595	0
Eco Town - Exhibition House	0	14,549			14,549	14,549	0
Eco Town - Travel Behaviour	0	76,360			76,360	76,360	0
					0		
<u>Housing Services Total</u>					0		
Choice Based Lettings	16,000		2,000		14,000	13,737	-263
Disabled Facilities Grants	575,000	375,000			950,000	951,022	1,022
The Sanctuary Acquisition Scheme	4,000		4,000		0	0	0
Acquisitions Scheme - to extend RSL Housing	578,000		99,000		479,000	479,500	500
Discretionary Grants for Domestic Properties - Es	427,000		42,000		385,000	359,742	-25,258
Housing Overcrowding Pilot scheme	30,000		30,000		0	0	0
Bicester Acquisition 2nd scheme	20,000		20,000		0	0	0
Young Persons Acquisition Scheme	352,000		217,000		135,000	135,000	0
Land Claypits Lane Bicester	187,000		187,000		0	0	0
Banbury Foyer & Banbury Youth Hub	169,000		68,000		101,000	101,400	400
Funding- Mollington & Hornton Rural Exception S	120,000		80,000		40,000	40,000	0
Purchase of Temp Acc Bryant House & Edward St	660,000		495,000		165,000	165,000	0
Orchard Way Banbury Redevelopment	1,100,000		1,100,000		0	0	0
Miller Road Youth Self Build	166,015		0		166,015	166,015	0
Planning, Housing & Economy Total	12,879,932	634,504	9,071,833	0	4,442,603	4,376,980	-65,623
<u>Finance</u>							
Financial Ledger - Agresso 5.5	50,000		50,000		0	0	0
Budget Module	15,000		15,000		0	0	0
Asset Register	15,000				15,000	15,197	197
<u>Legal & Democratic</u>							
Local Land Charges	6,000				6,000	5,500	-500
Legal/Democratic IT Investment	15,000			15,000	0	0	0
<u>Chief Executive</u>							
Intranet	0		0		0	5,000	5000
Corporate Core Total	101,000	0	65,000	15,000	21,000	25,697	4,697
Grand Total	15,649,558	634,504	10,336,502	66,280	5,981,280	5,831,758	-149,522

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.1 Deliver the Council's procurement strategy ensuring that the key objectives are understood and embedded across the Council	Narrative on Progress	
Action	Status	Narrative on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollout the Procurement Strategy in conjunction with the Procurement Guide via workshops and on project training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold three overview workshops by end June 2010 with follow-ups in between October and December 2010 with focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Options appraisals ○ Price/quality ratios and evaluation criteria ○ Sustainability considerations and calculating full lifetime costs ○ Specification writing ○ Key performance indicators and contract management ○ Nomination of Procurement Champions by service. • Improve procurement options appraisal process via further development of stakeholder questionnaires by end May, ensuring their use for all procurement exercises at project commencement, recording project objectives for meeting Procurement KPIs. • Introduce price/quality ratios into project planning to ensure evaluation criteria other than price are given due consideration. • Train officers in the calculation of whole life costing, including the initial purchase cost, operating, management and disposal costs. • Provide specification writing training for key projects. • Promote consideration of key performance indicators and contract management consideration at project planning stage. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>Move away from workshops to on the project training resulting in more positive outcomes in Q4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Services – saving £9500 on personal protective equipment and uniforms; • Finance saving £33,177 on insurance services £33,177 & £1125 on bank charges; <p>Procurement Champions role is to be combined with that of the Council's green champions.</p> <p>Focus on removing costs from contracts without affecting frontline services – e.g. £18,440 saved on public convenience cleaning.</p> <p>Used effectively with electricity & gas for Wood Green leisure centre with over £20,000 saved.</p> <p>Successfully applied on Bodicote Old House Refurbishment – biomass boiler, energy & water efficiency.</p> <p>Successfully provided for property, telephony maintenance, asset register & insurance.</p> <p>Working effectively with property maintenance.</p>

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.2 Governance and compliance		
Action	Status	Narrative on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all operational procurement and contract management activity complies with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and statutory regulations by providing a checklist for retention in the project file. Enhance the scrutiny and policy development role of the Procurement Steering Group Strategy. Monitor procurement indicators with an agreed recording mechanism in place by December 2010. A "No Purchase Order No Pay" policy is proposed whereby all expenditure is approved before it is committed. Retrospective Purchase Orders i.e. those raised after the commitment has been made should be discouraged and in due course sanctions should be considered for non compliance. Any tendering and contract management should be managed using a robust project plan, with responsibilities clearly outlined and clearly laid out targets, milestones, timescales and identification of resources. Such a project plan should be monitored regularly by the project team and failure to achieve timescales rectified immediately. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Carried forward</p> <p>Carried forward</p> <p>Carried forward</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>Indicators will be produced quarterly in 2011</p> <p>Work is underway to promote the use of purchase orders. This project is being led by Controls team Leader.</p> <p>This is being monitored on a project by project basis with the Procurement Manager having regular meetings with Heads of Service and sitting on groups such as the ICT Capital Programme Monitoring Group and VfM reviews – such as Urban and Rural.</p>
7.3 Achieve greater efficiency and demonstrate improved value for money		
Action	Status	Narrative on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver VfM savings associated with best practice procurement for all categories with a lifetime contract value of more than £10,000 per annum with records maintained for anticipated and actual savings. Cashable savings target of £225,000 for 2010/11. Further develop additional savings strategies such as prompt payment discounts and retrospective discounts for additional expenditure on existing and contracts with bi-monthly updates on progress. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>Narrative on Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total cashable in year savings of £316,111 against a target of £225,000 Total non-cashable savings: £70,219 Refer to Appendix 3 for a breakdown. <p>Prompt payment discounts requested with each tender – average offer is 3%. All new contractors signing up to 1% below CPI formula for all new contracts.</p>

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.3 Achieve greater efficiency and demonstrate improved value for money		Narrative on Progress
Action	Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop spend analysis via participation in a project recover duplicate payments to suppliers and identify cost reduction opportunities via identifying lower commodity prices. Continue supplier rationalisation and elimination of spend with non-approved suppliers. 	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Carried forward</p>	<p>Only one duplicate payment discovered in last three years emphasizing effectiveness of Creditors team.</p> <p>Reduction of multiple suppliers for four property maintenance areas to one corporate supplier for each.</p>

7.4 Understand the contract management requirements of the Council and identify ways to streamline the process and promote best practice		Narrative on Progress
Action	Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a Council wide register of all contracts/agreements for all significant contracts (over £10K) and monitor procurement performance and activity, including savings and benefits tracking. Clarify the contract management role for the Council and the resources required for effective monitoring. Improve contract management knowledge via rollout of a user manual & workshops across the service areas. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Carried forward</p>	<p>The Register has been re-categorised and is now hosted on the South East Business Portal to increase transparency.</p> <p>Scoping report presented to CMT at the end of October 2010. To be moved forward in 2011.</p> <p>Templates being produced by steering group in 2011.</p>

7.5 Sustainability		Progress to date
Action	Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed the Sustainable Procurement Strategy via the Procurement Guide workshops. Ensure full lifetime cost calculations carried out on all projects – as per 7.1 Consider the costs and benefits of environmentally preferable goods/services as alternatives as part of the full lifetime cost calculation process. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>The importance of sustainability covered in workshops and on projects.</p> <p>Applied for window cleaning and stationery contracts.</p>

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.5 Sustainability	
Action	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness, train and encourage buyers to review their consumption of goods and services, reduce usage and adopt more environmentally friendly alternative products. 	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Sustainable Procurement Strategy with the market place via pre-tender market engagement exercises. 	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage buyers to break down larger contracts to match SME and Social Enterprise capacity where appropriate. 	Completed
	Progress to date
	<p>Successfully implemented with the Bodicote Old House refurbishment (water saving devices, zoned lighting, better insulation, biomass boiler).</p> <p>Well received at six pre-tender exercises over the year.</p> <p>Implemented with public toilet cleansing, heating & cooling, fire & intruder tenders, window, graffiti, gum removal and photovoltaic panel installation.</p>

7.6 Collaboration	
Action	Status
<p>Develop further strategic links with the following procurement partners to share best practice, reduce duplication and administration costs and release additional savings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfordshire Procurement Hub Strategic Procurement Partnership for Oxfordshire (SPPO) Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Procurement Partnership (MKOB) Procurement arm of Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE) 	Completed
	Narrative on Progress
	<p>Continuing to share work programmes across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire & Northants with the following projects put in place in 2010/11:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleansing of public conveniences (South, Vale and West) Confidential shredding (Oxfordshire County) Cash collection (Oxfordshire County, Oxford City, South, Vale and West) Cleaning Materials (Northamptonshire authorities); Agency staff (Countywide).

7.7 Continuous improvement	
Action	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective benchmarking of current contracts against other authorities in the South East. 	Completed
	Narrative on Progress
	<p>Undertaken for public convenience cleansing, supply of wheelie bins, stationery, window cleaning, gum and graffiti removal.</p>

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.7 Continuous improvement		
Action	Status	Narrative on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively engage with local suppliers and seek feedback on how we can improve our contracting processes – as per 7.8 • Support the delivery of services to end users, ensuring stakeholder involvement and customer satisfaction surveys are routinely included. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Carried forward</p>	<p>Positive feedback received for many tenders including the hosted payments contract – especially on the evaluation methodology.</p> <p>Introducing customer satisfaction questionnaires in 2011.</p>
7.8 Mixed Economy		
Action	Status	Narrative on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise options for procuring from a diverse and competitive range of suppliers including minority businesses, voluntary and community sector groups, small firms and social enterprises by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encouraging breaking down of projects into lots where appropriate; ○ Including local SMEs on invitation to quote exercises; ○ Considering Selling to the Council workshops for all relevant projects; ○ Participating in and hosting further Meet the Buyer events; ○ Explore how we developing closer strategic and operational working arrangements with the Voluntary and Community Sectors: ○ Partner with the Economic Development team to provide further support for social enterprises within the district. 	<p>Carried forward</p>	<p>Have moved to more engagement on a project by project basis, offering supplier workshops with all relevant projects - such as the PV Installation project and the online Corporate Sales and Booking System.</p> <p>Projects are being broken down into lots where appropriate – e.g. public convenience cleansing, heating & cooling, fire & intruder maintenance.</p> <p>For each invitation to quote exercise there is a conscious effort to source local SME's – as with the Mobile Security contract.</p> <p>Regular liaison with Economic Development – particular over free of charge alerts to opportunities via the South East Business Portal & central government Contracts Finder service.</p>

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.9 E-Commerce		Narrative on Progress
Action	Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an options appraisal to determine the cost benefits of an e tendering system in partnership with other Oxfordshire authorities. 	Completed	Options appraisal has determined that at present the cost benefits do not justify the investment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploitation of South East Business Portal via loading of forward plans and adverts. 	Completed	Using portal to host contracts register, advertise and manage the pre-qualification process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the use of e-auctions wherever appropriate, in collaboration with other Oxfordshire or wider SE authorities. Include bids of £20k pa in future capital programmes for e-procurement initiatives, such as e-auctions, where these have the potential to deliver revenue savings. 	Carried forward	Watching brief being kept on those provided by Buying Solutions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When appropriate, include in the specification for corporate contracts requirements for web-based or similar e-ordering as a means of streamlining ordering procedures. 	Completed	Tracking and knowledge functionality is being made available with the insurance services contract.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor available options for e-sourcing/e-tendering, particularly in collaboration with other authorities. 	Completed	Agency staff tender undertaken using Oxford City Council's e-tendering system.

7.10 Corporate Procurement Resources		Narrative on Progress
Action	Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise the profile of the Procurement Service and its achievements, both internally and with external stakeholders. 	Completed	Workshops followed up by updates with Heads of Service and attendance at team meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment, retention and development of capable procurement staff in all procurement-related posts. 	Carried forward	All three members of the team scheduled to be MCIPS qualified within 2011/12.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and delivery of a procurement training programme; providing training and supporting professional procurement staff in obtaining core qualifications and keeping their skills up-to-date through Continuous Professional Development. 	Completed	Options appraisal and contract management training is being provided with all projects.

Appendix 3 - Record of Progress for the Corporate Procurement Action Plan for the year of 2010 to 2011 as at 31st March 2011

7.10 Corporate Procurement Resources		
Action	Status	Narrative on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure effective use of the Corporate Procurement Team to provide a range of services, from advice and guidance to undertaking full procurement processes for departments on specific projects to seek Value for Money in all contracts let. 	Completed	<p>Three tiers of reporting are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level annual procurement forward plan – all procurement projects with a value of £10k or more; Departmental forward plan – including responsibilities under the strategy action plan; Individual work plans – providing wider project details such a contract management and reviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider an “apprentice” procurement officer as part of the Oxfordshire Hub 	Completed	<p>This was reviewed as part of the 2011/12 Budget and for now additional support resource is being sought from within the Finance department.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate procurement team members to provide support for particular directorates on significant projects. 	Completed	<p>This is being done by Service Area at present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Contracts Officer is focused on Environmental Services and Regeneration & Estates; Corporate Purchasing Officer focuses on corporate contracts, Safer Communities, Urban and Rural and Finance.

**Appendix 4 -Procurement Cashable and Non-Cashable Savings Achieved for Financial Year 2010 to 2011 as at
31 March 2011**

Service Area	Contract Description	Cashable with budget reduction	Non-cashable	Capital
Various	Use of Purchasing Cards (reducing processing costs)		£55,426	
Community Safety	CCTV Maintenance	£8,225		
Environmental Services	Supply of Wheelie Bins	£7,500		
Environmental Services	Cleansing of Public Conveniences	£18,400		
Regeneration and Estates	Supply of Mobile Security Service	£12,153		
Regeneration and Estates	Out of Hours Telephone Answering Service	£10,000		
ICT & Customer Services	Mobile Solutions (phones & blackberries)	£8,000		
Engineering	Cattle Market Car Park Extension - interest rate for cashable saving worked out as 1.5%	£1,090		£100,000
Environmental Services	Glass Recycling - fixed price for 2nd year - CPI saving of 2.4%	£2,100		
Environmental Services	Vehicle Spare Parts - price increase 1% below CPI - i.e. 1.4% & 2.5% prompt payment discount	£2,730		
Regeneration and Estates	PAT Testing - fixed price for 2nd year - CPI saving of 2.4%	£100		
Regeneration and Estates	Water machines fixed price for 2nd year - CPI saving of 2.4%	£100		
Regeneration and Estates	Furniture - additional expenditure savings from 09/10 (£2500) + price increase 1% below CPI	£2,780		
	Eco Town Consultants - rates kept at 2009 level - i.e. CPI saving of 2.4% on £10,000	£240		
50/50 - Finance and Urban & Rural	Cash Collection - 6 month extension agreed at existing prices	£1,127		
Various	Prompt payment discount exercise	£331		
Environmental Services	Dry Recyclables	£33,000		
Leisure	Banbury Football consultancy	£250		
Regeneration and Estates	Cleaning materials	£290		
Regeneration and Estates	Confidential Shredding	£9,958		
Regeneration and Estates	Heating	£8,321		
Regeneration and Estates	Cooling	£3,137		
ICT & Customer Services	ICT Hardware and Software via Buying Solutions	£10,000		
Finance	Treasury Management	£5,000		
Regeneration and Estates	Thorpe Lane Phases 3 & 4	£883		£81,000
Regeneration and Estates	Bodicote Old House Refurbishment	£2,575		£236,268
Regeneration and Estates	Coffee Machine supplies	£100		
Regeneration and Estates	Washrooms (Museum/TIC)	£527		
Regeneration and Estates	Fire Systems	£2,554		
Regeneration and Estates	Intruder and CCTV	£3,541		
Leisure	Electricity savings Woodgreen L C	£20,000		
Leisure	Gas savings Woodgree L C	£890		
	Voice and Data	£60,857		
ICT and Customer Services	Sale of Print Room Equipment (Guillotine, Punch & Folder)			£2,000
ICT and Customer Services	Presentation equipment servicing (Reflex)	£2,800		
50/50 - Finance and Urban & Rural	Cash Collection - New Contract	£7,472		
Communications	Printed Media Advertising	£4,100		
Finance	Hosted Payments Solution		£5,199	
Customer Services	Self Service Payment Kiosks		£9,594	
Urban and Rural	Bedding Plants	£9,070		
ICT and Customer Services	Telephony Maintenance	£4,351		
Finance	Bank Charges (Jan - March)	£1,125		
Regeneration and Estates	Washroom services - Bodicote House	£2,339		
Regeneration and Estates	Window Cleaning services	£3,870		
Finance	Insurance Services	£33,177		
Environmental Services	Graffiti Removal	£525		
Environmental Services	Gum Removal	£985		
Environmental Services	PPE/Uniforms	£9,500		
Leisure	Refurbishment of North Oxfordshire Academy Athletics Track	£39		£3,550
	Total:	£316,111	£70,219	£422,818
	Notes			
	1) P Cards - Savings are calculated as £50(CIPFA average) per transaction			
	2) Cashable savings from capital projects - calculated as a saving of 1.09% to reflect the interest earned per annum.			
	3) Prompt Payment Discounts - 15 companies have signed up to date. Savings shown are for discounts received against the glass recycling contract.			
	4) Further £12,000 electricity savings for Woodgreen to be recorded for next year.			

**Appendix 4 -Procurement Cashable and Non-Cashable Savings Achieved for Financial Year 2010 to 2011 as at
31 March 2011**

Service Area	Contract Description	Cashable with budget reduction	Non-cashable	Capital
	5) Further £2,000 gas savings for Woodgreen for next year			