

Committee: Executive
Date: Monday 5 September 2011
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

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

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

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

4. **Urgent Business**

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

5. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 22)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 4 July 2011 and 26 July 2011.

Strategy and Policy

6. Cherwell Economic Development Strategy (Pages 23 - 92) 6.35 pm

Report of Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development

Summary

To ask the Executive to approve a final version of the Economic Development Strategy 2011 – 2016 for subsequent consideration by the Local Strategic Partnership Board.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the Economic Development Strategy, attached as appendix 1, to this report to go forward to the Board of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for final approval.
- (2) To authorise the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member for Estates to agree any further non substantive changes to the document following this Committee and either prior to, or following, its consideration by the LSP Board at the end of this month.

Service Delivery and Innovation

7. Overview and Scrutiny Reports: Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell (Pages 93 - 116) 6.45 pm

Report of Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

To consider the overview and scrutiny report on Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell.

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

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutiny review into the Council's approach to Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell.
- (2) To note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's support for the Executive's decision to proceed with the commissioning project.

8. Car Park Order Notice (Pages 117 - 120)

6.55 pm

Report of Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services

Summary

To advise Members of any objections to the Cherwell District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) Order advertised on 4 August 2011 and to seek authority to make the Order subject to any objections received.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To receive and deal with any objections to the Order (these will be tabled at the meeting).
- (2) To authorise formal Order Making on final proposals for implementation on, or as soon after, 11 November 2011 as is practicable.

9. Kidlington Pedestrianisation and Traffic Regulation Order
(Pages 121 - 124)

7.05 pm

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

Summary

To seek approval to make a new Traffic Regulation Order for Kidlington High Street.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the making of a new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Kidlington High Street.

10. Bicester Civic Building (Pages 125 - 136)

7.15 pm

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

Summary

To consider the brief and options for the procurement of a new civic building for Bicester, and determine the preferred method of procuring this building.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To resolve that the Council pursue the development of the Franklins Yard car park site with a new civic building, to comprise offices and a public library, together with a proposed hotel, on the basis that the Council finances the development in return for a future revenue income, subject to the terms of

the pre-letting agreements being approved by this Committee, and completed, prior to the scheme being committed.

- (2) That any costs or expenses incurred in fees and expenses necessary to progress this proposal being met from the existing capital approval for the Bicester town centre redevelopment scheme.
- (3) To earmark £5m of general capital receipts to this project and a further report be submitted seeking the necessary capital approval, when the costs and income achievable are known.

11. Award of Contracts for the Design, Supply and Installation of Photovoltaic Panels to Six Commercial Buildings for Cherwell District Council 7.30 pm
(Pages 137 - 142)

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

Summary

To seek approval to award six contracts for the Design, Supply and Installation of Photovoltaic Panels to six commercial buildings for Cherwell District Council.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) Award contracts for Lots 1, 2 and 6 to the companies identified in the exempt Appendix 1.
- (2) Subject to finalising negotiations with Parkwood Leisure Ltd and in consultation with the Lead member for Financial Management and the Head of Finance award contracts for Lots 3, 4 and 5 to the companies identified in the exempt Appendix 1.

Value for Money and Performance

12. Value For Money Review of Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management 7.35 pm
(Pages 143 - 150)

Report of Strategic Director for Environment and Community, Head of Environmental Services and Improvement Project Manager

Summary

To consider the findings of the Value for Money Review of Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management and the recommendations arising from the report.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Endorse the VFM conclusion that the service offers good value for money and has actively driven down its cost base, providing a top performing, high quality service.

- (2) Adopt the Service Plan Framework as a guide for the service in future years including areas for future improvements, savings and increased income.
- (3) Note the projected MOT Bay income shortfall in 2011/12 and the plans in place to reduce costs and increase income to address the shortfall in-year.
- (4) Agree the following recommendations to achieve additional savings and income:
 - £8k per annum from 2012/13, through improved fleet procurement and reduced spending on parts
 - Potential future revenue savings and income of £12k from a number of sources including working in partnership with other agencies, neighbouring councils and procurement partnerships
 - Additional new capital income source totalling £12k in both 2011/12 and 2012/13, rising to £24k in future years, as a result of improving the re-sale value achieved at auction from Council-owned equipment.

13. Performance and Risk Management Framework 2011/12 First Quarter Performance Report (Pages 151 - 192) **7.45 pm**

Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

Summary

This report covers the Council's performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2011 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.4.
- (2) To request that officers report in the second quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.5 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.
- (3) To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.

14. Quarter 1 Finance Report (Pages 193 - 212) **8.00 pm**

Report of Head of Finance

Summary

This report summarises the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the first 3 months of the financial year 2011/12 and projections for the full 2011/12 period. These are measured by the budget monitoring function and reported via the

Performance Management Framework (PMF) informing the 2011/12 budget process currently underway.

To receive information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2011/12 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the projected revenue & capital position at June 2011.
- (2) To note the Q1 performance against the 2011/12 investment strategy and the financial returns from each of the 3 funds.
- (3) To note the contents and the progress against the Corporate Procurement Action Plan (detailed in Appendix 1) and the Procurement savings achieved at June 2011 (detailed in Appendix 2).

15. 2012/13 Budget Strategy, Service & Financial Planning Process and 2012/13 Budget Guidelines (Pages 213 - 230) **8.10 pm**

Report of Head of Finance and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

Summary

To inform the Executive of the service and financial planning process for 2012/13, approve 2012/13 budget strategy and to agree budget guidelines for issue to service managers to enable the production of the 2012/13 budget and update the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2012/13 onwards.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Note the latest forecast for the Council's revenue budget for 2012/13 to 2015/16 at Para 2.17.
- (2) Note the preliminary results from the public consultation and proposed prioritisation framework at Appendix 1.
- (3) To endorse the overall 2012/13 budget strategy and service and financial planning process set out in the report.
- (4) Consider and agree the proposed budget guidelines and timetable for 2012/13 budget process. (Appendix 2 and 3)

Urgent Business

16. Urgent Business

Any other items which the Chairman has decided is urgent.

17. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

1 – Information relating to any individual

2 – Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

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

4 – Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority

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

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

“That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of that Act.”

18. **Award of Contracts for the Design, Supply and Installation of Photovoltaic Panels to Six Commercial Buildings for Cherwell District Council - Exempt Appendix 1** (Pages 231 - 232) **8.15 pm**
19. **Woodgreen Leisure Centre - Leisure Management Contract** (Pages 233 - 238) **8.20 pm**
20. **Value For Money Review of Public Protection** (Pages 239 - 256) **8.25 pm**

(Meeting scheduled to close at 8.35 pm)

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

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

Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

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

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

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

Queries Regarding this Agenda

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

Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Sue Smith
Chief Executive

Published on Monday 18 July 2011

Agenda Item 5

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:

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

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 26 July 2011 at 5.30 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 James Macnamara
Councillor Nigel Morris

Also Present: Councillor Leslie F Sibley
Councillor Tim Emptage
Councillor Kieron Mallon

Apologies for absence: Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Ian Davies, Strategic Director Environment & community
Chris Rothwell, Head of Safer Communities, Urban & Rural Services
Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant
Nigel Bell, Team Leader - Planning and Litigation / Interim Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

27 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Chairman reported that Councillor Sibley, Leader of the Opposition, would be submitting a petition on behalf of residents and businesses of Banbury regarding evening and bank holiday parking charges. The petition would be submitted at agenda item 4, Car Park Provision and Charges.

Car Park Provision and Charges

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report which sought consideration of the recommendations of the joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board regarding car park provision and charges.

Councillor Kieron Mallon, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board. The meeting had noted that a review had been due to take place in the autumn and had commended the Executive for recommending that the scrutiny committees undertake an early review of the revised parking charges in light of public concern and interest. Councillor Mallon explained that the recommendations would benefit residents in the district whilst ensuring that any future loss in income could be accommodated.

The Deputy Leader of the Council requested that all officers who had been involved in the work relating to car parking charges be thanked for their hard work. He paid particular thanks to staff in Parking Services and Customer Services for their hard work in dealing with the queries and calls in relation to parking charges.

Councillor Les Sibley, Leader of the Labour Group, presented a petition to the Executive on behalf of residents and businesses in Banbury opposing evening and Bank Holiday charges. He also addressed the Executive regarding the proposals from the Joint Scrutiny meeting

Councillor Tim Emptage, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, addressed the Executive commending their decision to review car parking charges and regarding the proposals from the Joint Scrutiny meeting.

The Executive noted that whilst they were in agreement about adjusting parking charges and policies, the correct legal processes would need to be followed and no changes could be implemented until such time as these were complete and therefore Excess Charge Notices would continue to be issued. Members also noted that no mistakes had been made in applying Excess Charge Notices since the implementation of the revised parking charges as the charge changes had been correctly introduced.

Resolved

- (1) That the following recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board be endorsed:
 - That there is a need to make some adjustments to the new car parking charges and policies in recognition of concerns raised by Councillors and the public.
 - That any adjustments must try to balance real benefit to car park users and town traders with the accepted effects on the Council's limited and reducing finances.

- That the current charges for evening parking be changed to charging to 1900hrs only on current hourly tariffs and free thereafter.
 - That there should be free parking for blue badge holders in designated disabled spaces but blue badge holders should be charged in all general parking spaces.
 - That there should be a 10 minute maximum period of grace for parking period expiry and non purchase of tickets.
 - That the discount for early payment of excess charge notices within 14 days be increased to 50% for all contraventions.
 - To note the withdrawal of the current £16 administration charge for appeals which are upheld but where the ECN was issued correctly.
 - That the effects of the redevelopment of Bicester Town Centre warrant an adjustment to the current charging regime until the new development is complete (anticipated summer 2013) by reducing the current charges by 10p per hour.
 - That officers determine the earliest implementation of the changes agreed by the Executive according to the appropriate legal processes.
 - That a detailed communications plan be compiled to signify these changes which takes into account the lessons learnt from the April changes.
 - That the loss of income of the above (estimated to be £93,000 per annum) be met from the additional income and lower cost arising from the transfer of some treasury management functions in house; and the fixed term Bicester loss of income (estimated to be £80,000 per annum over two years) from the additional interest secured from the later £10m investment of the Council's contribution to the Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment Scheme due to the delay in its start.
- (2) That Sunday and Bank Holiday parking be charged at £1 for all day and that parking on Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day remain free.

Reasons

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board have recognised the need to make some adjustments to the new car parking charges and policies in light of the concerns expressed by members and the public to the car parking charging changes introduced in April. This does acknowledge that any adjustments must balance real benefit to car park users and town traders with the accepted effects on the Council's limited and reducing finances.

Options

- Option One** Agree the recommendations of the joint scrutiny meeting.
- Option Two** Not accept the recommendations of the joint scrutiny meeting and to retain the current charging arrangements.
- Option Three** Agree in part the recommendation of the joint scrutiny meeting or other changes to current charging arrangements.

30

ICT Service Development

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report which sought consideration of the principles of a shared ICT service with South Northamptonshire Council.

Resolved

- (1) That a shared ICT service with South Northamptonshire Council be agreed in principle.
- (2) That a full business case for such a proposal to include estimated costs, benefits and risks prior to final commitment be received.
- (3) That external validation and assurance of the technical and service proposals assuming a clear conclusion in the Business Case to progress to a shared service in some form be supported.
- (4) That funding from the Council's Corporate ICT Reserve of up to £20,000 for this external validation and assurance be approved.

Reasons

A shared ICT service has the potential to offer significant benefits, both financial and through service support, to both councils. However, this needs a clear business case with risk factors evaluated and external validation.

Options

- Option One** To explore the benefits, estimated costs and risks of a shared ICT service.
- Option Two** To retain separate ICT services other than those already programmed in a shared way

The meeting ended at 6.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Executive

Cherwell Economic Development Strategy

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To ask the Executive to approve a final version of the Economic Development Strategy 2011 – 2016 for subsequent consideration by the Local Strategic Partnership Board.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the Economic Development Strategy attached as appendix 1 to this report to go forward to the Board of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for final approval.
- (2) To authorise the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member for Estates to agree any further non substantive changes to the document following this Committee and either prior to, or following, its consideration by the LSP Board at the end of this month.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Economic Development Strategy is an important document, not only for the Council, but also for our partner organisations working within Cherwell District. The purpose of the Economic Development Strategy is to set out the direction that we collectively need to take to ensure that the economy of the district remains strong and diverse for the benefit of all who live and work here.
- 1.2 The current Economic Development Strategy was prepared in 2006/7 and covers the period 2007 – 2011. It has now come to the end of its life and needs to be reviewed and updated in the light of the new Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy (“Our District, Our Future”) and the enormous changes to the world economy which have impacted on Cherwell

District since the last Strategy was prepared.

- 1.3 A key difference between the current Strategy and the new one is that the review is being carried out by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). It is widely recognised that whilst the District Council will continue to play a major role in delivering any Economic Development Strategy, it can only successfully do so with the active involvement and engagement of many key partners. Ownership of the Economic Development Strategy by the LSP will help raise the profile of the Strategy and ensure that it can be delivered.
- 1.4 In November 2010, the Executive, along with the LSP Board, considered a draft Economic Development Strategy and agreed to approve the document for public consultation. A public consultation subsequently took place between November 2010 and January 2011, with further comments since also being incorporated. This is especially important as this is Vision must remain alive to changing scenarios. More details of the consultation can be found in the “background information” section of this report.
- 1.5 Following the public consultation a revised version of the Economic Development Strategy is now put forward for approval.

Proposals

- 1.6 A version of the final Economic Development Strategy is attached to this report as **appendix 1**. The Strategy was broadly supported by stakeholders during the public consultation, however the following key issues emerged in terms of changes and additions that stakeholders wish to see in the final version of the Strategy.
 - There should be a greater emphasis on the green and low carbon economy.
 - More detail should be provided on the opportunities created by the eco-Bicester project
 - There should be recognition of issues faced by rural areas arising from, for example, high fuel prices, and also the importance of agriculture.
 - Reference should be made to the opportunities provided by rail improvements including the East-West rail initiative.
 - More information on Local Enterprise Partnerships is needed
 - Explain further how Begbroke Science Park and sites around Kidlington could drive the knowledge economy.
 - Identify rail infrastructure issues & plans
- 1.7 The final Strategy for which approval is now sought differs from the draft version in the following key respects.
 1. The document is shorter than the draft Strategy. This is principally because some of the background information that supports the Strategy

has been removed. In the draft version, the “key issues” section (section 2) provided a detailed analysis to support the issues affecting the district that had been identified. Consultees found this analysis helpful in setting the context for the strategy that followed and helping them to frame their comments, however it is considered that the level of detail provided in the draft is not required in the final version. In order that this material is not lost, it is proposed that a “companion document” is prepared which will include this information. Some of the detailed comments made to the draft Strategy will be addressed through changes that appear only in the companion document. This document will be available on the Council and the LSP websites.

2. The Action Plan (within section 7) has been significantly expanded with input from stakeholders. This has been coordinated through the LSP Management Group. The draft Action Plan had a number of gaps within it – deliberately so as one of the purposes of the public consultation was to consider what actions, outcome measures and timescales should be identified, and which partner(s) should be doing this work. These gaps have now been filled and will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain current.
 3. The Strategy has been updated to take account of the comments made in the public consultation, and also wider subsequent events, circumstances and initiatives that will impact upon it.
 4. The revisions to the document have also benefited from the recent Value for Money Review that was undertaken of the economic development service. This was concluded in July 2011 with a report to Executive. The report proposed a new vision for the council’s economic development service up to 2016, in line with this emerging Economic Development Strategy, and it also proposed a saving of £35,000 which will impact on a number of areas of work. These are taken into account in the Strategy before you today, however it should be recognised that the flexibility of the service to respond to new challenges will be reduced as a consequence of this budget reduction.
- 1.8 There are a couple of major challenges with producing a Strategy such as this. Firstly, given the pace and scale of change in the world which will impact upon any Economic Development Strategy, it is difficult to produce a document at a point in time that will not date too quickly but remain relevant and up-to-date. Secondly, given the range of activities that need to be undertaken to deliver the Strategy, it is challenging to find a means by which these can effectively be managed and monitored.
- 1.9 In the Strategy, these two issues are addressed through the way in which the **Action Plan** (within section 7) is prepared and kept up to date. The Action Plan will be monitored through the LSP of which many of the Strategy’s key stakeholders are members. Clearly, whilst Cherwell District Council’s own economic development team will deliver the Council’s Economic Development Service Plan and will have a coordinating role in this process, the responsibility for monitoring and implementing the Strategy will not be theirs alone. It is proposed therefore that the LSP Management Group takes responsibility for reviewing the partnership Action Plan at least annually. This will be done to tie in with the production of the LSP Annual Report so that any

key successes and issues can be reported here.

- 1.10 It is hoped that, with the exception of the Action Plan, the wider Strategy will not need to be reviewed until 2015/16. If, however, a re-fresh of the whole Strategy is needed, this will be led by the LSP.
- 1.11 The recommendation to the report includes a request to authorise the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member for Economic Development to agree any further non substantive changes to the document following this Committee and either prior to, or following, its consideration by the LSP Board at the end of September. This is because the document still needs to be considered by the LSP Board and it may wish to make further changes to the document at that time. Also, it may be that other partners wish to clarify their role and ability to contribute to meeting various targets in the Action Plan. Clearly, if the Board makes significant changes to the Strategy that will impact upon this Council's desire or capacity to support it, these will need to be reported back to the Executive as appropriate.

Conclusion

- 1.12 The Economic Development Strategy is an important document for helping shape the economic development priorities of the Cherwell District. It will help us to consider how best to use our resources, and those of our partner organisations within the LSP, to build upon the strengths within our economy and tackle those issues we know that our local economy is facing now, and to respond to issues that our economy will certainly face in future.

Background Information

- 2.1 Creating a "district of opportunity" is one of the key priorities in the current corporate plan, and the Economic Development Strategy is an important tool to help the Council support this aim. The current Strategy was prepared only four years ago, although the ensuing period has seen Cherwell District, as everywhere else, facing huge economic challenges as a consequence of the global credit crunch in 2008. Tellingly, when the Sustainable Community Strategy was prepared in 2009 – 10, the two words that emerged as ambitions for our economy over the next few years were "diverse" and "resilient". A key challenge of the new Economic Development Strategy is to help achieve this ambition.
- 2.2 The draft Economic Development Strategy was placed on public consultation between 29 November 2010 and 24 January 2011. Consultation was undertaken in the following ways:-
- A new page of the website was created and the document, together with a comments form, was placed here.
 - Copies of the document were placed in local libraries.
 - The following organisations were directly consulted:-

- All members of the LSP Board, Management Group and Reference Group (over 200 organisations in total). Board members were sent hard copies of the document.
 - All members of the Cherwell Investment Partnership Board
 - All other Oxfordshire authorities as well as all those within the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership.
 - Local business organisations and representative bodies such as the Chambers of Commerce, Bicester Vision and Kidlington Voice.
 - Over 900 local businesses on our database.
- 2.3 Furthermore, prior to the consultation, engagement with a number of local groups (e.g.: Banbury Corporate Finance Initiative, Eco-Bicester Economic Strategy Group) and at a number of events (e.g.: Banbury in Business) had taken place to inform the draft Strategy.
- 2.4 The consultation received a total of 18 formal external comments. These came from a wide range of types of group and included town councils, chambers of commerce, education establishments, landowners and businesses. Many of these were detailed, some covering specific points and others covering a wide range of different areas.
- 2.5 In addition to these comments, a number of comments were made verbally, both during the consultation and subsequently, with members of the LSP Board and Management Group. These have all been fed into the final version of the Strategy that is before members today.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The key issues for consideration is whether the final Economic Development Strategy provides a useful summary of the key issues affecting our economy today, and a credible strategy for addressing problems within the economy.

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

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Option One | To approve the Economic Development Strategy for consideration by the LSP Board |
| Option Two | To approve the Economic Development Strategy with amendments for consideration by the LSP Board |
| Option Three | Not to approve the Economic Development Strategy. |

Consultations

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Local Strategic Partnership | The Management Group has helped develop the Action Plan in section 7. |
|------------------------------------|---|

Other local authorities, local businesses and others See paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 above for more details.

Implications

Financial: The cost of producing the Economic Development Strategy, including the cost of the public consultation, can be met within existing resources. The cost of provided officer input to delivering the Strategy will be met by the current economic development team, again within their existing budgets. Members should be mindful of the £35,000 saving from the economic development budget that was agreed as part of the VFM review approved by Executive in July 2011. Achieving some of the actions within the Strategy may require additional resources, either from the Council or its partners. These will be considered at the appropriate time. This report is not committing the council to any expenditure beyond current budgets.

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

Legal: There are no legal implications associated with the Economic Development Strategy. A robust Economic Development Strategy is, however, a useful part of any evidence base for the LDF which should help contribute towards a sound Plan.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Team Leader – Planning & Litigation/Interim Monitoring Officer, 01295 221687

Risk Management: There is a risk to the reputation of the Council and to the LSP if a poor Economic Development Strategy is produced, or if the Council and its partners are not able to deliver on the promises made in the document.

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy & Performance Manager, 01295 221566

Equalities An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

Comments checked by Caroline French, Equalities and Diversity Officer, 01295 221586

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell, a District of Opportunity

Lead Member

Councillor Norman Bolster
Lead Member for Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Economic Development Strategy
Background Papers	
Report to Executive, 1 November 2010 Draft Economic Development Strategy, November 2010	
Report Author	Steven Newman, Economic Development Officer Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development
Contact Information	01295 221860, steven.newman@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221840, philip.clarke@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Cherwell District Economic Development Strategy 2011 - 2016

Revised Draft



**Cherwell local
strategic Partnership**

August 2011

Revised Draft Economic Development Strategy for Cherwell, North Oxfordshire (2011 – 2016)

Contents

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7 Action Plan	40

Appendices – see Companion Document

Appendix 1	Information sources and background documents
Appendix 2	Consultation
Appendix 3	Significant partnerships
Appendix 4	An Environmentally Sustainable Economy

Executive Summary

1. We have a vision for the economy of Cherwell, north Oxfordshire in the year 2016 and we invite you to share it with us.
2. Cherwell is a tremendous location where businesses flourish. Home to over 6,000 companies, local networks and partnerships have created a strong and resilient business community which has in recent recessionary times ensured continuing and successful evolution. We want to ensure that success continues by supporting appropriate economic growth!
3. The superb location of Cherwell mid-way between London and the UK's industrial heartland in the Midlands provides a basis for business efficiency and investment. With excellent road and rail connections, Cherwell's infrastructure is unique in containing the only commercial airport between Birmingham and London. Furthermore, the University of Oxford's research facilities are in Cherwell at Begbroke Science Park, allowing local business innovation and enterprise to be supported by one of the world's great research institutions. We have a unique package for businesses to invest in.
4. This Economic Development Strategy builds upon the success of previous work, adding new insights and understanding that has resulted from discussions with businesses and partners, and innovative research during a time of immense organisational, political and economic change. There is a strong collective will to join together through formal structures, particularly the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), and informally to maximise opportunities locally for the benefit of the District's businesses, employees, residents and visitors.
5. The LSP, involving the voluntary sector, business groups, local authorities, the police, NHS, college and others has joined together to create this coherent vision.
6. It begins by identifying the 'Issues' facing Cherwell's economy, the detail of which is contained within a companion document. The context, themes and actions that follow are a result of public consultation and further work by LSP partners.
7. The central theme of this Strategy is the creation of 'economic resilience', whereby we focus upon the power we have locally to combine the resources of the private, social and public sector partners. By joining together, we add value by becoming more effective and efficient, ready to make an even greater difference through enabling the creation of jobs and prosperity this year, the next and in the decades to come.
8. Whilst supporting a 'diverse and resilient economy' is also key to the Sustainable Community Strategy, a further cross-cutting theme of this Strategy is to maximise the value of the unique opportunity arising through the Bicester eco-town project. The development of 'green' infrastructure, skills and technology will allow the town and the wider district to become home for innovative business investment, creating sufficient 'higher value' employment opportunities in line with the expected growth in resident population.
9. The leadership of a 'Low Carbon' economy will involve the development of 'green technologies' and 'green knowledge' around existing and new employers, sectors

and clusters. This Strategy addresses the challenge of climate change by working with industry to support innovation in alternative energy sources and maximises opportunities within engineering and construction to develop practical solutions to mitigate the impact of climate change and secure competitive, green business practice. Furthermore, we aim to explore ways to increase capacity to design and build or upgrade existing infrastructure so that it does not contribute to climate change such as buildings, roads and communication networks. We also seek to protect the environment and bio-diversity as this is a considerable attraction for sustainable investment by businesses and for the visitor economy.

10. At the heart of this strategy is a will to continuously develop our local economy to ensure it remains internationally competitive by recognising and developing our unique set of resources contained within three broad themes:
 - **People** (skills development, work readiness, help to find work)
 - **Business** (entrepreneurship, enabling success, attracting investment)
 - **Place** (provide transport and housing infrastructure, support rural areas and develop key urban sites)
11. Whilst the recession adversely affected investment in sites and property before 2011, we now see renewed interest and, in places, a shortage of readily available land for business development. An employment land review will ensure that sufficient land is available throughout the Local Development Framework period to 2026 for the realisation of this, and subsequent, economic development strategies.
12. By implementing annual action plans to show how we will provide the support and create the conditions for private business growth, we expect to develop renewed resilience to ensure that the economy and people of Cherwell can withstand further 'economic shocks', such as national recession or local business closures.
13. How will we know we have achieved our goals? We will keep in direct contact with our businesses, our communities and our residents to ensure that resources are being used most effectively to develop our economy, and to react flexibly to meeting needs and opportunities as they arise, if not before.
14. You are welcome to join us on our journey to sustainable prosperity for all.

Contact Cherwell's Economic Development Officer on (01295) 221860 or at economic.development@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

1) Introduction

What is the Economic Development Strategy for Cherwell?

- 1.1 This is a shared 'vision' supporting and developing the broad themes outlined in the Community Strategy, setting out the direction we need to take to ensure that the economy and society of the District is prosperous and resilient, for the benefit of all who live and work in north Oxfordshire. To be successful, it must integrate with partners' work and other key strategies, such as housing and transport, to maximise its impact. Ultimately, it should support Cherwell to prepare to resist future economic, environmental and social challenges, and to maximise opportunities. This is particularly timely as the nationally-significant Bicester Eco-Town project begins.

When will it happen?

- 1.2 The Strategy covers the 5 year (medium term) period from 2011 to 2016, as part of the Community Strategy's vision for 2030. It will both inform annual delivery plans and look to a longer horizon to ensure cohesion and synergy with other strategic documents and policy frameworks.

Why is it necessary?

- 1.3 An Economic Development Strategy is necessary to reflect the changed economic conditions, and priorities of the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership, as identified in broad terms within the Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy 2010.
- 1.4 Economic growth has until recently been enjoyed since the early 1990s but the context has changed considerably through a series of crises hitting the world's financial systems, deeply affecting global, national and local economies:
- The housing crisis (i.e. sub-prime mortgage defaults & slowing market);
 - The banking crisis (i.e. collapse of banks, nationalisation & recapitalisation);
 - The 'credit crunch' (i.e. constraints in borrowing for investment);
 - Recession (i.e. reduced output and increased unemployment);
 - Public borrowing (i.e. high public debt, reducing expenditure)
 - Public spending cuts (i.e. further unemployment and increased reliance upon private and social sectors)
- 1.5 Whilst the causes of the crises were beyond the direct control of local partners, the Economic Development Strategy previously developed for Cherwell (2007-11) ensured that resources were adjusted to provide a timely, flexible and effective response to minimise the impact upon people and businesses in Cherwell. Support to residents facing redundancy, for example, was given through operating Job Clubs and an enterprise agency alongside core support for our 6,000 local businesses.
- 1.6 High aspirations for the local economy remain and we now also have a changed national political context, new local Community Strategy and new research to inform our understanding. Significantly, we have a unique opportunity to deliver economic growth through 'Eco Bicester' development, to be focussed upon the North West Bicester site and raising opportunities around 'green technologies' throughout the district and beyond.
- 1.7 Against a volatile background, local economic strategy and effective partnerships will have an important role to play, ensuring that resources are co-ordinated and that priorities can be agreed towards achieving the community's vision.

Where does it cover?

- 1.8 The Strategy deals with economic development as a theme that cuts across all that happens in Cherwell District, north Oxfordshire. Whilst administrative boundaries may be tightly drawn, partnerships and trade across boundaries are supported. A framework is provided for decision-making and local action; specific locations are rarely mentioned, apart from in annual operational plans.
- 1.9 North Oxfordshire is in a paradoxical position. On the one hand, it lies at the geographical heart of England, mid-way between the powerhouses of London and Birmingham, and in an excellent position for business. However, we also lie at the far north-western corner of the administrative South East region, at a junction point between the South East, East and West Midlands and South-West regions. This has in the past led to difficulties in being on the periphery of the large and economically highly active South-East region but, with a review of regions, there is renewed vigour to put Cherwell more effectively 'on the map'.

Who is it for?

- 1.10 It's for everybody with an interest in north Oxfordshire: businesses, investors, residents, visitors and communities. Whilst the Strategy is led by Cherwell District Council, the 'vision' belongs to all members of the Local Strategic Partnership and will be delivered in partnership by agencies, organisations and businesses, involving local Members of Parliament as appropriate.

Upon what evidence is it based?

- 1.11 The Strategy draws upon the following research:
- Cherwell Community Strategy 2010
 - Cherwell Economic Resilience Study 2010
 - Cherwell Employers Skills Study 2010
 - Cherwell Employment Land Review 2010
 - Eco-Bicester Economic Development Strategy 2010
 - Oxfordshire Economic Assessment 2010

How will it be made to happen?

- 1.12 Building upon research and partnership discussions since 2009, the strategy will be predominantly delivered through a series of Annual Operational Plans which will focus on how the vision will be realised in the short-term within north Oxfordshire. It seeks to configure resources between partners across the social, private and public sectors in north Oxfordshire, exploiting the value to be added local by innovative and effective linkages, as illustrated below:

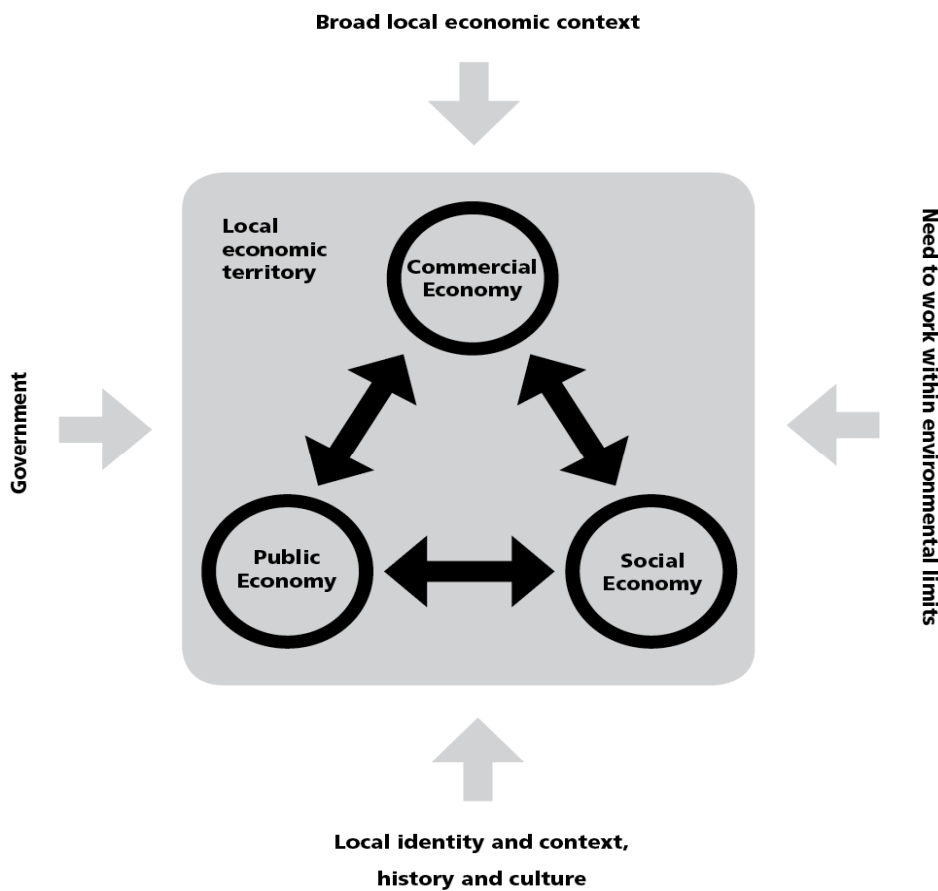


Figure 1: The CLES resilience model

- 1.13 The resilience model stands out because it acknowledges the relative strength of the reciprocal relationships between the public, private and social sectors that help generate resilience within an area. Stronger mutual relationships allow a locality to be more flexible, proactive and agile if faced with an economic/environmental shock or changing context.
- 1.14 Aiming to enhance the resilience of Cherwell's economy, this strategy follows a logical format:
- Firstly, we will outline the economic situation for the District; some of the recent and long-term trends, and key issues to address over the period of the strategy.
 - Then we will set the strategic context within which we are working, and the main aims of the Community Strategy that we are seeking to deliver.
 - Finally, we will present a series of themes covering the economy in the District, giving a more focused view of how we will move forward together over the next five years.

2) Cherwell's Economy – the Key Issues

We face the following issues:

- a) Levels of **employment** remain high but not everybody is benefiting;
- b) We have increasingly relied upon **public sector** jobs which are set to reduce in number;
- c) **The economic climate, access to finance and cash flow** have become critical issues for businesses;
- d) **Wages** paid within Cherwell still lag behind South East regional averages;
- e) There are still residents without the right **skills**;
- f) There remain pockets of **deprivation** within our overall prosperity;
- g) Our **population** is expected to grow significantly;
- h) Employment **land, premises & infrastructure** do not always meet modern business needs;
- i) We have a **diverse** economy but often with 'lower value' activity similar to the south Midlands;
- j) **Manufacturing** is a particular strength but is often lower skilled locally;
- k) The **knowledge** economy is growing but not quickly enough;
- l) Businesses are generally highly **satisfied** with their location in Cherwell yet all too often still face real issues and constraints;
- m) This is an **enterprising** district with potential for innovation;
- n) The **environment** provides both challenges and opportunities in creating a low carbon economy, especially through the 'Eco Bicester' project;
- o) **Globalisation** has also become a significant issue for the economy: both a challenge and opportunity;
- p) The **community** sector will have an increasing role to play.

a) Levels of employment remain high but not everybody is benefiting

- 70,200 residents (over 16 years old) of the district (April 2009 - March 2010) were in work (as employees or self employed), with Cherwell's employment rate remaining consistently above 80% in recent decades.
- Individuals and communities, however, have been affected by the national recession with youth inactivity & unemployment becoming a serious concern since 2009.
- Some residents, such as Disability Allowance claimants and long term unemployed, face challenges in finding work.

b) We have increasingly relied upon public sector jobs which are set to reduce in number

- The strong labour market performance has been helped by large growth in public sector employment, increasing by 39.1% during 1998-2008, particularly in education.

- Although Cherwell has a strong level of private sector employment, this has actually decreased by 2.4% during 1998-2008 and the public sector has taken the slack in terms of local employment.
- The likelihood of public spending cuts continuing for the foreseeable future presents a significant challenge to the private and social sectors to provide alternative sources of employment, and to the public sector to lead and support this transition.

c) The economic climate, access to finance and cash flow have become critical issues for businesses

- Nine out of ten Cherwell businesses (90%) report in 2010 that they face constraints on their business of some kind, a higher proportion than found in 2008 (83%).
- The most commonly cited constraint is the economic climate (73%), followed by access to finance or cash flow and lack of market opportunities (both 28%).
- Access to finance is often constrained by SMEs not knowing how to ask for funding, rather than simply its availability.

d) Wages paid within Cherwell still lag behind South East regional averages

- Within Cherwell, workplace earnings, whilst higher than the national average, are lower than the Oxfordshire and South East averages.
- The relative change in earnings, however, has increased markedly between 2002 and 2009, suggesting an increase of knowledge intensive activities.
- The resident-based earnings are notably high compared to workplace-based earnings, suggesting high levels of out commuting to increasingly higher paid, higher value jobs.
- The challenge, therefore, is to attract higher value employers into north Oxfordshire to provide residents with opportunities to work locally in activities that create further wealth and employment, therefore reducing the need to commute outwards.

e) There are still residents without the right skills

- A lack of 'basic' numeracy, literacy and work-readiness skills act a major impediment to finding work especially in the 'knowledge economy' age, and are a barrier to other skills which are becoming essential in the workplace, especially with a decline in e.g. traditional manufacturing and construction jobs.
- Difficulties in recruiting and developing the right skills and attitudes could restrict the competitiveness of our businesses.
- With opportunities arising for enterprise through eco-Bicester, the issue is how to develop skills quickly enough to capture the opportunity to build a cluster of knowledge and employment.

f) There remain pockets of deprivation within our overall prosperity

- Cyclical nature of problems facing households with a concentration in Banbury but also households affected elsewhere in the District.

- Numbers of school leavers not in education, employment or training (NEET) at an all time high.

g) Our population is expected to grow significantly

- Cherwell's population increased by almost 12% between 1991 and 2001, and by a further 4.5% since then. Growth predictions of a further 8% by 2016 and a cumulative 15.6% by 2026 are significantly higher than regional and national rates.
- Most of the recent growth has been in Banbury and Bicester and this will continue, with Bicester's population projected to grow by 13.8% between 2001 and 2016; however the rapid growth across the District will put pressure on the local infrastructure. Kidlington's population is expected to reduce due to declining size of households and green belt restraints on growth.
- The number of residents of pensionable age in particular is set to grow, presenting challenges and opportunities for service provision and employment.

h) Employment land, premises & infrastructure do not always meet modern business needs

- There has been investment interest for advanced manufacturing and distribution but demand for office sites and premises is low with few new speculative developments beginning.
- Pressure remains to use industrial and office land for uses such as housing, retail and leisure, and to demolish vacant buildings; further reducing supply.
- The growing 'internet economy' relies less on land and property but more on ever-advancing telecommunications infrastructure.
- The LDF seeks to identify appropriate locations and amounts of new land.
- Utilities such as power, water/sewage and broadband are key issues in certain locations that could restrict economic growth.
- Rail services are being significantly improved but local concerns exists over Government's proposal for High Speed 2 (HS2) service.

i) We have a diverse economy but often with 'lower value' activity similar to the south Midlands

- The business base within Cherwell generally consists of lower value activity, as highlighted in the reliance upon wholesale/retail and a low proportion of residents in management and professional occupations.
- There is evidence of differences between Cherwell's economy and that of Oxfordshire, and between the north and south of the District.

j) Manufacturing is a particular strength but is often lower skilled locally

- Traditional manufacturers can become uncompetitive in the global economy but modern manufacturing is a key wealth creating activity, especially when incorporating knowledge gained through research & development.

- 'Value added' manufacturers investing in skills, technology and local networks perform well but are under-represented in Cherwell compared with other parts of Oxfordshire.

k) The knowledge economy is growing but not quickly enough

- Compared with other parts of Oxfordshire, employment in "high skilled industries" is less common in Cherwell and high skilled clusters are less strong. The proportion of employment in such industries is similar to that in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire.
- Higher Level Skills are important, and the challenge is address these skill needs which are likely to be more *dispersed*, among smaller high technology or knowledge intensive employers, or in *niche* activities within firms where lower level skills are more common.
- Competition for staff, including competition from other areas and attracting potential employees to Cherwell as a place to work, appears to represent a key issue for some businesses.

l) Businesses are generally highly satisfied with their location in Cherwell yet all too often still face real issues and constraints

- Investors tend initially to consider more congested and expensive parts of the county before realising the competitiveness of Cherwell implying that the benefits of Cherwell to businesses need to be better communicated and understood.
- A small minority of businesses report locally a high cost of living and business premises, poor transport and challenges from competition locally, meaning that infrastructure improvements and business support need to be made available.

m) This is an enterprising district with potential for innovation

- There were 5,800 VAT registered businesses in Cherwell at the end of 2007, with a high proportion of registrations and low level of de-registrations compared to national and regional levels.
- The challenge is to ensure that advisory and financial support remains during a period of cuts to publicly-funded business support services, to help residents to start and grow competitive and innovative businesses.

n) The environment provides both challenges and opportunities in creating a low-carbon economy, especially through the 'Eco Bicester' project

- Transforming to a competitive low carbon economy is an overarching objective of this economic development strategy.
- Transportation and telecommunication systems have a significant impact on economic development, and are set to be of increasing importance as costs of energy increase and waste is minimised.
- Cherwell has a unique opportunity as the location of the nationally-significant North West Bicester (Eco-town) site.

o) Globalisation has also become a significant issue for the economy: both a challenge and opportunity;

- Our successful businesses look both within and beyond north Oxfordshire to sell their products and services, as do their competitors.
- Competition is increasingly global for many businesses and set to grow further through the movement of products, services, capital, people and knowledge.
- If we are to prosper and achieve sustainable economic recovery with reduced national debt, the trade imbalance needs to be particularly addressed at national level, with corresponding action at local levels, including at the level of organisations, businesses and the individual person as consumer, employee or entrepreneur.

p) The community sector will have an increasing role to play

- The community/social sector is already important to north Oxfordshire.
- Government direction for a 'Big Society' will place more responsibility on community groups and individuals, requiring value to be added by the reducing public sector and support hoped for from a growing private sector.

3) Local Context

3.1 Across the UK economy, we are aware of several factors that are almost certainly going to grow in importance in the coming years;

- **Increasing global trade**, including the movement of products, services, people and knowledge;
- **The effective minimum level of qualifications for employment is steadily increasing**;
- **Jobs in services to individuals**, from hairdressing to personal shopping, are expected to increase as time becomes an increasingly rare commodity for many people;
- **The draw of the south east** for people relocating, both from other parts of the UK and further afield, will remain as long as the area retains its general prosperity.
- **Rising energy costs** and potential for volatility in access to fossil fuels.

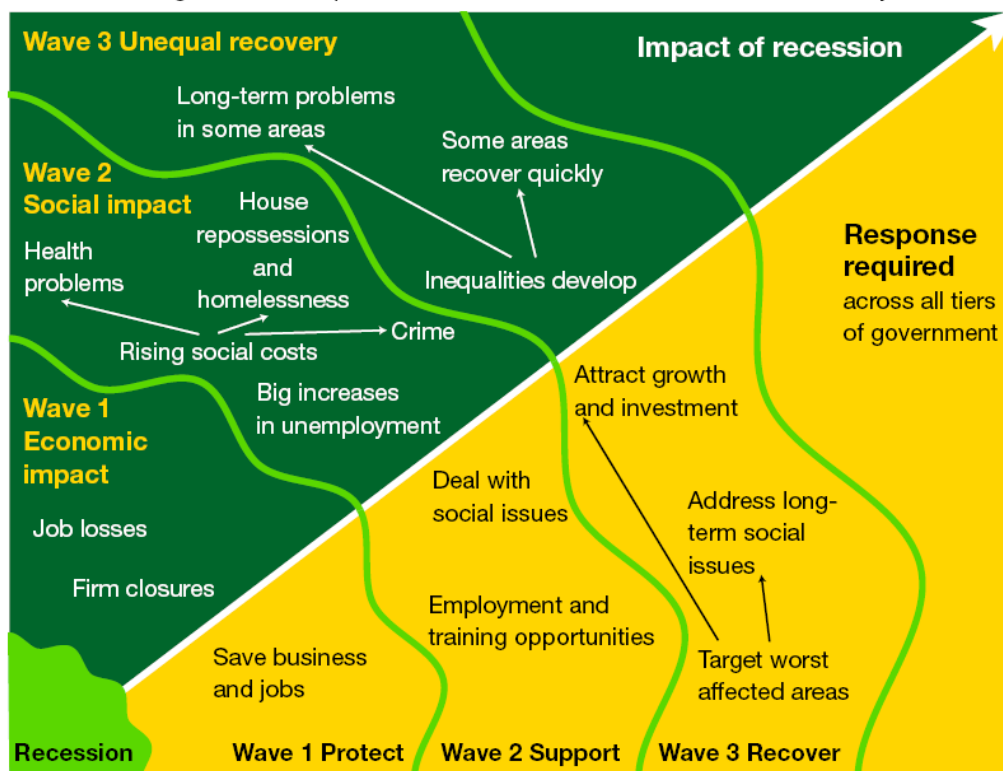
3.2 Recent experience, however, reminds us that economic development does not occur at a steady rate and is subject to many global influences; foreseeable and unforeseeable, controllable and uncontrollable. Our experience during the recession proved that Cherwell was a 'resilient' place, particularly in:

- Economic partnership across the private, public and social sectors
- Business culture, and
- Its ability to cope with recession

3.3 By previous actions and by rapidly adjusting its economic development strategy, Cherwell took swift action to develop effective partnerships and services to meet head-on the waves of recessionary impact, as explained below:

Figure 1: Responses to the three waves of a recession

Economic effects generate social problems, and some areas are left behind in a recovery

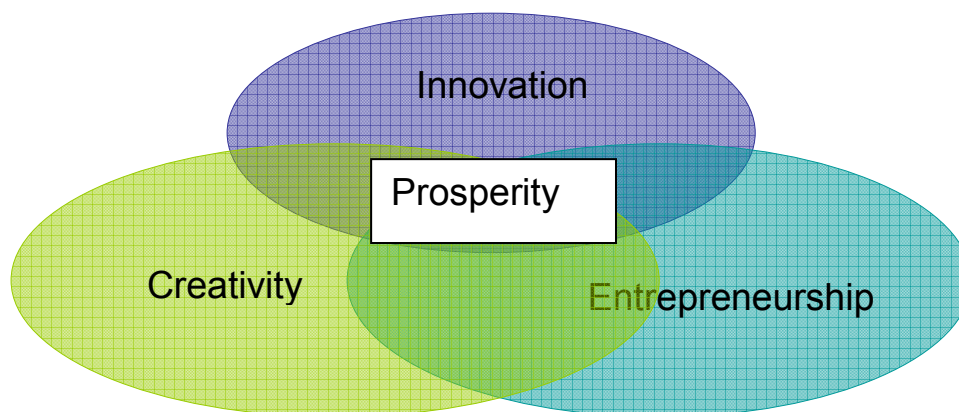


Source: Audit Commission

- 3.4 Nevertheless, the recession has had an impact on Cherwell businesses and the economic climate remains a constraint for 73% of employers. However, expectations around turnover and staff growth in the next year are quite positive (70% expect turnover to increase, 24% expect increased staff numbers) and there are signs that employers in Cherwell are taking pro-active steps to try to grow their business or recover from the downturn, for example by looking to new markets or undertaking innovative activities.
- 3.5 The incidence of businesses with the aim to "grow by increasing sales" has increased strongly in Cherwell (82% in 2010 compared with 73% in 2008). This proportion is greater than that found across Oxfordshire as a whole (78%) and has increased at a faster rate. The importance of this aim in the District suggests that businesses may have an interest in training or support to help them achieve their goal.
- 3.6 The study also suggests a need to support *employees* to ensure they have the skills required to help their employer maximise their competitiveness in the current climate. As is the case across the County and in the neighbouring areas of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, the incidence of skills gaps reported by employers has increased since 2008 (20% compared with 14%), with particular issues highlighted around motivation of established staff members, their ability to keep up with change and to be *flexible* in terms of the skills they have and how they apply them. (Employers Skills Survey 2010 – Cherwell)
- 3.7 The response has therefore been achieved by effective mobilisation and co-ordination of social, public and private resources. The challenge for Cherwell must now, therefore, be to maximise competitiveness and to ensure that effective action can be taken to repel the impact of further waves of recession through **sustainable economic growth**, defined as:

“Growth that can be sustained and is within environmental limits, but also enhances environmental and social welfare and avoids greater extremes in future economic cycles”.
(Communities & Local Government, 2009b, p3).

- 3.8 Prosperity within a resilient Cherwell will be built through:



- 3.9 Against a background of these factors, we have unique local circumstances; our geographical location in the country, our history, culture and heritage, the presence of transport links and other infrastructure. In this section we explore a possible future for the District, its three main urban centres, and its rural population.

Cherwell

- 3.10 Following the completion of the M40 in 1990, Cherwell has grown in population, and seen its economy transform, bringing low unemployment and high economic activity and resilience through the recession. However, we are still a relatively low-wage economy. Simply increasing wages isn't going to help – companies need to be successful and productive to be able to afford to pay, and this situation must be sustainable in the face of competition.

- 3.11 The future economy of Cherwell needs to retain what is good now and address its weaknesses. Population growth has been, and is likely to continue to be, driven by migration into the area. The presence of a strong economy is a cause, an effect, and a necessary requirement of such population growth. A key issue in the future will remain a careful balancing of population growth, economy and infrastructure. Cherwell is a good place to live and work, and our top priority must be to maintain that.
- 3.12 Cherwells' economy will by necessity be even more outward-looking than it is now. We will seek to add to our strong indigenous industry with selected inward investments, focussing on those companies which either bring diversity to our economy, or add to established strengths. We will also see an increase in companies trading on an international, global basis, in both goods and services.
- 3.13 We will need to provide new sites for development to ensure a paced economic growth, close to where people live and making use of investments in rail and road infrastructure. It will also be necessary to redevelop existing sites in the district to ensure that sites remain relevant to modern business needs and to address the changing nature of our built and natural environment.
- 3.14 We see Cherwell further strengthening its technical capacity, using high-profile areas such as motor-sports as a 'shop front', but fulfilling a leading role in a variety of high-technology, specialised engineering sectors. We also expect Bio-technology, materials engineering and nanotechnology (engineering of functional systems at the molecular scale) to become an increasingly significant wealth generator, especially in the southern part of the District.

Banbury

- 3.15 Banbury has undergone considerable growth over the past 20 years, and there is every reason to expect that to continue. The closure in 2008 of the aluminium works after 80 years was a major shock and Banbury's manufacturing and service sectors will continue to face competition from lower cost competitors overseas. However, with a diverse service sector and a large proportion of manufacturing in higher-value and specialised areas which are more dependent upon skilled input, we can be confident that the town will remain an important employment centre.
- 3.16 Banbury has a strong industrial heritage, and we see this evolving into a robust 21st century engineering economy, well located in relation to customers and suppliers. Driven by flagship sectors such as motor-sports and advanced materials, this will give Banbury a firm footing from which it can compete in a global marketplace. A cluster of other employment activity, such as food production, will ensure that a diverse range of jobs and employers maintain a 'resilient' economy.
- 3.17 The town itself will also continue to be a sub-regional shopping centre, anchored by Castle Quay, attracting shoppers from a broad catchment of towns and villages. A continuing programme of environmental improvements, investment, events and activities will enable its town centre 'product' to remain competitive and attractive in a dynamic retail / tourism market. Independent shops and cultural assets such as The Cross, Fine Lady on a White Horse and St Mary's Church amongst many other historic buildings add unique interest to the town.
- 3.18 As an historic market town and employment centre, Banbury serves as a hub for its surrounding rural hinterland, and its catchment area stretches beyond the County boundary into a sphere of influence often known as 'Banburyshire'. The provision of services such as business support, schooling, public transport and health services often crosses boundaries into other local authority and organisational areas, creating a need to ensure seamless services.

Bicester

- 3.19 The development of an 'eco town' at north west Bicester, expected to create 5,000 homes and at least 5,000 jobs, provides an enormous and unique opportunity for the town to create itself as an internationally renowned location. The master planning of the site will take account of the land required to deliver the employment whilst work with partners will seek to successfully promote the site to established and new businesses. There is great scope for the north west Bicester development to act as a catalyst for inward investment and repositioning of the local economy, through the development of skills and expertise leading to innovative 'eco-regeneration' elsewhere in the town and beyond.



- 3.20 Bicester's history has been dominated by its location at a nexus of major transport routes and the presence of the Defence activities. Bicester Garrison army base has around 700 working military personnel and aspires to create an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) centre of excellence.
- 3.21 As the MOD has gradually reduced its presence, sites and premises such as those at Graven Hill have become available to let out to local industry in the short term, with a local desire for more to become permanently available for businesses, making use of the railhead and strategic location. Land and buildings at RAF Bicester also have great potential, to provide leisure and visitor heritage facilities.
- 3.22 Meanwhile, other private industry has had to provide alternative employment. Bicester's industrial estates have nurtured manufacturing employment since the 1960s and, whilst not entirely suited to modern employment requirements, have started to see some investment which should be continued.
- 3.23 The ease of access from Bicester to Oxford, Aylesbury and London has made it a popular residential area, but created significant issues of transport pressures and a 'brain drain'. The town will have even better rail connections through planned investment in:
- East West Rail (Oxford to Cambridge via Bicester)
 - Project Evergreen 3 (Oxford to London Marylebone via Bicester)
 - Faster journey times between London and Birmingham (via Bicester)
- 3.24 The challenge is for Bicester to become a more attractive work location for many of its more-qualified and higher-earning residents. With new opportunities arising from its major growth plans, Bicester is expected to become a significant location in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, and so see an increase in science and technology based businesses, exploiting innovations and spin-outs from academic research.
- 3.25 Bicester will be able to take advantage of both materials engineering and bio-technology in its economic future, thanks to its location and the strength of those sectors already nearby. In addition, as these become more established the breadth of the towns' knowledge economy will increase to encompass other areas of innovation and creativity. Examples are in the motorsport engineering strengths of Oxford & Cherwell Valley College in Bicester and connections to local industry. Great potential exists for local Universities to lead in , for

example, the transfer of green technology (Oxford Brookes University) and materials engineering (University of Oxford's Begbroke Science Park) in Bicester and across the whole district.

- 3.26 Following work by Thames Water to complete the ring main, the owners and tenants of property in the older industrial areas must ensure, with the utility companies, that basic service infrastructure is of a high enough standard to satisfy future needs.
- 3.27 The presence of the Bicester Village retail development has placed the town on the international map and given the town a stronger retail offering than would be expected in a centre of this size; our primary concern will continue to be to ensure that the town centre is vital and viable, and able to co-exist with Bicester Village in a mutually productive way. Drawing visitors from a very wide area, we expect that Bicester will show an increase in specialist high-value retailers appealing to discerning but affluent customers alongside its good range of local services in a revitalised town centre.

Kidlington

- 3.28 The economy in Kidlington is dominated by the proximity of Oxford, and inevitably its future is intimately linked with the future of the city. However, whilst it is a popular location to live for people working in Oxford, it has in recent years developed a considerable commercial property stock and now contains two key assets that provide a foundation for not only Kidlington's economy, but that of the district and wider region:
- 3.29 Over the last decade, the University of Oxford has developed **Begbroke Science Park** into a successful centre for scientific research, much of it linked to the Departments of Engineering and Materials Science. In addition to meeting the space requirements of the University, the Science Park has provided facilities and support to those wishing to develop commercially the results of pure research initiatives through its purpose-built Centre for Innovation & Enterprise. Further expansion plans at Begbroke will ensure that Kidlington has an increasingly important role to play in developing the 'knowledge economy'.
- 3.30 **Kidlington's airport** is named 'London Oxford Airport' as a reflection of its growing importance. Recent investment in a passenger terminal / business hub signifies an increasing role in relation to supporting local businesses that require efficient global transportation services, and is therefore also an important asset in attracting inward investment. Airport-related services have the potential to develop into a key cluster.
- 3.31 Kidlington has therefore become a quality business location in Oxford's green belt, having access to the City but free from major flood risks and traffic congestion with competitively priced commercial and residential accommodation. These qualities, coupled with an active business network 'Kidlington Voice', provide a competitive offer to businesses. This will ensure that Kidlington develops a stronger identity and integrates its facilities better.
- 3.32 Kidlington will need to work hard to retain those aspects of village life that it most treasures; providing an attractive centre around which a sustainable community can thrive. It will also benefit from developing stronger links between its resident, shopper, and daytime employee populations. Its relationship with the surrounding environment, particularly the Green Belt, will shape its future development.

Rural

- 3.33 The countryside has undergone massive changes in recent years and this is likely to continue. Whilst the countryside may be perceived by some as being less an area of agricultural production and more as a managed environment, agriculture remains to be of considerable importance to the economy and society of local communities. Quality of life factors have made rural villages attractive, and consequently expensive, places to live with knock on effects for young people seeking to set up home in their native territory.

- 3.34 We expect that villages will remain popular places to live and will encourage the provision of local services by commercially viable businesses and through social enterprises. The changing rural economy will continue to benefit from the growing public interest in the food and drink we consume and in rural attractions to visit, enabling rural enterprises to offer higher-value products such as organic produce and visitor services.
- 3.35 Farm diversification and conversion of existing buildings will provide opportunities for employment, skills and services to be retained in rural communities. Creative and knowledge based industries will continue to be attracted to rural locations, as will some activities where yards and commercial buildings are re-used. Our rural areas are well located to afford engagement in the national economy while enjoying social and environmental advantages.
- 3.36 Some rural communities do, however, suffer a technological disadvantage when it comes to broadband connectivity. Given increasing reliance upon Information Communication Technology within the 'knowledge economy', it is of fundamental importance to address this issue. Rural areas also bear the brunt of high fuels costs given that many of our villages are off the mains gas grid.

4) Strategic Context

- 4.1 The purpose of any strategy is to provide a focussed approach to achieving its' key goals. Therefore, our strategy must first and foremost concentrate on delivering for Cherwell. However, it is important to remember that many initiatives and actions that enable us to deliver on our aims are dependent on our partners, and many issues that affect us reach more broadly than our District border.

Community Strategy

- 4.2 The new Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 'Our District; Our Future' identifies the central importance of a 'resilient' economy and provides a strategic context for the revision of the Cherwell Economic Development Strategy for 2010 – 2016.

- 4.3 The SCS identifies seven challenges:

- Managing growth;
- Managing resources and creating prosperity;
- Adapting to an ageing population;
- Empowering the next generation;
- Reducing inequality and addressing deprivation;
- Safe, strong and vibrant communities;
- Adapting to climate change.

Local Strategic Context

- 4.4 There is also a need for the Economic Development Strategy to integrate with the other medium-term strategies, and for all of those strategies to contain elements of local economic development at their core:

- Rural Strategy
- Cultural Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Environmental Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Public Health Strategy

Government's Economic Strategy

- 4.5 Since the election of the Coalition Government in 2010, the strategic context for economic development has – along with other strategy – changed significantly. In its White Paper, *Local growth: realizing every place's potential*. (October 2010), Government states its intention to:

- shift power to local communities and business, enabling places to tailor their approach to local circumstances;
- promote efficient and dynamic markets, in particular in the supply of land, and
- provide real and significant incentives for places that go for growth; and
- support investment in places and people to tackle the barriers to growth.

“The Government's economic ambition is to create a fairer and more balanced economy – one that is not so dependent on a narrow range of economic sectors, is driven by private sector growth and has new business opportunities that are more evenly balanced across the country and between industries. The Government is therefore determined that all parts of the country benefit from sustainable economic growth”. (HM Government, 2010, pg 5).

- 4.6 With the enhanced role of localities to drive their own economy, achievement of the Government's aims rely heavily upon the development and implementation of local economic development strategies such as this partnership strategy for Cherwell.

Open Public Services

- 4.7 Government has also launched, through its *Open Public Services White Paper*, a programme of modernising public services based on its key principles of increasing choice, decentralising services, opening services to a range of providers, ensuring fair access and accountability to users and taxpayers. Again Government recognises that it does not have all the answers and wishes to provide people and communities the opportunities to shape services that best meet their own needs (HM Government, 2011). See: [open-public-services-white-paper.pdf](#)
- 4.8 Cherwell District Council is renowned for shaping its own services in support of the local economy, working effectively with partnerships and neighbouring councils, and is recognised as an 'Excellent' council by the Audit Commission. This foundation has become all the more important as resources to support the economy are limited and services to our business from Government are reducing.
- 4.9 Business Link services are, for example, being cut from autumn 2011 whereby its regional service providing face-to-face support and training is being replaced by a centralised call-centre and website. The leadership, therefore, by Cherwell partners in maintaining the Oxfordshire Business Enterprises since 2007 has provided a model in combining public, voluntary and private sector strengths to provide continuity of much needed support, and retention of the value of earlier investment in services to assist our residents to start and to develop their own business.
- 4.10 Similar experience and success has been gained in skills and labour market support through the local development of Job Clubs in Banbury and Bicester since 2009. In 2011, the success of Cherwell's leadership was recognised by the opening of a National Work Club Network.
- 4.11 The challenge is to now, whilst national and regional structures are being reduced, to build upon this local leadership and continuity of partnership for the benefit of our people and businesses.

Emerging Labour Market Strategy

- 4.12 Government has identified four themes to get more people working:
- 1) **ensuring that society rewards work**; removing the barriers to job creation and improving the incentives for individuals through welfare and employment law reform; reducing taxation for the lowest paid; a temporary reduction in employer National Insurance Contributions for qualifying new businesses in selected countries and regions;
 - 2) **a new Work Programme**; giving greater flexibility and incentives to private and voluntary sector organisations to work with partners to help people back to work;
 - 3) **connecting people to jobs**; reforming social housing and maintaining investment in local transport; and
 - 4) **reform of the Further Education and skills system**; through a new skills strategy setting out how vocational training will be delivered and driven by the choices of learners and employers

Emerging Skills Strategy

- 4.13 The Government will shortly be setting out its skills strategy and response to its recent skills consultation. Within this, a refocused network of business-led Sector Skills Councils and National Skills Academies will work with employers to ensure skills provision is tailored to employers' needs and that learners have timely and relevant information to inform their career choices.

Emerging Green Economy Strategies

4.14 The Government's approach to policies for growing the green economy will, according to the White Paper *Local growth: realizing every place's potential* (October 2010), be based on the following elements:

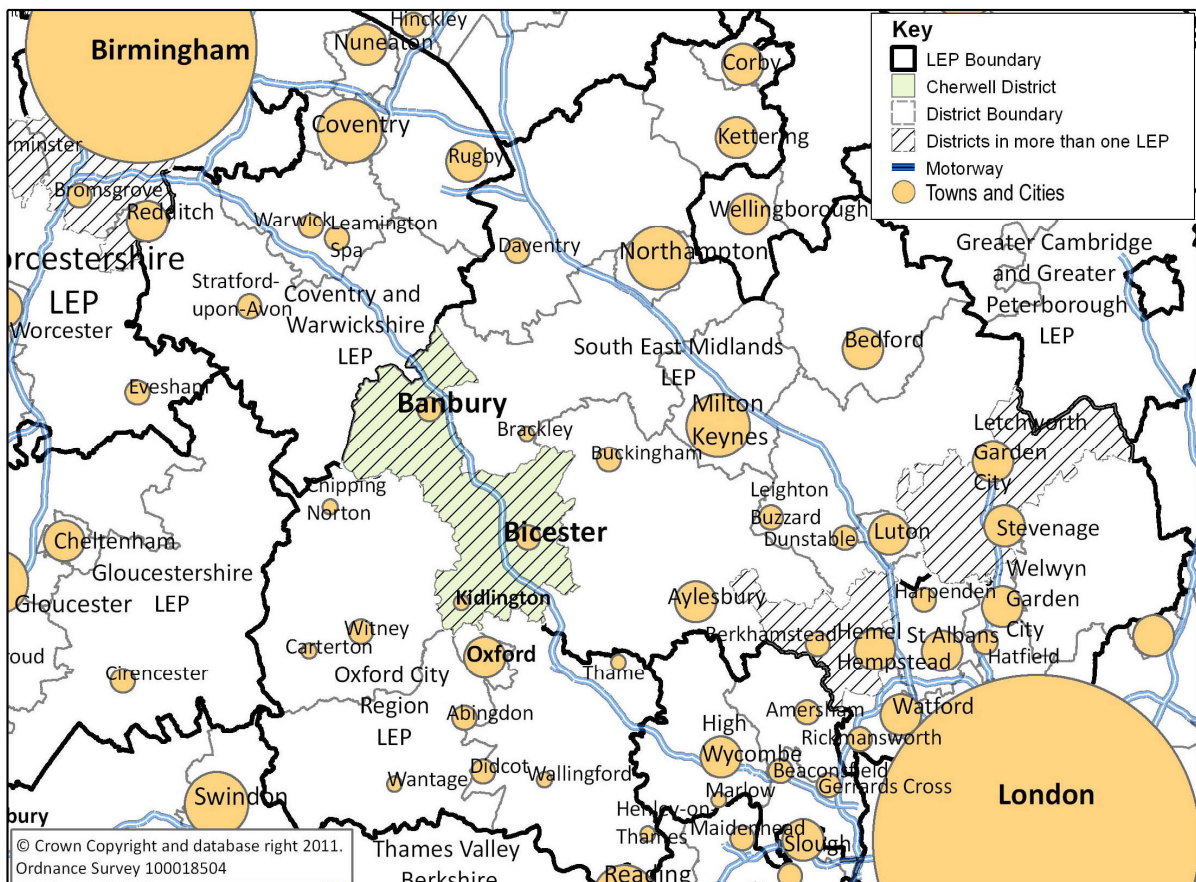
- **low carbon, green innovation** in new technologies that require further investment in research, development and demonstration (R, D&D) before they are ready for market.
- **green infrastructure** to enable sustainable growth and potentially crossing LEP boundaries with national involvement where necessary.
- **stimulation of UK-based supply chains** and emerging business opportunities; and
- **Low Carbon Cluster** development to reinforce local competitive advantage.

4.15 Natural England (2009) identifies that “a healthy natural environment is indispensable to current and future economic prosperity.”

Local Enterprise Partnerships

4.16 By abolishing Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) by 2012 and agreeing to the establishment of the first phase of 24 local enterprise partnerships from April 2011, the Government seeks to encourage a more responsive approach to the needs of local business, and people by:

- supporting local authorities' existing role in fostering and sustaining growth;
- putting local business leadership at the helm of bodies that represent real economic geographies;
- managing the wind down and closure of the RDAs to maximise value and take the opportunity to look again at key European funding for economic development.



Above: Cherwell's location connecting Oxfordshire LEP with South East Midlands LEP

- 4.17 Cherwell has, in the White Paper *Local growth: realizing every place's potential* (October 2010) been included within both the South East Midlands LEP and the Oxford City Region LEP. At the heart of these two powerhouses of the modern UK economy, north Oxfordshire's economy could gain new opportunities and resources, and be less impeded by its previously peripheral location within the South East region.
- 4.18 The Local Authority Partners in SEMLEP are Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale, Cherwell, Northampton, Corby, Daventry, Kettering and South Northamptonshire. In the Oxford City Region LEP, the County Council and five Districts are involved, including Cherwell.
- 4.19 The Business Organisation Partners of both LEPs are the Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors for their respective areas.
- 4.20 The production of economic development strategies for both LEPs is underway, including the incorporation of the issues and themes identified in this strategy for Cherwell.
- 4.21 Both LEPs identify high value clusters including Advanced Technology/Precision Engineering; Creative Industries; Life Sciences/Biotech; and Finance/Businesses Services, coupled with the strengths of nearby education establishments including the University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University, Cranfield University, University Of Bedfordshire, and University Centre Milton Keynes and University of Northampton.
- 4.22 The Local Enterprise Partnerships have identified the following priorities to build their strategies around to create economic growth:

South East Midlands LEP	Oxfordshire LEP
Generating/Supporting Start up Businesses .	Providing the local link to business support .
Expansion of High Growth Businesses .	Improving the skills of Oxfordshire's workforce and those about to enter it, to improve their employability.
Attracting New Businesses into the area (including Foreign Direct Investment).	Maximising Oxfordshire's potential to increase inward investment .
Engaging with Central Government on urgent issues associated with Transport and Infrastructure which affect short term job growth in the area.	Enabling infrastructure for growth and reducing barriers, including getting the County connected to fast broadband access and improve mobile phone coverage.

- 4.23 The emerging strategies will include a diverse range of roles and responsibilities for LEPs, including:
- **working with Government to set out key investment priorities**, including transport infrastructure and supporting or coordinating project delivery;
 - **coordinating proposals** or bidding directly for the Regional Growth Fund and Enterprise Zones;
 - **supporting high growth businesses**, for example through involvement in bringing together and supporting consortia to run new growth hubs;
 - **making representation** on the development of national planning policy and ensuring business is involved in the development and consideration of strategic planning applications;
 - **lead changes** in how businesses are regulated locally;
 - **strategic housing delivery**, including pooling and aligning funding streams to support this;

- **help local workless people into jobs** by working with local employers, Jobcentre Plus and learning providers;
- **leveraging funding from the private sector** by coordinating approaches;
- **renewable energy projects and Green Deal**; exploring opportunities for developing financial and non-financial incentives on; and
- **becoming involved in delivery of other national priorities** such as digital infrastructure.

Oxfordshire 2030 strategy

4.24 The Oxfordshire Partnership has an ambition to:

- a) Create a world class economy for Oxfordshire.
- b) Have healthy and thriving communities.
- c) Look after our environment and respond to the threat of climate change.
- d) Break the cycle of deprivation by addressing regeneration, education and aspiration.

Economic Development Strategy for Oxfordshire 2006-2016

4.25 Oxfordshire's Vision is now being implemented through the Oxfordshire LEP and remains:

"To raise Oxfordshire's profile as a pioneering, productive, world-class economy that fulfills the potential of its inhabitants through continually developing its capacity for innovation, business and personal development, research and education, and through the effective management of its high quality environmental resource".

Other Oxfordshire Strategies

4.26 The following are relevant to the development of Cherwell's economy:

- **Ox-Online – The Digital Strategy for Oxfordshire** to enhance broadband and mobile communications.
- **Oxfordshire Children's and Young People Strategy** to support Cherwell's children and young people to become the successful employees and business leaders of the future.
- **Area Transport Strategies** to reduce congestion, enhance public transport and provide sustainable options.
- **Better Mental Health in Oxfordshire**, jointly between OCC and NHS including the promotion of healthy workplaces.

Eco-Bicester Economic Strategy

4.27 The Eco-Bicester national exemplar provides Cherwell with a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of the emerging green economies.

4.28 A detailed strategy is being developed for the Eco town at Bicester, meeting the requirement of Planning Policy Statement 1 policy ET10 - Employment:

"It is important to ensure that eco-towns are genuine mixed-use communities and that unsustainable commuter trips are kept to a minimum. An economic strategy should be produced to accompany planning applications for eco-towns that demonstrate how access to work will be achieved. The strategy should also set out facilities to support job creation in the town and as a minimum there should be access to one employment opportunity per new dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/or public transport". (The Department for Communities & Local Government, 2009a, p8).

4.29 The Economic Strategy for the exemplar site at North West Bicester identifies the following jobs as part of the initial phase:

- 1) Construction jobs

- Jobs related to construction of the Eco-development
- 2) Endogenous jobs (from within)
 - 'service' jobs related to the increase in population (e.g. care home)
 - Population thresholds: a tipping point?
- 3) Exogenous jobs (from outside)
 - Bicester as a hub for 'eco'-activity
 - Other high value-added employment
 - Using the re-branding of Bicester as a key attraction for investment
- 4) Changing patterns of living and working (e.g. homeworking)

4.30 It has three key components:

- **Formulation** – covering the initial stages of the eco-town's development
- **Evolution** – demonstrating how the economy will evolve, particularly in response to new a changing context, and in particular how it may lead to more efficient resource use and low-carbon production
- **Implementation** – guidance on how relevant key actions will be taken forward

Procurement Strategy

4.31 Cherwell District Council is identifying how it can use its resources most effectively: it spends around £9 million a year on a diverse range of goods, works and services with external suppliers. It aims to commit to ensuring the goods and services it purchases are manufactured, delivered, used and disposed of in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, and deliver long-term value for money for the Council and the public sector as a whole. There remains a challenge to engage local suppliers to play a greater role, and for partners organisations to follow suit to maximise their positive impact upon the local economy.

Cherwell District Council's expenditure

- Spend with third party suppliers in 09/10 was £9,373,790.
- 66% of total spend was with SMEs - this is 19% more than the English Council average of 47%.
- 19% of SME spend was within the district.
- 23% of total spend was within the district - this is 9% more than the English Council average of 14%.

4.32 By working with all members of the Local Strategic Partnership, the cumulative benefits resulting from enhance co-operation on procurement could reduce costs to the public sector and increase local multiplier benefits to local private and social sector providers of goods and services.

Spatial Strategy

4.33 Delivery of economic development frequently has a crucial spatial dimension contained within national Planning Policy Statements and the Local Development Framework.

1) Planning for Economic Development

4.34 In planning for sustainable economic growth, Planning Policy Statement 4 states that Cherwell District Council, as local planning authority, should:

- **Set out a clear economic vision and strategy** which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth;
- **Support existing business sectors**, and identifies new and emerging **sectors** whilst retaining flexibility to respond to changing circumstances;

- **Positively plans for clusters of knowledge-driven or high technology** industries, co-ordinated with the regional level;
- **Make the most efficient and effective use of land**;
- **Identify, protect and promote key distribution networks**, and locates or co-locate developments which generate substantial transport movements;
- **Plan for the delivery** of sustainable transport and phasing of development;
- Disaggregate **minimum job targets** from regional to local level;
- **Safeguard land from other uses**, identify a range of sites, facilitate a broad range of economic development and not carry forward sites that are unlikely to be developed during the plan period;
- **Encourage new uses** for vacant or derelict buildings;
- Consider how **sites for different business types** can be delivered;
- **Facilitate new working practices** such as live-work.

2) Local Development Framework

- 4.35 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the Council's vehicle for shaping its overall spatial strategy and setting out its planning policies for Cherwell District. The LDF is not a single document but a suite of documents which are prepared at different times as required. The Economic Development Strategy therefore has strong links with the LDF, and some of the studies which have informed this Economic Development Strategy (such as the Employment Land Review) will also inform the work on the LDF.
- 4.36 The first document within the LDF is the Core Strategy. This will set out the overall development strategy for the district and the core policies (and allocations) that the Council will need to follow. In February 2010, the Council produced its Draft Core Strategy and consulted with local people on this. This Draft Core Strategy set out some broad policies for protecting employment land and identified several major areas where employment uses would be promoted.
- 4.37 The Draft Core Strategy was written in the context of the (then) regional spatial strategy for the south east of England; the South East Plan. This required the district to provide 13,400 new homes over the period 2006 - 2026. In July 2010, the new Secretary of State revoked all Regional Spatial Strategies, and instead permitted local authorities to consider what level of growth would be appropriate within their areas and, if they can justify these, plan for them accordingly. However, in November 2010, the decision to abolish Regional Strategies was successfully challenged. The forthcoming Localism Bill is expected to clarify the position and a New Homes Bonus scheme will reward councils and communities for home building from late 2010-onwards.
- 4.38 Cherwell District Council has indicated its intention to review its housing figures with a view to proposing some new targets which, it considers, may result in less development pressure on certain areas. In doing this, it has reaffirmed its commitment to growth at Bicester in line with its eco-town status.
- 4.39 At the time of writing this draft Economic Development Strategy, the Council is currently undertaking the work to inform what these new housing targets may be, and what impact this may have upon overall levels of growth, and its spatial distribution, across the district. The review of the Economic Development Strategy has come at a good time to allow the Core Strategy to consider the economic implications of growth (or lack of it) and make sure that it responds to the economic needs and priorities of the district as set out in the Economic Development Strategy.

5) Vision, Leadership & Golden Threads

Vision

5.1 The overall vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell in 2030 is:

“A diverse economy with opportunities for all, vibrant communities connected by a sense of pride, place and purpose”.

5.2 But what will the economy of Cherwell look like in 2016 – or 2030 or 2060 for that matter? The honest answer is that we do not know for certain, and whilst we can make reasoned arguments for expecting certain changes, the further into the future we look, the thicker the mists of time become. However, this is no reason not to try to envisage how we would like that economy to be, drawing on what we know is happening now and what we believe is likely to happen in the future.

5.3 The Community Strategy is the main source of aspirations and goals for the Economic Development Strategy, and has four ambitions:

- Opportunities for all;
- A diverse and resilient economy;
- Connected infrastructure and protected environment;
- Resourceful and receptive community leadership.

5.4 Development of the local economy will in fact involve all four ambitions; in light of the strong linkages – between the community, private and public sectors - that will need to underpin the development of a ‘resilient’ economy. Primary focus will, however, be upon ‘creating a diverse and resilient economy’, as summarised below:

Our Economic Vision:

To develop a **diverse and resilient economic base** with an appropriately **skilled workforce** that can **adapt to challenges and opportunities, supported by a well planned and effective infrastructure** of housing, transport, leisure and services.

5.5 Our Vision involves:

- **Enabling** appropriate **housing & business development** to meet the future needs of the population;
- **Engaging** with the wealth of **expertise, enterprise and innovation** on our doorstep;
- **Helping** our residents to develop their **skills** to allow everybody to have employment;
- **Tackling** the causes of **under achievement** which include engagement in education and training, poor housing, lack of access to transport, poor socio- economic cultures and dependence on benefits.
- **Supporting** new and existing **businesses**, and their products and services, for them to locate and grow in North Oxfordshire which, in turn, will encourage our younger population to stay or return here;
- **Evolving** our **rural and urban areas** through the engagement and involvement of our business communities.

- 5.6 A vibrant and diverse economic infrastructure is the bedrock upon which we can build a sustainable future.

Leadership

- 5.7 On behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership, Cherwell District Council is leading and shaping the delivery of significant elements of this Vision to 2016, supported by partners; all contributing to its achievement to the best of their ability within available resources.
- 5.8 To ensure partnership action is effective, local outcomes will be used to measure against baseline data and annually set targets in Cherwell District Council's Corporate Plan, so that by 2016 we can show we have contributed towards:
- Increased numbers of employment opportunities;
 - Increased number of VAT and NNDR registered local businesses;
 - Reduced number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) – both 16-18 year olds and under 25s;
 - Retention of the low level of unemployment;
 - Increased qualifications among residents of working age – particularly NVQ 3 plus
 - Wage rate levels;
 - Outcomes focused in priority areas: Bicester Eco Town and 'Banbury Brighter Futures' wards.

Golden Threads

- 5.9 This Vision is ambitious and contains three 'golden threads' that run throughout our Strategy:

- **Ensure a diverse and resilient economy remains at the heart of Cherwell's Vision;**
- **Build a strong and flexible partnership culture which acknowledges capacity but 'adds value' by working together effectively;**
- **Maximise the 'green economy' benefits arising from Eco-Bicester.**

- **Ensure a diverse and resilient economy remains at the heart of Cherwell's Vision**

- 6.1 Cherwell has been a prosperous district with very low unemployment. Much of the stability we have experienced has come from small and medium sized businesses and these businesses need continued support so that they are maintained. We also need to look to new and innovative business to attract this into the area and retain the population through a range of work opportunities. Lastly we need to ensure that our population is skilled enough to take up these opportunities and to balance this with homes they can live in and transport they can get to work with.

- **Build a strong and flexible partnership culture which acknowledges capacity but 'adds value' by working together effectively**

- 6.2 There is an established culture of co-operation in Cherwell with a strong track-record of taking both proactive and timely reactive steps to address economic 'shocks'. It is upon this positive culture and new opportunities through Local Enterprise Partnerships (as noted under 'Strategic Context') that the annual delivery plans will be based, enabling a flexible and responsive approach to be taken, through effective community leadership.

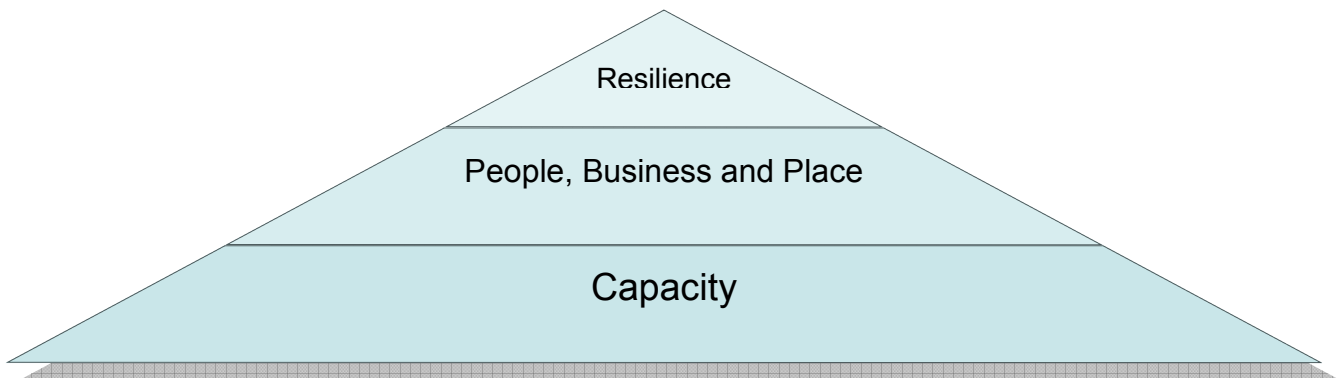
6.3 Our great ambition, coupled with the availability of only limited resources, will require that actions are prioritised to maintain a clear focus upon the 'golden threads' of our Strategy.

- **Maximise the 'green economy' benefits arising from Eco-Bicester**

6.4 In maintaining the global competitiveness of Cherwell's economy, we must sustain an environment in which people choose to live, work and visit. As energy costs rise and regulations tighten, the 'green economy' will be synonymous with the whole economy. Individuals, businesses and locations will have to be resource and energy efficient to survive and to compete. We have a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of sustainable community development through Eco-Bicester, and to spread the benefits across the whole district.

6) Developing Resilience

- 6.5 We have established that the local economy is a complex series of interactions between private, public and social interests, and that the inter-relationships form the basis of value to be added to Cherwell's economy. This may not always be easy - or even necessary - to measure, but continuous practical experience over the past two decades nevertheless provides us with a solid basis upon which to build our shared economic vision for 2016.



- 6.6 We wish to secure the economic resilience and the comprehensive sustainability of our community by developing our capacity to then be able to develop the key themes of people, business and place:

A) Developing Capacity

- 6.7 Much of the work in economic development is now delivered in partnership – both with professional bodies such as Job Centre Plus and Business Link, and with voluntary groups such as community associations. A key part of the success in economic development in Cherwell over the last 20 years has been the Cherwell-M40 Investment Partnership (CHIP), which has been instrumental in attracting and retaining quality employers in the district.
- 6.8 As with many fields, economic development has its own jargon and specialist knowledge; to achieve our aims we must communicate as clearly as possible with our partners, and where appropriate work with existing partners, and new ones arising through Local Enterprise Partnerships, to increase their capacity to work with us.
- 6.9 Our work is knowledge-based, and so depends greatly on quality information, which in turn rests upon quality data. A good base of robust data from a variety of sources is an essential resource, and one we will strive to maintain. We also need to keep up our analytical capacity through strong working partnerships to create the context within which that information becomes knowledge. Ultimately, we must become a learning partnership to effectively deliver our strategic aims.
- 6.10 We are actively engaging with the new Local Enterprise Partnerships to identify shared priorities and resources to achieve them. Even with effective partnership working, our resources are limited and we must be realistic when setting our aims and ambitions. With this in mind:

Our partnership is committed to implement this Vision for 2016, and we will:

- 1. Develop the resilience of Cherwell's economy by maximising the effectiveness of our partnerships**

We will:

- **Enhance co-operation** within the Local Strategic Partnership, and between the social / community, private and public sectors.
- **Ensure skills within the partnership** are utilised and maintained.
- **Communicate, analyse information and build understanding** to encourage individuals, organisations and businesses to actively contribute to this vision.
- **Actively engage in Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)** for the benefit of Cherwell's businesses, residents and visitors.

B) Developing Themes: People, Business and Place

6.11 Whilst valuing the inter-relationships, we will also take actions to develop the diversity and resilience of our local economy, as identified by the Community Strategy:

1. **Raise expectations and ambitions** and provide a range of economic opportunities for everyone including lifelong learning and retraining. We will foster and develop alternative ways of accessing employment such as apprenticeships, volunteering or work-based training;
2. **Promote and support business diversification** and a sustainable economy in both urban and rural environments. Protect and grow local services and businesses, while supporting town centres to be attractive economic hubs for the district.
3. **Manage our infrastructure development**, matching housing growth with local jobs, transport to work, facilities and services. We will plan effectively for our future workforce and employment patterns, focusing on what we need to achieve in raising our skills and actively attracting the right businesses into the area.

6.12 There are complex inter-linkages within and between these objectives but can be simplified into three broad headings:

- i. Developing people
- ii. Developing business
- iii. Developing place

Developing People

Our people are indeed the greatest asset within our community and, to engage all, we will:

2. Create employment

6.13 Our economy generally consists of high levels of employment and economic activity but as identified in Issue b, this has increasingly been reliant upon a growing public sector whilst the private sector has contracted slightly. The implications of the coalition government's austerity plans, with likely reductions in public sector employment and expenditure will be experienced over the years of this strategy and will need interpretation and review locally.

6.14 Underpinning all other themes in the delivery of our economic strategy, continued high levels of engagement with the economy will support skills development, business growth, community vibrancy and social inclusion.

We will:

- **Create sufficient additional jobs** by 2016 to cope with the predicted increase in population.
- **Maintain the low unemployment rate** in the district.

3. Provide access to Employment

- 6.15 Creating jobs is insufficient to ensure a prosperous economy. If we cannot find the right people with the right skills and aptitudes to fill those jobs, in the right location, then neither the local populace nor the employer will benefit. It is therefore vital that we continue to ensure that local people are able to take advantage of the opportunities that are created. This means more than simply ensuring they have access to training; it involves helping young people avoid being 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET), helping people with basic skills to enter into work for the first time, return to work with new skills and to use those skills and experiences throughout life to progress as individuals within a strong society.
- 6.16 Although our economy is generally prosperous, there are clusters of households suffering the linked disadvantages of poor housing, low skills, and low levels of economic activity. Where these problems are concentrated, we must have a flexible approach dealing with all the issues. The danger of communities forming within our large towns on the shared basis of exclusion from the broader prosperity is alienation, social exclusion and eventually problems of crime and disorder.
- 6.17 Housing is fundamentally important for workers and employers, with a mix of affordable and desirable housing key to retaining businesses and attracting inward investment. Cherwell's Housing Strategy provides innovative approaches to engaging residents in achieving and maintaining their own home.
- 6.18 The Job Clubs have proven to be national exemplars of best practice in how the private, public and social sectors can forge successful working partnerships to tackle the economic shock of recession locally. The momentum created should ensure effective labour market support to individuals in good times as well as bad.

We will:

- **Raise expectations and ambitions** and provide a range of economic opportunities for everyone including lifelong learning and retraining.
- **Develop Job Clubs** to improve access for economically inactive people to skills, training, enterprise and employment opportunities.
- **Help young people into employment, education or training** by providing alternative routes to economic activity.

4. Enhance Skills

- 6.19 Cherwell is served by Oxford and Cherwell Valley (Further Education) College (OCVC) and other college networks, and we are within an hour's travel of five universities, incorporating three business schools. Despite this, skill levels in the District are still a cause for concern. It is vital for our future prosperity that we equip the existing and future working population with the skills required for a 21st Century economy. These skills range across the board, including both technical skills and generic 'soft' skills such as customer service, team-working and so forth, and must be based on the needs of employers.
- 6.20 To maintain our diverse and resilient economy, skills development is about improving productivity, efficiency, and adding value. Through the recession, however, the challenge has also arisen to help provide individuals with the basic skills, knowledge and support to enter and return to work.

We will:

- **Develop relationships with local employers** as partners in addressing education and skills issues, meeting future needs and supporting key local sectors.
- **Provide the 'eco' skills** needed to develop Bicester eco-town, to attract businesses and to develop a competitive 'green economy'.

Developing Business

Businesses will work with each other, and public and social partners, to become even stronger and more diverse, and

We will:

5. Promote business start-up and entrepreneurship

- 6.21 The creation of new businesses, especially those in creative and knowledge-based sectors, is vital for the future of our economy. It will create more diversity and resilience amongst the businesses in our economy. Businesses started in a locality often have a strong loyalty to their 'place of birth', and generate all the benefits of wealth generation associated with a head-office function.
- 6.22 For some people, starting a business is self-employment in its truest sense; the aim is sustainable income rather than growth, and the focus is on the activity at hand rather than managing a business. This has an important role to play for individuals for whom mainstream employment may be inaccessible – their domestic demands may require them to manage time in a different way to 9-5 employment, or they may have recently become redundant with no clear opportunity to use their skills in a role with a new employer.
- 6.23 For others, the business is the focus, and these are the true entrepreneurs; their aim would be growth and competitiveness whatever their product. These businesses provide the powerhouses of the future for our economy, growing and employing people in skilled roles. With increasing reliance now needed on private sector job creation, both self-employment and entrepreneurship are vital to our economy.

We will:

- **Increase the numbers of new businesses forming**, fostering enterprise through Oxfordshire Business Enterprises, enabling all residents considering starting a business to gain help and support, smoothing the start-up process and ensuring early survival.
- **Enable high skill and high tech entrepreneurship** through the Innovation and Growth Team, Oxford Innovation and other local support networks,
- **Support the early survival and growth of enterprises**, though developing the network of agencies, banks and other professional advisers, training and education providers and local authorities.
- **Embed an entrepreneurial culture in our young people**, through programmes such as Young Enterprise, increasing the number of young people involved in these programmes.

6. Develop local procurement and supply chains

- 6.24 In an increasingly global economy, individual purchasing and investment decisions are often taken outside Cherwell yet the effects of those decisions can then be felt locally through business closures and job losses. Whilst in a global market place, it is increasingly difficult

to compete on price alone, so quality and service are becoming more important, as is an understanding of the local 'multiplier' effects.

- 6.25 The public, private and increasingly social elements of a resilient economy should ensure that the exchange of products and services can involve all potential providers to contribute, allowing 'value for money' to be identified, especially where it contributes to circulation of wealth locally.
- 6.26 Initiatives, such as breaking down larger contracts to match small to medium sized enterprise (SME) and social enterprise capacity, and encouraging collaboration between local SMEs and social enterprises to compete for larger contracts, will have a real positive impact on the local supply chain.

We will:

- **Maximise opportunities for the private and social sectors** to supply to the public sector.
- **Assist businesses to identify local supply chains.**

7. Promote business & cluster development

- 6.27 All businesses now compete in a national, international or for many a global marketplace. It is recognised that businesses geographically related and operating in a broadly similar field have much to gain by working in partnership. By pooling resources and knowledge, whilst reducing costs, collaborative actions can create competitive advantage for Cherwell through the growth of private sector-led employment, enabled by the public and social sectors where necessary.
- 6.28 Cherwell is home, fully or partially to some established clusters (for instance, we are at the mid-point in the famed 'motor-sport valley'). There is considerable prestige to be gained by acting as the 'spiritual home' to an established and high-profile cluster, leading to further investment and success; we should support further virtuous development to create future 'resilience' for businesses, and therefore our whole community.
- 6.29 Support for businesses is often delivered on a themed basis. Effective support provides a high return on the time invested by the company in becoming engaged; it is therefore a sign of a strong business support framework that it manages its contacts with the private sector closely and streamlines processes – this is all the more important when there are multiple agencies involved.

We will:

- **Continue to support the growth of established clusters** locally involved with the bio-medical, nanotechnology, materials engineering, motor-sport and other high-technology sectors, identify key areas for co-operative development, and identify further clusters.
- **Develop and integrate a new 'green technology cluster'** in and around Bicester as part of the eco-town's low carbon economy.
- **Engage with our businesses** to understand what support we can give them to stay and grow here into medium sized, high performing businesses.
- **Support businesses in conforming to regulations** and avoiding 'red tape'

8. Attract new investment

- 6.30 A key part of the success of the Cherwell economy since 1990 has been the concerted drive to attract inward investment to build today's local economy which has proven, through facing recession, to be 'resilient'. Through its geographic advantage of being in central England, between London and Birmingham, Cherwell is naturally in an enviable position. It has, however, been the investment in road, rail, airport, colleges, universities, innovation

centres and other infrastructure necessary for business to really thrive that has resulted from the actions of successful local networks.

- 6.31 A key to the success has been the Cherwell-M40 Investment Partnership, bringing together public and private sector partners to deliver comprehensive support for inward investors and expanding local companies. A number of highly successful firms have set-up or grown, making strong commitments to the area as a result, bringing many quality jobs and contributing diversity and resilience.
- 6.32 We must not rest on our laurels. The partnership services and networks must operate efficiently and effectively to overcome obstacles in the delivery of further sustainable investment, especially by the private sector.

We will:

- **Continue to enable investment** by inward investors and existing businesses in north Oxfordshire through our Cherwell-M40 Investment Partnership (CHIP), maximising the use of the private and public sector's resources.

9. Develop a 'World Class' Business Community

- 6.33 No business, however small, can continue untouched by the increasing impact of globalisation. As a part of one of the most economically active and dynamic regions in the world, we are 'in the top drawer' as a local economy. Developing our new businesses and encouraging further investment will increase our competitiveness, and many of these new firms will join existing ones in trading on a European, and even a global basis.
- 6.34 We must be prepared to support and facilitate the internationalisation of our businesses, by giving them access to specialist knowledge and support, opportunities and markets. We must maintain our links with other parts of the world as a geographical and governmental entity, and look for opportunities to develop more. Since the demise of NOVEC (North Oxfordshire Virtual Exporters Club) there has been a vacuum for networking and support for export at the local level, which we are keen to address. Such a group will enable the sharing of experience and pooled resources, reducing the often daunting barriers to international markets.

We will:

- **Promote the benefits of international trade** by bringing experienced exporters and traders together with novices and professional services to share experiences, develop knowledge, collaborate and exploit opportunities.
- **Maximise the value of overseas links** formed through civic activity or other networks.

10. Develop the Visitor Economy

- 6.35 The visitor economy is a unique sector comprising of not only attractions and overnight accommodation but also part of the transport, catering and retail industries. The visitor economy is an important part of the locality, providing expenditure, facilities, services and opportunities that might not otherwise exist whilst improving businesses and infrastructure for local residents to also use. There is also great potential to generate wealth by drawing in expenditure from visitors arriving from outside the region and, in particular, from outside the UK.
- 6.36 Cherwell's tourism product faces the challenge of nearby tourism 'hot-spots' such as Oxford City, the Cotswolds, Silverstone, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick and the Chilterns. However, our strong transport infrastructure and central location for all these areas does give us a unique offering, whilst also benefiting from attractive local countryside.

- Businesses in Cherwell directly received £287,143,000 from visitors in 2009; an increase of 6.8% from 2008. This led to further 'multiplier' expenditure of £45,295,000 – and therefore a total expenditure of £332,438,000 (Tourism South East 2010).
- 5,700 jobs in Cherwell were in tourism in 2009 - equivalent to 8.5% of total employment locally. (Annual Business Inquiry).

6.37 The promotion of Oxford and Oxfordshire allows the potential for venues in the district to engage with the lucrative business tourism market. Both Banbury and Bicester have in recent years seen limited investment in hotels and further investment is needed to meet existing and projected demand. Business tourism fits well with our aim to be a centre of business growth and innovation in the sub-region. Our improved accessibility in comparison with Oxford City centre, and our excellent transport links, means we are in a strong position to develop the premier business tourism product for Oxfordshire.

We will:

- **Work in partnership with businesses and tourism bodies to enhance and develop our tourism product, maximising the value whilst minimising any negative affects.**

Developing Place

Our district will be an even better place in which to live, work, learn and spend leisure time, and

We will:

11. Promote employment sites & premises

6.38 The successful Cherwell-M40 partnership brought together public and private sector partners, enabling the paced development and occupation of commercial property to meet demands from employers. All businesses require premises; be they on an industrial estate, in a town or village, or increasingly at home. It is important to maintain the capacity to create new space to meet needs when required, but it is also important to make the best use of existing business sites. We will seek to protect existing allocations of land for new employment generating development, and ensure sufficient new land is available through the Local Development Framework to accommodate economic growth.

6.39 Continued marketing, improvement and redevelopment where necessary of existing employment sites and premises will form a central pillar in the support we provide to the business community. Our main aim must be balance the need for new land against the opportunity to re-use previously developed land. We hope to improve the efficiency of land use, increasing the amount of employment and economic activity without unnecessarily increasing the amount of land used.

We will:

- **Provide sufficient quantity, quality and choice of employment land and premises** to accommodate the expansion needs of existing and future employers, across a diverse range of activity, whilst protecting established and identified employment sites.
- **Support businesses through the planning process**

- **Enhance business environments** to encourage a virtuous cycle of upgrading of premises to encourage further investment, reducing the number of vacant units and enhancing economic activity.

12. Manage our infrastructure development

- 6.40 The quality of communications links has been highlighted as one of the key economic drivers in our district. Transport and telecommunications provide the key link to markets that businesses require and in a rural, centrally located area, maintaining and improving those connections is a vital task for economic development to take place.
- 6.41 We need to ensure that people have convenient access to homes and jobs, being able to get themselves to their place of work in a reasonable time and a sustainable manner. Cherwell residents generally travel long distances to work. Car ownership overall is high and residents in the rural areas are particularly dependent on their cars. Over 60% of people drive to work. This dependency on cars to get Cherwell's residents to work could prove to be a problem as fuel prices continue to rise and, therefore, alternatives are required.

We will:

- **Enhance key transport infrastructure** to support business efficiency.
- **Enhance telecommunications** to support business and home-working throughout Cherwell.
- **Enable a good supply of housing** and a wide range of affordable housing opportunities to ensure that housing provision is able to support the development of the local economy.
- **Ensure that utilities to all businesses meet present and future demand**, particularly in the older industrial areas where power and water/sewage supplies can become inadequate.
- **Develop Eco-Bicester** as an exemplar of innovative transport and communications.

13. Support rural areas

- 6.42 Cherwell's Rural Strategy acknowledges the importance of a strong local economy. Rural business locations are proving to be ever more popular, due to a combination of lower cost and pleasant surroundings, making them particularly appealing to start-up and micro-businesses where the owner lives locally. This is especially true of those working in the valuable creative or knowledge driven sectors. A key enabler of such rural business growth is the continual enhancement of infrastructure, as recognised in Theme 12.
- 6.43 All businesses need to innovate and compete, and this is no exception for farms and other rural businesses. Service businesses, such as shops, post offices and public houses in villages, can often face commercial challenges yet are very important in providing a valuable community hub, services and local employment opportunities.
- 6.44 The isolation of residents of rural areas running their own businesses from home, or working remotely from their main employment base, can adversely affect productivity and opportunity. This can be overcome by effective networking which can add-value to private businesses and the vitality of rural areas during the working week.

We will:

- **Implement Cherwell's Rural Strategy**, including support to rural businesses and employees.

14. Support urban centres

- 6.45 Our three Urban Centres, in Kidlington, Bicester and Banbury, have an important role to play at a county and sub-regional level. Much has been achieved in creating thriving attractive places where people want to live, work and relax, but these places exist in a dynamic environment, and therefore if they do not keep moving forwards, in relative terms, they can be moving backwards.
- 6.46 The urban centres play a pivotal role in the economic life of the District. They form hubs around which our economy revolves, as meeting points for communications, and providing a critical mass of property, businesses and local customers. Quality urban centres represent the District to the outside world, being one of the main impressions gained by visitors here on either business or pleasure and therefore high quality, tidy, thriving centres establish the District firmly as a modern, dynamic and pleasant place to live, work and visit.
- 6.47 Transportation to urban centres is important for shoppers, workers and visitors. Car parking services provided by the District Council will continue to balance real benefit to those car park users and town traders with the accepted effects on the Council's limited and reducing finances. Other providers of transportation services are encouraged to also work collectively to promote trade.
- 6.48 To enhance the resilience of Cherwell and to maximise resources, there is scope to stimulate more business interaction between our urban areas providing businesses with a perfect opportunity to develop cross sector working relationships, activity and trade.

We will:

- **Maximise the benefits of co-operation** between local chambers and business networks to build relationships with each other, and with public and community partners.
- **Promote the economic vitality** of centres through successful services, shops markets and events.
- **Undertake regeneration** schemes and actions to enhance the attractiveness and success of the centres.
- **Maximise use of public & community assets** in support of the local economy.

Banbury

- **Develop local business leadership further** and align economic actions.
- **Undertake key development projects**, including the 'Brighter Futures' programme, 'Cultural Quarter' development, Canalside and Bolton Road redevelopment.

Bicester

- **Develop local business leadership further** and align economic actions.
- **Maximise the potential of the eco-town development** – build upon the accessibility of Bicester, its skilled workforce, further education opportunities, and location to attract new businesses and seize this major opportunity, as detailed separately in the eco-Bicester Economic Development Strategy.
- **Raise the profile of the town**, attracting & retaining visitors to maximise the links with other areas of this strategy.
- **Undertake key development projects**, including the completion of the town centre redevelopment and remodelling Market Square.

Kidlington

- **Develop local business leadership further** and align economic actions.

- **Maximise its unique advantages:** promote the benefits of the airport, University of Oxford Begbroke Science Park and its proximity to Oxford in supporting local business growth.
- **Enable stronger sustainable transport links** between industrial/employment areas, residential areas, the village centre and key local facilities.
- **Consider Kidlington pedestrianisation** – a project from the Kidlington Village Centre Management Board involving a review of the current ineffective Traffic Regulation Order for the High Street and formal public consultation on changes to be made, not only to the Order but signage too.

7) Action Plan

- 7.1 Having identified the themes to address the issues, it is necessary to prepare for action and to plan how this can best be done to achieve an even more diverse and resilient Cherwell.
- 7.2 This Strategy belongs to everybody with an interest in the economy of north Oxfordshire.

Existing partners include:

- Aspire www.aspireoxford.co.uk/
- Association of Local (parish) Councils www.oalc.org.uk/
- Banbury Chamber of Commerce www.banburychamber.com/
- Banbury Old Town Association
- Banbury Town Centre Partnership
- Banbury Town Council (Ban.TC) www.banbury.gov.uk/
- Bicester Chamber of Commerce www.bicesterbusiness.org.uk/
- Bicester Town Council (Bic.TC) www.bicester.gov.uk/
- Bicester Vision www.bicestervision.co.uk/
- Bomber Command Heritage (BCH) www.bc-heritage.org/
- Businesses
- Cherwell Community and Voluntary Services (CVS)
- Cherwell District Council (CDC) www.cherwell.gov.uk
- Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership www.cherwell.gov.uk
- Cherwell-M40 Investment Partnership (CHIP) www.cherwell-m40.co.uk
- Connexions www.spired.com/connexions/
- Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) www.fsb.org.uk/oxfordshire
- Fredericks Oxfordshire www.fredericksoxfordshire.org/
- Highways Agency www.highways.gov.uk/
- Institute of Directors (IoD) www.iod.com/
- Jobcentre Plus <http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk/>
- Job Club www.cherwell.gov.uk
- Kidlington Village Centre Management Board www.kidlington-pc.gov.uk/community/villagecentre.asp
- Kidlington Voice www.kidlingtonvoice.org.uk/
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) www.mod.uk/
- National Apprenticeship Service www.apprenticeships.org.uk/
- National Farmers Union (NFU) www.nfuonline.com/
- Next Step <https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>
- NHS Oxfordshire www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/
- Oxford and Cherwell Valley College (OCVC) www.ocvc.ac.uk/
- Oxford Brookes University (OBU) www.brookes.ac.uk/
- Oxfordshire Business Enterprises (OBE) www.oxonbe.co.uk
- Oxfordshire Business First (OBF) www.obfirst.org.uk/
- Oxfordshire City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (OLEP) www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/
- Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/
- Oxfordshire Learning and Skills Partnership <http://oxtranet.com/OLSP/default.aspx>
- Oxfordshire Partnership www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/
- Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) www.oxonrcc.org.uk/

- Oxfordshire Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/
- Oxfordshire Town Chambers Network (OTCN) www.otcn.co.uk/
- Prince's Trust www.princes-trust.org.uk/
- P3Eco (private enabler of Bicester Eco Town) www.p3eco.com/
- Skidz Motor Project www.skidzofbanbury.org.uk/
- Skills Funding Agency <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/>
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) www.southeastmidlands.org.uk/
- UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) www.ukti.gov.uk/
- University of Oxford (UoO) Begbroke www.begbroke.ox.ac.uk/

The following action plan identifies projects to be led by Cherwell District Council shaded yellow in the right hand side column.

A) Developing Capacity

Objective:

Our partnership is committed to implement this Vision for 2016, and **we will:**

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Partner(s)
1) Develop the resilience of Cherwell's economy by maximising the effectiveness of our partnerships	Enhance co-operation within the Local Strategic Partnership, and between the social / community, private and public sectors.	Identify the importance of economic development within Cherwell throughout all work of the Local Strategic Partnership.	Consideration of economic impact within all LSP strategies.	2011-on	LSP
		Address economic issues regularly and collectively through the LSP Board and/or Reference Group, and other appropriate forums and partnerships.	Clear roles and contributions to the delivery of the Strategy.	2011-on	LSP
	Ensure skills within the partnership are utilised and maintained.	Review & upgrade our own skills to ensure we have the skills to deliver economic development in Cherwell.	Up-to-date skills being used to deliver annual action plan.	Annually	LSP
		Identify opportunities for voluntary and community sector representatives to be involved in training and development opportunities alongside professional staff to	Increased capacity of volunteers to contribute to this Strategy.	2011-on	LSP
	Communicate, analyse information and build understanding to encourage individuals, organisations and businesses to actively contribute	Maintain a business and investment database covering land, property and businesses as the underpinning of a knowledge-driven service, and access to other data sources as appropriate.	Up-to-date information being effectively used.	On-going	CDC, CHIP

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Partner(s)
	to this vision.	Use our working partnerships to analyse and learn from data and information.	Up-to-date information being effectively used.	2011-on	CDC, OCC
	Actively engage in Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for the benefit of Cherwell's businesses, residents and visitors.	Participate in working groups and steering groups of both LEPs (the South East Midlands LEP and the Oxfordshire City Region LEP).	Contribution toward Cherwell's Economic Development Strategy.	On-going	CDC, LEPs, all partners to identify roles.

B) Developing people

Objective:

Our people are indeed the greatest asset within our community and, to engage all, we will:

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Partner(s)
2) Create employment	Create sufficient additional jobs By 2016 to cope with the predicted increase in population.	Implement this Strategy.	Jobs created (CDC & NOMIS)	On-going	All partners, including businesses, CDC, OCC, CHIP, LEPs.
	Maintain the low unemployment rate in the district.		Working age people on out-of-work benefits (NI152).	On-going	All partners.
3) Provide access to Employment	Raise expectations and ambitions and provide a range of economic opportunities for everyone including lifelong learning and retraining.	Implement education strategy and college plans.	Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher (NI 163). Working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher (NI 164).	On-going	OCC, OCVC

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Partner(s)
		Help disadvantaged people into employment through social enterprises providing services to the private sector.	Expand into Cherwell and employ 20 new people per annum.	2012-on	Aspire, CDC
	Develop Job Clubs to provide support and access for economically inactive people to skills, training, enterprise and employment opportunities.	Co-ordinate Job Clubs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise special events Develop the role of libraries Attract businesses to recruit & to sponsor Ensure that Job Clubs remain flexible and responsive to local needs. 	Help 1,000 job seekers per annum through Banbury & Bicester Job Clubs measuring satisfaction with the service and modifying it to meet changing needs.	2009-on	CDC, MP, LEPs, OCC, JC+, OCVC, businesses
		Provide practical one-to-one help and careers advice to job seekers through national services delivered locally, supported by referrals from partners.	Enhanced confidence and c.v. and interview skills for job seekers to find employment.	On-going	Next Step, Connexions, NHS (GPs), all partners to refer
	Help young people into employment, education or training by providing alternative routes to economic activity.	Apprenticeships: building upon the Cherwell pilot, disseminate learning and good practice models to engage other employers.	Number and variety of apprenticeship courses and involvement of employers and partners.	2011-on	Colleges, private providers, National Apprenticeship Service, businesses, CDC
		Encourage and support volunteering as a pathway to employment, and identify new opportunities.	Numbers of job seekers finding work through volunteering. Integration with Job Club.	On-going	VCS, Job Club, CDC
		Develop projects to prevent young people becoming NEET.	Number of young people per annum moving on into employment, education or training.	On-going	Skidz Motor Project, schools, colleges, OBE, businesses, OCC

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Partner(s)
		Prince's Trust courses for 16-24 year olds to avoid becoming NEET.	Work experience, qualifications, practical skills, community projects.	12 week courses	Prince's Trust , Connexions.
4) Enhance Skills	Develop relationships with local employers as partners in addressing education and skills issues, meeting future needs and supporting key local sectors.	Develop the Cherwell Skills Board and work with Oxfordshire Learning and Skills Partnership to determine and agree targets and delivery plan.	Achievement of Skills Board's targets.	On-going	CDC , businesses, colleges, OLSP, OCC, Skills Funding Agency
		Identify the skills needs of businesses and provide for the future needs of employers and employees.	Skills needs understood and findings shared with businesses & partners.	Biennially or as required.	OLEP , CDC, businesses, colleges, universities
		Identify employers who do not currently link with education (schools/colleges/HE) and encourage them to get involved.	Businesses aware of and engaged in local training.	Include question in annual Cherwell business survey.	CDC , colleges, universities & other providers
		Host 'Skills Summits' to raise awareness of current issues & opportunities, and support available.	Greater business engagement and understanding of skills issues and opportunities.	As required	CDC , businesses, Skills Funding Agency, schools, colleges, universities
		Establish Cherwell Investors in Training Awards scheme to recognise and encourage further investment.	Encouragement of further investment in skills through the Cherwell Skills Awards.	As required	CDC , Bicester & Banbury Chambers, KV

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Partner(s)
	Provide the 'eco' skills needed to develop Bicester eco-town, to attract businesses and to develop a competitive 'green economy'	Implement the Eco-Bicester Economic Strategy, to include training courses to meet the needs of the emerging eco-construction sector.	Local employment opportunities.	2011-on	P3Eco , OBU, OCVC, private providers, Bicester Chamber, businesses, CDC
		Develop a 'University Technical College' to specialise in sustainable construction and science engineering.	National exemplar of education for 14-19 year olds.	Bid in July 2011. Opening in 2014.	OCVC , OBU, P3Eco, A2D, Bicester Schools

C) Developing Business

Objective:

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

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
5) Promote business start-up, entrepreneurship & innovation	Increase the numbers of new businesses forming , fostering enterprise through Oxfordshire Business Enterprises (OBE), enabling all residents considering starting a business to gain help and support, smoothing the start-up process and ensuring early survival.	Support OBE in continuing to provide advice within a wider support network.	Independent advice service available to all residents considering business start-up. - Number of local residents supported. - Satisfaction rate over 90%.	On-going	OBE, CDC, LEPs, OBF, OCC, TBAC, banks & other business service providers.

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
	Enable high skill and high tech entrepreneurship through the Innovation and Growth Team (IGT), and its possible successor from 2012 - the High Growth Coaching programme, and other support networks.	Maximise the involvement of Cherwell businesses in such programmes to create growth and value-added businesses within all sectors.	Number of businesses actively engaged in Cherwell, and their success over time.	IGT until Aug 11. High Growth Coaching programme possibly from 2012.	LEPs, IGT & successor
	Support the early survival and growth of enterprises , through developing the network of agencies, banks and other professional advisers, training and education providers and local authorities.	Work within the LEPs Business Support Task Groups to map and publicise support services , including advice and access to finance.	Increased survival rate of Cherwell businesses.	On-going	OLEP, OCC, CDC
		Operate a loan scheme for viable enterprises unable to access mainstream funding.	Businesses assisted. Survival beyond 12 months. Repayment of loan.	2011-on	Fredericks Oxfordshire, OBE, TBAC
		Recognise and celebrate innovation amongst local businesses through awards to encourage further success and investment in our knowledge economy.	Businesses participating and growing as a result of involvement.	Annual	Banbury Innovation Award partners, CDC businesses.
	Embed an entrepreneurial culture in our young people , through programmes such as Young Enterprise, increasing the number of young people involved in these programmes.	Support North Oxfordshire Young Enterprise	60 young people and 5 schools engaged p.a. in activities	On-going	Young Enterprise Board/CDC, schools, businesses
		Bid to become a partner and develop the National Enterprise Academy ('Peter Jones' Academy).	To enable more young people to consider entrepreneurialism.	2011-on	OCVC, businesses

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Lead partner(s)	
Page 79	6) Develop local procurement and supply chains	Maximise opportunities for the private and social sectors to supply to public sector.	Implement Cherwell District Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prompt payment to assist the cash-flow of businesses. Work with public sector partners to develop a single procurement portal. Hold 'Meet the Public sector Buyer' events. 	Achievement of Procurement Strategy targets.	On-going (since 2009).	CDC Procurement, South East Business Portal, businesses, Oxfordshire Procurement Hub, Police, NHS, universities & colleges
		Assist businesses to identify local supply chains.	Make available to businesses information and contacts that identify potential local trading partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Cherwell database. Review Oxfordshire Business directory. Contribute to business network meetings. 	On-going	CDC, OCC, LEPs
		Engage residents with the local economy , providing information on local businesses and encouraging local trading.	Higher local multiplier expenditure through conscious purchasing decisions.	On-going	OTCN, FSB, Chambers, CDC	
7) Promote business & cluster development	Continue to support the growth of established clusters locally involved with the bio-medical, nanotechnology, materials engineering, motor-sport and other high-technology sectors, identify key areas for co-	Strengthen links with Oxfordshire wide technology clusters	Expanding clusters	2011-on	CHIP/CDC, Oxon LEP, colleges, universities	
		Strengthen links with South East Midlands partners around performance engineering .	Expanding clusters	2011-on	CHIP/CDC, SEM LEP, colleges, OBU	

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
	operative development, and identify further clusters.	Develop Begbroke Science Park to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening an ISIS Innovation Centre to enhance technology transfer cluster, and Provide additional space for spin-off companies. 	1) Completion of new road access. 2) Commercialisation of intellectual property arising from research by patenting, licensing and formation of spin-out companies. 3) Increase floorspace from 12,148sq.m to 21,236sq.m	1) Road by 2012. 2) ISIS by 2016. 3) Long-term development by 2021.	UoO Begbroke Science Park
		Identify potential clusters around Kidlington's London Oxford Airport .	Sustainable job creation.	2011-on	CHIP/CDC, Oxford Airport
	Develop and integrate a new 'green technology cluster' in and around Bicester as part of the eco-town's low carbon economy.	See Actions under 14) Bicester.	Delivery of Bicester Economic Development Strategy objectives.	On-going	P3Eco, CDC
	Engage with our businesses to understand what support we can give them to stay and grow here into medium sized, high performing businesses.	Communicate with businesses , through e.g. participating in business meetings and occasional surveys to identify issues.	Response to issues within 5 working days.	On-going	CDC
		Identify and overcome constraints to business growth through lack of finance.	All viable businesses able to access development finance.	On-going	LEPs, Banks, BCFI, CDC.
		Provide employers with help to recruit and support for staff facing redundancy.	Special recruitment events held and redundancy support provided.	On-going	Job Club/CDC, businesses, JobCentre Plus

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
	Support businesses in conforming to regulations and avoiding 'red tape'.	Operate a protocol for business support , clarifying the roles of various agencies and the transferring of clients between them.	Efficient services to business and high satisfaction.	2011-on	LEPs, OCC, CDC
		Provide Health & Safety training and advice to pilot industrial estates and, if successful, extend across district.	Awareness and avoidance of incident.	On-going	CDC (Environmental Health)
8) Attract new investment	Continue to enable investment by inward investors and existing businesses in north Oxfordshire. through our Cherwell-M40 Investment Partnership (CHIP), maximising the use of the private and public sector's resources.	Work day-to-day with existing businesses, potential investors and other professional partners.	Contribute to the creation of 200 new jobs per annum.	On-going	CDC, CHIP, LEPs, UKTI
		Meet regularly with commercial property agents to maintain intelligence on the local market, combine resources and adjust actions as appropriate.		Quarterly meetings of the CHIP Working Group.	CHIP/CDC
		Joint attendance at key exhibitions , e.g. to promote 'clusters' such as Eco-Bicester and engineering.	Effective use of resources, referrals and information leading to investment and jobs.	As required.	CHIP/CDC, OCVV, local businesses
		Attract investment to Eco-Bicester , as part of the Bicester Economic Development Strategy.		2011-on	P3Eco, CHIP/CDC
		Produce and maintain marketing and investment materials for Cherwell , including website information to identify what makes the district special and to assist investment.	Attraction of inward investment and expansion of existing companies.	2011-on	CHIP/CDC

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome (Measure)	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
9) Develop a 'World Class' Business Community	Promote the benefits of international trade by bringing experienced exporters and traders together with novices and professional services to share experiences, develop knowledge, collaborate and exploit opportunities.	Enhance knowledge of exporting opportunities by establishing a local 'exporting club'. Develop actions.	Maximise commercial opportunities available to Cherwell businesses.	Establish 2011. Annual action plan.	OTCN CDC UKTI Chambers FSB
		Attract investment from overseas into Cherwell.	Support business expansion and employment.	On-going, review annually.	UKTI, LEP, CHIP/ CDC, BCFI
	Maximise the value of overseas links formed through civic activity or other networks,	Identify opportunities for potential overseas co-operation that support this Economic Development Strategy.	Community links developed to support skills, investment, employment and trade.	Identify as appropriate.	Town & parish councils, CDC, OCC, BCFI
10) Develop the Visitor Economy	Work in partnership with businesses, cultural and tourism bodies to enhance and develop our tourism product, maximising the value whilst minimising any negative affects.	Attract new investment in tourism infrastructure, enhancing visitor attractions, accommodation, transport, public realm, etc.	Increased visitors' length of stay and expenditure.	On-going	CDC, CHIP businesses, Oxfordshire Tourism, Oxford Inspires
		Encourage sustainable tourism development through the green advantage initiative.		On-going	CDC, businesses
		Enable businesses to make the most of opportunities afforded by London 2012.	On-going to 2012 and beyond	CDC, businesses, SEEDA	
		Improve visitor information.	On-going	CDC, Oxfordshire Tourism	

D) Developing Place

Objective:

Our district will be an even better place in which to live, work, learn and spend leisure time, and we will:

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
Page 83	11) Promote employment sites & premises Provide sufficient quantity, quality and choice of employment land and premises to accommodate the expansion needs of existing and future employers, across a diverse range of activity, whilst protecting established and identified employment sites.	Review employment land provision to ensure the Local Development Framework provides sufficient amount and choice of land, in the right place and with every chance of becoming available to meet the future needs business until 2026.	Employment Land Review completed and Local Development Framework adopted.	In 2011	CDC
		Continue to work closely with partners in the commercial property and investment fields to encourage the bringing forward of new commercial property to meet demand, working to re-develop and improve existing commercial properties to maintain high environmental standards, meet changing demand patterns and improve the built environment for local people.	See CHIP targets under 8) Attracting Investment	Quarterly meetings and daily communication.	CHIP/CDC commercial agents and other professional services, landowners, businesses
	Support businesses through the planning process.	Contribute to pre-application discussions and consultations to ensure that the planning process fully considers business needs.	Business satisfaction. Jobs created or safeguarded.	Within 5 working days, and formal consultation responses within 14.	CDC , planning consultants.

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
	Enhance business environments to encourage a virtuous cycle of upgrading of premises to encourage further investment, reducing the number of vacant units and enhancing economic activity.	Identify environmental issues affecting business success and work with partners to overcome.	Address issues that have not been resolved by statutory authorities or businesses.	Set by project.	CDC & partners
12) Manage our infrastructure development	Enhance key transport infrastructure to support business efficiency.	M40 junction 9 improvements.	Commencement and completion of Phase 2.	When funds come available.	Highways Agency
		Identify bottle-necks within urban centres and seek to resolve.	Improved efficiency of business and vehicles.	2011-on	OCC Local Transport Plans
		East West Rail (linking Oxford to Cambridge via Bicester)	Investment attracted to Bicester/Kidlington.	Completion of western section by 2017.	Consortium
		Project Evergreen 3 rail (linking Oxford to London via Bicester, including major investment in Bicester Town station and Water Eaton (Kidlington).	Investment attracted to Bicester/Kidlington.	Completion of Phase 2 by 2013.	Chiltern Railways
		Improved signalling and track to enhance north south rail services.	Reduced journey times to London/Birmingham.	Initial phase by summer 2011.	Chiltern Railways
		Maximise the benefits of 'London Oxford Airport' (at Kidlington) for Cherwell's businesses.	Development of aero-cluster and reduced journey times for international travel.	On-going	Oxford Airport, CHIP
	Enhance telecommunications to support business and home-working throughout Cherwell.	Implement Ox-Online – The Digital Strategy for Oxfordshire throughout Cherwell.	High quality broadband and mobile telecommunications meeting business needs.	By 2015	OLEP, OCC

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
Page 85	Enable a good supply of housing and a wide range of affordable housing opportunities to ensure that housing provision is able to support the development of the local economy.	Implement Cherwell's Housing Strategy.	Achievement of Strategy objectives, including meeting the needs of employers and employees.	On-going	CDC
	Ensure that utilities to all businesses meet present and future demand , particularly in the older industrial areas where power and water/sewage services can become inadequate.	Work with utility companies, property owners and businesses to establish how infrastructure can be improved.	Premises suitable for modern business needs, attracting more investment.	On-going	Utility companies, Chambers, CHIP, CDC
	Develop Eco-Bicester as an exemplar of innovative transport and communications.	From 'One Shared Vision', implement low-emission transportation and telecommunications in Bicester.	Efficient transportation and carbon reduction.	By 2016	P3Eco, OCC, CDC, Telecoms providers
13) Support rural areas	Implement Cherwell's Rural Strategy , including support to rural businesses and employees.	Support to rural businesses includes action to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable the development and occupation of appropriate rural sites and premises for local employment. • Encourage diversification of farms and other rural businesses. • Support rural businesses, including rural shops. • Develop access to high-speed broadband. • 	Achievement of Rural Strategy objectives and targets.	On-going	CDC, ORCC, Police, retailers, NFU, CDC, parish councils, FSB, IoD, WODC, OCC, OLEP.

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
14) Support urban centres	Maximise the benefits of co-operation with local chambers and business networks to build relationships between each other, and with public and community partners.	Promote membership and meet regularly to identify issues and develop collaborative working.	Increased business involvement and collective action.	Quarterly meetings and day-to-day contact.	Chambers, Kidlington Voice, BicsterVision, FSB, OTCN, CDC.
	Promote the economic vitality of centres through successful services, shops markets and events.	Hold specialist markets and events.	Increased footfall and expenditure, and high business occupancy level supporting jobs and thriving centres.	On-going	CDC, market operators, town & parish councils, CDC, businesses.
		Provide successful car parking services that balance the real benefit to car park users and town traders with the effects on the public sector's limited and reducing finances.		On-going	CDC, private and public car park operators.
		Produce guides / websites to attract trade to Cherwell's urban centres.		On-going	Chambers, businesses, town councils, CDC.
		Providing policing services through Cherwell Crime Partnership to reduce crime, and the fear of crime, engaging businesses through e.g. Business Watch schemes.		On-going	Police, retailers, CDC, town councils.
	Undertake regeneration schemes and actions to enhance the attractiveness and success of the centres.	Key schemes described in detail below designed to regenerate urban centre sites.			
	Maximise use of public & community assets in	Promote available properties to assist the development of new	Development of micro businesses in vacant	2011-on	CDC, OCC (Mill Arts & libraries)

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
	support of the local economy.	businesses, and use buildings to support unemployed residents to access Job Centre services, careers advice and to find work/training via Job Clubs.	industrial units and supporting residents into work/training.		JC+, public meeting places, Next Step, Connexions
- Banbury	Develop local business leadership further and align economic actions.	Create a Banbury Town Centre Strategy to identify opportunities for marketing and partnership activity to enhance the town centre.	Completion of Strategy to include an Action Plan to increase footfall and expenditure, and high business occupancy level.	2012	Banbury Town Centre Partnership , Banbury Chamber, CDC, Town Council, Old Town Association, Chamber, Sketts Market.
		Undertake key development projects.	Implement the 'Brighter Futures in Banbury' project , enhancing Skills, Employment and Financial Inclusion.	Achievement of project objectives.	On-going
		Redevelop Canalside, including Tramway Industrial Estate , ensuring that existing businesses are supported in relocating locally if necessary.	Allocation of Canalside as a development site within Cherwell Core Strategy and preparation of Supplementary Planning Document area to support this policy.	2012	CDC
		Redevelop Bolton Road - a comprehensive redevelopment of the north western edge of Banbury town centre, which also includes the Meteor car park.	Allocation of site for development within Cherwell Core Strategy and preparation of Supplementary Planning Document area to support how this site should be taken forward.	2012	CDC

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
		Implement the 'Banbury Cultural Quarter' development to build a hub for the creative and cultural sector throughout the town.	Creation and safeguarding of jobs and facilities, and attraction of visitors.	2011-14	OCC, CDC
- Bicester	Develop local business leadership further and align economic actions.	Implement Bicester Economic Development Strategy by engaging all local interests.	Delivery of Strategy targets.	2011-on	P3Eco/CDC, CHIP, LEPs, OCC, BicesterVision, Bicester Chamber, Bic.TC
	Maximise the potential of the eco-town development – build upon the accessibility of Bicester, its skilled workforce, further education opportunities, and location to attract new businesses and seize this major opportunity, as detailed separately in the eco-Bicester Economic Development Strategy.	Implement NW Bicester 'Eco Town' Strategy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'exemplar' development of 5,000 homes and at least 5,000 jobs • Establish & develop the factory of the eco-homes builder in Bicester • Develop an Eco Innovation Centre. • Attract new investment & enable existing businesses to maximise the new 'eco' opportunities. 	Delivery of Strategy targets.	Planning approval in July 2011. Masterplan by 2012. Development 2011 – 2032	
	Raise the profile of the town , attracting & retaining visitors to maximise the links with other areas of this strategy.	Promote tourism and business in the town through Bicester Village's Visitor Information Centre and marketing activity.	Enhanced income and investment to the town.	On-going	
	Identify further improvements to footpath and signs between Bicester Village and the town centre.	Increased time and money spent in the town.	2011-on		

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
		Develop suitable leisure, visitor, community & educational facilities; for example at RAF Bicester.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve the heritage land and buildings through a commercially viable scheme. • Attract more visitors & expenditure to Bicester. 	Discussions on-going	Bomber Command Heritage , MoD and local partners
	Complete the Town Centre Redevelopment Project - a comprehensive redevelopment of Crown Walk and Franklins yard car parks to provide a supermarket, cinema, replacement car parks and bus facilities and further retail and restaurant units.	<p>Work programmed to start on site by Jan 2012 and be completed 18 months later.</p> <p>Phase 2 comprising a new civic building to follow-on.</p>	Attractive centre leading to increased footfall, expenditure and business occupancy.	Diversion of river by 2011. Acquisition of whole site by 2012. Completion of development by 2014.	CDC, Sainsburys.
	Remodel Market Square – led by Oxfordshire County Council, a highway and townscape improvement scheme.	Works to commence after the Town Centre Redevelopment has been completed.	Attractive centre leading to increased footfall, expenditure and business occupancy.	2014-on	OCC , CDC
Kidlington	Develop local business leadership further and align economic actions.	Regular business meetings in Kidlington and involvement with wider actions.	Business co-operation and growth leading to further employment.	On-going	Kidlington Voice , CDC

Theme	Aim	Action	Outcome / Measure	Timescale	Lead partner(s)
	Maximise Kidlington's unique advantages: promote the benefits of the airport, University of Oxford Begbroke Science Park and its proximity to Oxford in supporting local business growth.	Support Begbroke Science Park & encourage 'spin-out' companies to remain within north Oxon, attract other related businesses, and sustainably develop the airport and other transport infrastructure.	Development of science and technology 'cluster', transport infrastructure and high value jobs.	See 'cluster' actions in Theme 7 & 'infrastructure' in Theme 12.	UoO, Oxford Airport, businesses, CHIP, CDC
	Enable stronger sustainable transport links between industrial/employment areas, residential areas, the village centre and key local facilities.	Enhance public transport & cycling connections to the new Water Eaton rail station (Evergreen 3), including from the industrial estates/airport.	Bus services & infrastructure provided.	By the opening of new station.	OCC (Transport)
		Encourage journeys made by public transport, by bike and on foot.	As in Kidlington Area Strategy - Oxon Local Transport Plan.	2011-30	OCC Transport
	Consider Kidlington pedestrianisation	Review the current ineffective Traffic Regulation Order for the High Street and formal public consultation on changes to be made, not only to the Order but signage too.	Make Traffic Regulation Order and implement improvements.	Autumn 2011-on	Kidlington Village Centre Management Board, OCC, CDC

How to contact us

This document, and a form for making comments on it, is available to view from the Council's website at www.cherwell.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can contact us in the following ways:-

Write to: Steven Newman,
Economic Development Officer,
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House,
White Post Road,
Bodicote
Banbury OX15 4AA

Telephone: 01295 221860
Email: economic.development@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

The information in this document can be made available in other languages, large print braille, audio tape or electronic format on request. Please contact 01295 227001

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać. 01295 227001

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ। 01295 227001

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。01295 227001

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔
01295 227001



**Cherwell local
strategic Partnership**

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Executive

Overview and Scrutiny Reports: Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell

5 September 2011

Report of Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the overview and scrutiny report on Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell.

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

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutiny review into the Council's approach to Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell.
- (2) To note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's support for the Executive's decision to proceed with the commissioning project.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Proposals for a commissioning exercise to deliver a consistent and equitable approach to the funding of advice, volunteering and volunteer driving services in Cherwell and to consider the implications for a potential countywide Dial-a-Ride service were discussed by the Executive on 23 May 2011.
- 1.2 The Executive approved all of the recommendations in the report but asked that it be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration of the issues and implications.

Proposals

1.3 This topic was confirmed as a review item at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 14 June when Councillors Mallon, Emptage, Pratt, Stevens, L Stratford and R Stratford volunteered to meet with officers to discuss the specific issues relating to:

- Advice
- Volunteering
- Voluntary Car Transport Schemes

The notes of those informal working group discussions were tabled at the Committee meeting on 19 July 2011 alongside a question and answer statement in response to questions raised by Councillor Cartledge (Appendices 1 and 2 refer). At that meeting the Strategic Housing Manager and the Strategic Housing Officer briefed Members on the key issues arising from the informal discussions and explained the details underlying the written answers provided.

In discussion the following points were made:

- That the commissioning project should not be seen as a cost-cutting exercise but as a vehicle to ensure the delivery of transparent, equitable cost effective services to the widest range of residents.
- Statistics and data analysis: the officers explained that statistical data should be treated with caution as it was not always possible to check the source data. For example when looking at call centre volumes for some of the charitable organisations it was not clear whether the figures were all first time callers or included a number of repeat calls. Clearly this had implications for performance assessment and the quality of service provided. This was an area that was targeted for improvement through the commissioning process which would require a more rigorous methodology for data collection and analysis.
- Volunteering: the commissioning project should seek to encourage volunteering from all age groups and backgrounds and replicate good practice from across the county. It was also important to recognise that volunteering schemes should complement service offerings and not be seen as a cheaper alternative delivery option.
- Community Transport: the Committee noted the current status of the County Council's review of dial-a-ride services across Oxfordshire and their intention to provide a base-line service which could be "topped-up" with funding from the individual District Councils. A survey to be led by the County Council of existing Banburyshire Community Transport Association (BCTA) customers was planned which would inform the new service specification to be delivered by either the County Council or a third party. This would also inform the District Council about the appropriate level of "top-up" funding that might be required. Officers also briefed the Members on the current status of the discussions with BCTA and the support that had been offered in the light of the Council's decision in principle to terminate the dial-a-ride funding agreement in March 2012.

In conclusion the Committee agreed that it was important that the Council used the commissioning exercise to ensure that the funds available were channelled towards strategically relevant services and projects which would meet the needs of residents securing positive outcomes for them. It was also acknowledged that the understanding of customer needs will become more refined as the commissioning exercise progresses and in this context a degree of flexibility is required in terms of the amount set aside to support the development of a County Council dial-a-ride service.

Conclusion

- 1.4 The Committee confirmed their support for the Executive's decision to proceed with the commissioning project and agreed that it was important that the project progressed according to the set timetable to ensure that no residents were disadvantaged in April 2012 because contracts and suppliers were not in place.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

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

Option One To note the conclusions contained in the Overview and Scrutiny report.

Option Two Not to note the conclusions contained in the Overview and Scrutiny report.

Consultations

See Appendix 1 and 2 for details

Implications

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

Comments checked by Sarah Best, Senior Accounting Assistant 01295 221736

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

Comments checked by Paul Manning Solicitor 01 295 221688

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

Comments checked by James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager, 01295 221587

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell, a District of Opportunity
Cherwell, an Accessible Value for Money Council

Executive Lead Member

Councillor Debbie Pickford
Lead Member for Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Notes of working group meetings
Appendix 2	Responses to Councillor Cartledge
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Contact Information	01295 221583 Catherine.phythian@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Car Volunteering Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee feedback - June / July 2011

Feedback from Member engagement sessions

- Three sessions were arranged following the initial consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2011 of the Executive Report Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Car Volunteering Services
- These sessions were arranged to allow Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to consider each of the three headings of the commissioning exercise in greater detail
- It was agreed that any issues identified in these meetings would be fed back to the 19 July 2011 meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where the report would be considered in greater detail
- It was also agreed that Members could make separate requests for information from officers. Therefore, attached to this summary is the list of questions raised by Councillor Cartledge and the officer response to these points
- The outcomes of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee exercise are laid out for Council Executive.

Session One – Primary Focus on Advice Services

Monday 11 July, 2011, 10am

Councillor Kieron Mallon – Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Tim Emptage
Martyn Swann – Strategic Housing Manager
Helen Town – Strategic Housing Officer

Outcomes – General

- A key message is that this commissioning exercise should not be just seen as a 'cost cutting exercise' but the main driver is to deliver equitable cost effective services. Actually advice services may experience an overall increase in funding due the reallocation of resources.
- Another key message is that it is important that funding is given on a transparent basis and therefore though commissioning exercises are painful,

it is sometimes the best way to ensure a fair approach to funding and to ensure services are locally relevant and in line with Council priorities.

- Agreement that the current contract for the Court Duty Desk with Banbury CAB will not be included in this commissioning exercise was made. This is funded from a separate budget with external funding from DCLG. At the point when the Executive Report had been written it was thought that this funding may cease – however, this is no longer the case. The current contract ceases in 2014 and there is no provision to bring to an end early unless DCLG funding is withdrawn. However, given the increased work load in housing services (with a significant increase in people approach the Housing Options Team) this may avoid additional pressure and provide some capacity during the transition period post commissioning.
- Agreement that current advice services provided by Banbury CAB and Bicester CAB are good services but that there is a need for equitable distribution of funding across the District.
- Agreement that the focus of advice needs to be debt, given the Council's statutory duty to prevent homelessness. Less than six years ago the Council was spending huge amounts on homelessness and temporary accommodation ~ we do not want to return to those times. We recognise that debt advice is one of the most important 'homelessness prevention tools' and therefore it needs to be the primary focus.
- Agreement that it makes sense to work with the County Council to find a county solution. The County Council are looking to establish a 'base line' level of service provision across the County as a whole (e.g. each District to have one bus operating three days per week) to which Districts can add additional funding to enhance the provision in their locality. The Executive report mentioned a figure of £30k as a possible contribution from Cherwell towards local provision. Scrutiny Panel members advised that this may need to be reviewed upon completion of the consultation exercise with current service users of BCTA.
- District and County Officers have been trying to 'unpick' the level of service take up and the profile of the service users. This has proved somewhat challenging as although there is data on 'journeys' it is not clear on the needs of those using the service. For example, it is not clear if current service users could in fact use local bus services. However it was agreed that a negative outcome from the commissioning exercise would be for vulnerable residents to be unintended victims of services reducing. Therefore County and District Officers are in the process of sending out a questionnaire to everyone on the BCTA register to ascertain which elements of the service are most vital to retain. It may be that these vital elements of the service can be comfortably be delivered through a combination of the County's baseline service with Cherwell's contribution of £30k, but flexibility may be required on this.

Actions to for Officers to follow up on

- **Figures:** officers to provide most up to date statistics on service utilisation. Officers explained that for some services (such as CAB) this was straightforward, but other service providers struggle to provide monitoring information, despite input and support from Officers.
- **Scrutiny Panel Members** also keen to understand level of service take up in Kidlington including that provided by KADIC and by Bicester CAB.
- **Other sources of funding:** officers to provide a breakdown of other funding sources for key agencies. Officers agreed to source this information from the accounts which are submitted to the Council annually (and are available on the Charities Commission Website)
- **County Officers** need to provide information on what their 'base line offer' will consist of in relation to Dial-A-Ride and that these services can realistically be delivered.
- **Officers** need to clarify what level of service Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire District Councils secure for their annual grants payments to community transport of £25k to £30k.
- The consultation exercise/survey will need to identify who the most vulnerable service users are and which routes are essential for continuation.
- The BCTA figures for Kidlington need further examination, however the full picture may not become clear until the survey is completed

Session Two – Primary Focus on Volunteering Services

Tuesday 12 July, 2011, 5pm

Councillor Lynn Pratt – Vice-Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Rose Stratford
Martyn Swann

Outcomes – General

- The original vision was outlined which included:
 - Cost effective services and an equitable distribution of resources based on population and deprivation
 - Increase in volunteering ~ in line with Big Society Agenda
 - Significant changes in relation to community transport at a County Level ~ concessionary fares, huge differences in spend by local authorities (next biggest spender is Oxford City @ £60k, lowest is South Oxfordshire @ £0k)

- Stronger focus on debt advice
- Co-ordinated promotion and branding to ensure representational take up in relation to age, gender and ethnicity (feedback from Equalities Panel)
- Consistent quality of service provision across the district
- Aware that services funded by the Council represent just a small element of voluntary sector activity in the District
- Aware that Council has always supported the voluntary sector and usually at a much higher level than neighbouring authorities.
- Concerned that some services are over-reliant on council funding and struggle to attract funding from other sources. Whilst this is not an issue for smaller services who do not ask for council funding, those that deliver key services (e.g. advice) do need business continuity. Where services are over-reliant on the input of one or two trustees this presents a huge risk if they are also reliant on council funding.
- The challenges were considered which are:
 - To deliver 24% savings if possible. The reality of this is that as the main area for reduction will be community transport – advice services and volunteering may actually have a slight increase than at present.
 - To work across a large district with urban and rural areas
 - To ensure transparency and openness so that Council funding is not a ‘closed shop’ yet ensure locally responsive services which people want to support through volunteering etc
 - To build capacity into local organisation. This includes advice and information on accessing additional funding (e.g. Funding Training), strengthening boards (e.g.
 - We recognise that current buildings are not adequate in some areas and are currently looking at alternative options.
- The proposal, as per Executive Report, incorporates commissioning based on the relationship between all elements, but not necessarily one organisation delivering all ~ open to bids for individual lots, thematic groupings (e.g. advice) and locality groupings (e.g. all services in Banbury).
- It is believed (and supported by other agencies) that there is a strong link between elements of commissioning ~ volunteering, progression into employment etc. This is also based on evidence that this works elsewhere ~ including Wantage and South Northants
- Specific to volunteering
 - There are a number of different models. OCVA (Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action) operate with a huge volume (1700 enquiries per annum) much of which is email and phone advice and information with links into the Do-It Website however C CVS (Cherwell Council for Voluntary Service) operates with a much lower volume (50 placements per annum).

- All three Volunteer Centres in the County (OCVA, CCVS and Volunteer Link Up in Witney) are currently working towards accreditation with Volunteer England. This has been raised as a challenge to the Council ~ how can smaller volunteer centres as we are proposing be accredited. However we have been in close communication with Volunteer England who believes our model is workable and will support accreditation.
 - Both OCVA and CCVS have said that a key area of their work is liaison with the voluntary sector organisations. However we are finding that a number of voluntary groups are anecdotally saying that they successfully recruit volunteers themselves without the help of the volunteer bureaux.
 - A key issue with both OCVA model and CCVS model is monitoring outcomes. A key element of new provision will be to ensure monitoring which shows outcomes ~ not just enquiries. In addition we are keen to look at models which enable people to progress to employment as we see this works with many volunteer placements. The proposal therefore is for each locality to have access to the Do-it website (which will require organisations to be affiliated users) and to upload local opportunities onto the site and help local people use the website if they haven't done so before. However it is also hoped that the volunteering element of the commissioning will target people who are unemployed and would not have previously considered volunteering. This will require the service provider to have excellent links with local voluntary groups, good local intelligence, good administrative systems and excellent people skills.
- The above context and way forward was supported by Members
 - Agreement was made that the timetable for tendering should allow voluntary organisations to make considered submissions within the context of the summer holiday season – for information, the tender exercise has been extended by and made more straightforward by officers and by removing the requirement for a pre-qualification questionnaire.
 - Agreement that there are pockets of deprivation across the District, including Bicester, so it is positive that the funding split recognises this fact

Actions to for Officers to follow up on

- The specification should ensure there is a push for volunteers from all groups – good practice identified through the Bicester CAB where young people receive training which has the additional benefit of assisting them in their future career development
- 'Skills swapping' was identified as a possible contribution to the development of volunteering
- A number of organisation successfully recruit volunteers themselves e.g. League of Friends – so we should continue to acknowledge this and that fact

that the commissioning exercise will compliment existing volunteering and will not 'be the answer' to everything.

Session Three – Primary Focus on Car Volunteering Schemes

Friday 15 July, 2011, 9am

Councillor Trevor Stevens
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Martyn Swann
Helen Town

Outcomes – General

- Officers confirmed that the current service providers are ORCC for rural transport and BCTA for Dial-A-Ride.
- Officers confirmed that the key issue with rural transport is the need for Council funding to be directed to organisations which can deliver outcomes, which is a concern at present.
- Officers confirmed that the issues with Dial-A-Ride are:
 - the level of funding (Cherwell provides over three times the level of funding of any other district)
 - The cost of the service (it is run completely by paid staff with no volunteers)
 - The over-reliance on funding from the Council and lack of evidence of ability to secure funding from alternative sources (other than a much smaller grant from the County Council)
 - The difficulty in establishing the profile of service users. Though BCTA are able to give data on journeys it is hard to 'unpick' who the actual service users are and therefore identify which services are vital.
- Other parts of Oxfordshire are served by the Octabus Dial-a-Ride service. Funding for this contract expires in March 2012 and County Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of dial-a-ride funding and provision throughout the county with a view to putting in place new, county-wide provision from April 2012. The County Council will provide a base line provision to which District Councils can provide additional funding to increase the provision in their localities.
- Council officers are working closely with County Council Officers to survey all existing service users of BCTA which will hopefully inform the new service specification to be delivered either by the County Council direct or a third party from April 2012. Though a notional figure of £30k has been put forward, it may be advisable to be flexible on this until the findings of the survey are analysed.

- Scrutiny Panel Members were keen to understand the risks of this commissioning exercise and how risks were being mitigated. Officers explained that the risks include:
 - Early collapse of BCTA before end of contract. County Officers are currently working on a plan to pick up service delivery should this happen. This is a real risk as BCTA operate on a low level of reserves.
 - Vulnerable residents not able to access services. The survey being undertaken should identify these individuals and ensure services for those members are continued through the County arrangements.
 - Confusion for service users. Communication will be crucial and will be the responsibility primarily of the County Council and District Council. However officers have asked BCTA how they intend to communicate the changes to their customers.
 - Risk management is very important to the exercise – for reputation, providers and customers

Actions to for Officers to follow up on

- Advice to be sought from the Council's Head of Finance with regards to the recent paperwork received from BCTA which outlines:
 - The recent purchase of a new vehicle (in the knowledge of contract ending in March)
 - Most recent accounts have not been audited due to uncertainty if BCTA is a going concern or to be discontinued. BCTA accounts need to be submitted to Companies House and the Charities Commission by 30 September 2011.
 - Two closure scenarios (closure in December or March). There are questions over both scenarios in relation to requirements of the Council financially.
 - A schedule of current vehicles
- Consideration as to whether communication should be made with Elected members who are BCTA Board Members. However it was noted that Elected members on the BCTA board had met with Senior Officers from the Council.

Actions for officers to follow up on – answers and progress

Session One – Advice Services

1. Figures: officers to provide most up to date statistics on service utilisation. Officers explained that for some services (such as CAB) this was straightforward, but other service providers struggle to provide monitoring information, despite input and support from Officers.

Organisation	Total usage 10/11	% Cherwell	Grant 11/12 (£)
Banbury & District Samaritans	25,000	40% (10/11)	3,000
Relate Oxfordshire	5000	25% (10/11)	5,000
Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre	2000	18.91% (10/11)	2,000
Cherwell Community And Voluntary Service	250 Driver Scheme 20 Vol & Community groups No volunteer figures available for this reporting period	80+% (09/10)	17,000
Kidlington Advice and Information Centre	304	100% (09/10)	7701
CAB Banbury	4800	80% (09/10)	106,968
CAB Bicester	3324 (includes CAB services in Kidlington)	100% (09/10)	86,263

2. Scrutiny Panel Members also keen to understand level of service take up in Kidlington including that provided by KADIC and by Bicester CAB.

CAB Bicester provides an outreach session in Kidlington on Thursday at Exeter Hall (10-3pm) and appointments only on Tuesday. Statistics for the take up of this service are not available, but have been requested.

APPENDIX 1

3. Other sources of funding: officers to provide a breakdown of other funding sources for key agencies. Officers agreed to source this information from the accounts which are submitted to the Council annually (and are available on the Charities Commission Website)

The table below does **not** include donations, membership fees or funding for projects

Organisation	Other Funding	£
CAB Banbury 10/11	South Northants	12,000
	Brackley Town	2,200
	Banbury Town	6,000
	Northants CC	5,693
CAB Bicester 09/10	Bicester Town Council	8,250.00
	Money Advice	12,000
KADIC 10/11	OCC Good Neighbours Scheme	3,500
Banbury & District Samaritans 09/10		Nil
Relate Oxfordshire 09/10		Nil
CCVS 09/10		Nil
Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre 09/10	Local Authorities (excluding CDC)	82,134

4. County Officers need to provide information on what their 'base line offer' will consist of in relation to Dial-A-Ride and that these services can realistically be delivered.

Agreed. Officers are awaiting this information.

5. Officers need to clarify what level of service Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire District Councils secure for their annual grants payments to community transport of £25k to £30k.

Noted.

West Oxfordshire
Community Transport Adviser (CTA) support - £5,615 for 2011/12 (as in previous years)

APPENDIX 1

Oxfordshire Community Transport and Accessibility Partnership Officer (OCTAPO) - £5,000 - Grant award of six months (April to September 2011) funding only (a full year award would have been £10,000).

Vale of White Horse pay £29.5k per year and get a 9-5 service, 5 days per week.

6. The consultation exercise/survey will need to identify who the most vulnerable service users are and which routes are essential for continuation.

Consultation documents have been forwarded to Parish Clerks. BCTA user consultation is planned for w/c 1 August 2011.

OCC to lead on this exercise, but will receive support from CDC.

7. The BCTA figures for Kidlington need further examination, however the full picture may not become clear until the survey is completed

Noted – see point above

Session Two – Volunteering

1. The specification should ensure there is a push for volunteers from all groups – good practice identified through the Bicester CAB where young people receive training which has the additional benefit of assisting them in their future career development.

Noted - Many organisations offer training (NVQ) to volunteers – i.e. WRVS, Age UK

2. 'Skills swapping' was identified as a possible contribution to the development of volunteering.

Noted

3. A number of organisation successfully recruit volunteers themselves e.g. League of Friends – so we should continue to acknowledge this and that fact that the commissioning exercise will compliment existing volunteering and will not 'be the answer' to everything.

Noted

Session Three – Car Volunteering Schemes

1. Advice to be sought from the Council's Head of Finance with regards to the recent paperwork received from BCTA which outlines:
 - a. The recent purchase of a new vehicle (in the knowledge of contract ending in March)
 - b. Most recent accounts have not been audited due to uncertainty if BCTA is a going concern or to be discontinued. BCTA accounts need to be submitted to Companies House and the Charities Commission by 30 September 2011.
 - c. Two closure scenarios (closure in December or March). There are questions over both scenarios in relation to requirements of the Council financially.
 - d. A schedule of current vehicles

Advice sought from Head of Finance:

- Advised to write to BCTA confirming that:
- CDC will not underwrite any unforeseen costs incurred by delays to closure post 31st March 2011
- CDC is concerned that Board Members are fully aware of their financial and legal responsibilities and liabilities in the case of service closedown.
- If unforeseen costs from delays to closure post 31st March cannot be fully mitigated then BCTA to provide a cash flow forecast for a closure earlier than 31st March and a project plan to accompany this

Head of Finance also advised that we need to fully consider the impact on the Shopmobility Scheme in Bicester as closure of BCTA would necessitate an alternative operator and potential TUPE issues.

2. Consideration as to whether communication should be made with Elected members who are BCTA Board Members. However it was noted that Elected members on the BCTA board had met with Senior Officers from the Council.

CDC's representatives on the BCTA Board have been advised of the arrangements.

**Information produced by Martyn Swann and Helen Town, Strategic Housing Team
July 2011**

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Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Car Volunteering Services

Questions/comments from Cllr Cartledge

July 2011

Please note the questions/comments from Cllr Cartledge are in italic and the officer response is in normal font and highlighted.

1. *The paper has 3 aims:*

1. *To cut the Council's spending on advice services and community transport*

The paper does refer to an overall reduction of 24% however as the most significant reduction in spend is on Dial-A-Ride there is no actual reduction in spending on advice services. The aim of the paper is not purely about 'cutting spending' but about equitable distribution of cost effective, strategically relevant services.

2. *To transfer resources from Banbury and Bicester (and their surrounding villages) to Kidlington and its surrounding villages*

The paper does propose an equitable re-distribution of resources but this is based on both population and housing benefit take up as one indicator of deprivation.

3. *To transfer the responsibility for community transport from collective provision to the voluntary sector and thus transfer some of the cost to volunteer drivers and (potentially) the users themselves.*

The paper does state that the County Council have taken on responsibility for concessionary fares and are taking a lead role in the planning and procurement of community transport. As Community Transport is not a statutory duty of the District Council it makes financial and strategic sense to work collaboratively with the council on this. We could, as a District Council chose to do as other district councils have done and 'do nothing'. However we do value the role of community transport and it is for that reason we are recommending that we a) support the growth of volunteer car driving schemes and b) work with the County Council to develop a more cost effective model of delivering Dial-A-Ride.

Regarding the issue of transferring cost to users and volunteer drivers, it is worth noting that there are systems in place for reimbursing transport costs to and from the hospital. At a national level we are moving towards 'personalised budgets' which will mean that people have their own budget to spend on care and transport so actually a more personal approach is in line with the national 'personalisation agenda' and therefore 'collective provision' may no longer be required at the same level as it has been previously. There will however still be the base line provision funded by the County Council and enhanced by the District Council to safeguard services to the most vulnerable.

APPENDIX 2

To cut the Council's spending on advice services and community transport Section 3.1 contains the statement that CDC are planning a cut of 24% in the combined budget for these services. This is a cut of £120,000.

When did the Council/Executive agree to cut this budget by 24% as stated in the paper at section 3.1?

What was the reasoning behind this decision?

Did the Executive look at the hard ship this would cause?

The 24% reduction in spend was in relation to the final settlement on the Council's grant from central government under the Comprehensive Spending Review. We could have just simply reduced the funding on each grant by 24% however this would have not addressed the issues of equitable distribution, strategically relevant services and improved performance. We actually believe that even with the reduction in spending, this commissioning proposal has the potential to develop, over time improved service provision which is more cost effective. As far as hardship goes, the targeting of resources is at the heart of the proposal:

- equitable distribution, taking into account housing benefit take up
- stronger focus on debt and money advice
- survey of customers of Dial-A-Ride to ensure County provision is delivered to the most vulnerable
- increased focus in volunteering on progression into employment

In relation to hardship to actual organisations, officers have worked hard to support local voluntary organisations. This has included:

- organising training events on applying for funding from different sources
- sending out each organisation a 'health check' form and offering to help complete them. This helps organisations see areas that they may need to develop (e.g. by having the right policies in place and procedures such as financial procedures, correct governance etc). We have also said that if organisations are struggling we can connect them with people who can help with business planning etc.
- meeting with each organisation individually (some on a number of occasions) who is currently in receipt of funding to discuss the impact of the commissioning.

Section 2.4.6 admits that some existing advice services and Dial-a-Ride will become unviable as a result of this cut. Which advice services would become unviable?

The rest of 2.4.6 reads "Therefore an important role for the Council should this proposal be approved will be to work with service providers to identify additional funding streams to increase capacity and resilience." It is this piece of work that we have been trying to do through the input outlined above. We have directed organisations to alternative funding sources and given options to reduce overheads such as shared buildings, which some organisations have considered. As a result, it may be that some organisations are no longer as at risk as at the time of writing the paper. However, where organisations are heavily reliant on Council funding (such as BCTA) the risk of closure still exists unless they chose to bid for the funding available through the commissioning process, secure alternative funding or significantly reduce their overheads.

APPENDIX 2

	Banbury 54% of overall budget	Bicester 28% of overall budget	Kidlington 18% of overall budget	TOTAL
Debt & Money Advice 75% of overall budget	£136,128	£70,585	£45,376	£252,089
Volunteering Opportunities 15% of overall budget	£27,226	£14,117	£9075	£50,418
Volunteer Car Driving 10% of overall budget	18150	9411	£6050	£33,611
TOTAL	£181,504	£94,113	£60,501	£336,118

To transfer the responsibility for community transport from collective provision to the voluntary sector and thus transfer some of the cost to volunteer drivers and (potentially) the users themselves. Compared with advice services, the paper gives very little information about the proposed "voluntary car driving schemes" which would replace Dial-a-Ride.

Some of our response to this is detailed on page one, but a key point to note here is that the voluntary car driving schemes are intended to compliment Dial-A-Ride, not replace it.

How much would be paid to the volunteer drivers to cover costs (fuel wear & tear etc)? If it is less than the actual cost, this proposal would transfer some of the cost from CDC to the volunteer driver.

As we are looking to bid competitively we would expect service providers to come up with an appropriate costing. However we know that some schemes reimburse within the tax threshold and others pay over and above this. Anecdotal evidence suggests that tax payers prefer just to be reimbursed to the tax threshold as they do not want the hassle of entering information into tax returns. We have looked at Volunteer Car Driving Schemes which are considered to be 'leaders' in best practice such as Wantage, who make the process of reimbursement as simple as possible to take pressure off volunteers.

Is it feasible to rely on volunteer drivers to provide the same level of service as Dial-a-Ride? At present, the maximum fare for Dial-a-Ride is £2 per single journey from a village to Banbury. At 40p per mile, this equates to 5 miles. Many villages are more than 5 miles from Banbury.

No, it is unlikely that this will provide the same level of service as Dial-A-Ride, but it may be more responsive and as said above will be complimentary to the County Wide Dial-A-Ride Scheme being proposed.

Would users pay more under this proposal if so, it is transferring some of the cost from CDC to the users? Note: according to the website for Oxfordshire Rural Community Transport, there is a limit of 40p per mile for a volunteer driver in practice because he/she becomes liable for tax if he/she receives more than 40p per mile. ORCT also say (on website) that it costs more than 40p per mile for a volunteer driver so that if the

APPENDIX 2

driver is only paid 40p per mile, he/she is not being reimbursed for the full cost. As a result, ORCC say that volunteer drivers are being forced to stop volunteering because they cannot afford to continue. Have you considered this?

As said in page one, with the move to personalised budgets people will be free to make their own choices about how they spend their money, so flexible approaches are necessary. ORCC have not established any volunteer driving schemes in Cherwell so we are unsure where they have obtained this information from and indeed did not raise it during their consultation with officers. Certainly for Banbury CVS Scheme and Wroxton Scheme this is not the case. There are some additional findings which suggest that volunteer drivers can claim an extra 5p per mile for passengers tax free.

Lack of Consultation: According to the paper (sections 4.1 - 4.3), CDC Officers have had discussions with some Councillors, Banbury CAB, Bicester CAB, KADIC, ORCC and BCTA. Why no consultations with the users of these services?

Officers consulted with the Equalities panel whose feedback helped inform the proposal. Over and above this it was deemed inappropriate that officers should first speak to service users about the commissioning process before seeking the authority of Executive about the strategic direction. Intelligence has been gathered about the use of the service, although this information has been received by organisations that are recipients of grant under the current system.

Why no consultations with the people who depend on Dial-a-Ride?

It was deemed inappropriate that officers should first speak to service users about the commissioning process before seeking the authority of Executive about the strategic direction. Council officers are now working closely with County Officer to undertake a survey of all service users of BCTA to establish service take up and the profile of service users. This in turn will be used to ensure service continuation to the most vulnerable through the County arrangements from April 2012.

Why do Officers regard the urban communities as less important than rural communities?

Officers do not. The specification will make this very clear. The emphasis on rural needs has been placed to respond to feedback on the importance of rural-proofing the plans. Urban communities are also important, albeit the type of need may vary in different locations.

What will happen if there are not enough volunteers to ensure that a rural (or urban) community is not well served?

The new arrangements will ensure that outcomes are achieved i.e. number of car volunteering schemes stipulated within the contract. Schemes may not be workable in some locations – this reinforces the approach of having both car volunteering and supporting county provisions as part of the plans. It is partly in recognition of the challenge of recruiting volunteers that the proposal brings together general volunteering with volunteer car driving as it is hoped there will be some cross over (as is the case with Cherwell CVS and South Northants Volunteer Bureau).

APPENDIX 2

Why is there nothing in section 2.20 about monitoring the performance of volunteer car driving schemes?

Car volunteering scheme outcomes will be monitored – an important principle of the commissioning arrangements.

*Does Banbury Community Transport submit an annual report to CDC?
is it available to Councillors?*

The BCTA submits annual accounts to CDC for inspection and data on service utilisation. This can be made available to members

Why is there no information about the Volunteer Transport Scheme run by CCVS?

The CCVS volunteer transport scheme comprises two of the four schemes in the District – delivered through the Banbury CVS and the Resource Centre in Bicester.

How will it fit with the Volunteer Car Driving schemes proposed by the paper?

The CCVS could bid for the proposals – so we could consider the links with them. Their scheme could complement any other arrangements, and we should avoid any duplication.

Dial-a-Ride vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Many (most?) private cars are not wheelchair accessible.

-How is it proposed to cater for the needs of the most disabled wheelchair users under volunteer car driver schemes?

Most car volunteering schemes cannot accommodate wheelchair users as the vehicles are not large enough or suitably equipped to take them. The needs of these users will need to be met through the countywide Dial-a-Ride proposals. Moving to the personalisation agenda/budgets, the opportunity will exist for disabled customers to use local taxi firms and their mpv's (multi purpose vehicles).

According to ORCC, there are 60 volunteer car driving schemes in Oxfordshire. How many are in CDC? Have the Officers contacted any of them?

There are four formal car volunteering schemes in the Cherwell District – although there could be other, less formal, neighbour activities that take place. Cherwell has the lowest level of car volunteering in the County, which could be due to the extensive Dial-a-ride provision.

Officers have worked with partner organisations. It was not deemed appropriate to consult service users at an earlier stage as Executive had not at that stage considered the proposals. Consultation is planned with service users, and it will be required that the organisation(s) appointed for car volunteering will develop services based on the experiences of existing successful car volunteering schemes.

Response to Proposal

The paper identifies 3 options. There is another option: test the feasibility of Option 3 in a pilot area (say Kidlington and surrounding villages) - this would also have the

advantage of being able to take into consideration the outcome of the County Reviews before taking a final decision.

This commissioning exercise is urgent and a pilot would cause a delay and would not only be a considerable cost in officer time, but would also reduce the efficiency savings delivered by the commissioning and delay the other outcomes that the commissioning will deliver:

- Equitable geographical distribution of funding and a greater consistency in service provision
- Debt and money advice focus for advice services ~ which needs to be in place as a matter of urgency to contribute to the homelessness prevention agenda, as temporary accommodation use is at risk of increasing
- The urgency to commission strategically relevant cost effective services
- The discussions with Oxfordshire County Council officers to explore a county wide Dial-A-Ride service

Monitoring. How would CDC monitor client satisfaction (as proposed in section 2.20)? (Note: CAB have strict rules about confidentiality and should not allow CDC to contact their clients.)

The contract will be monitored by Cherwell District Council. The detail of the performance measures will be agreed at the contract award stage of the procurement. However, the following measurements and tools are likely to be used in assessing the performance of the services:

- Service User Feedback
- Feedback from referring services
- Case Studies (particularly useful to process map any issues)
- Service Visits
- Outcomes monitoring

Reporting mechanisms may include the following:

- Quarterly* monitoring reports on an agreed form layout
- Six monthly* monitoring meetings between the service provider and the District Council representative. This may result in an action plan to rectify any deficiency in the quality of the service identified through the report and or meeting.
- Monitoring of complaints, their progress and outcomes.

* This may be more frequent in the early stages of the contract or during times when there are service performance concerns.

It is hoped that the dialogue will be two-way to enable feedback to the Council on trends, local issues etc as well as monitoring service performance.

Services will need to demonstrate that you have the appropriate systems in place for:

- Receiving, responding to, recording and monitoring service user complaints and customer feedback.
- Computerised outcome and output monitoring ~ management information systems which can be interrogated and used to provide intelligence for service improvement and development.

Other Advice Services. *What advice and information is provided in Cherwell District by other organisations which are not listed in Appendix One (e.g. Age UK)? What effect on these organisations will this proposal have, and has this been investigated? A properly planned provision of advice services would take account of other providers.*

Information on other advice services can be found in the Community Directory on the Council Website. All local organisations have been sent a form to complete so that they can be included and this is updated regularly. Organisations bidding for funding will need to demonstrate a commitment to partnership working with other organisations.

Volunteering. *To what extent are the existing services listed in Appendix One already promoting volunteering? What are results of these efforts? Why do the CDC Officers think that such efforts will be more successful as a result of commissioning?*

This is a very relevant question as all of the services listed in Appendix One are promoting volunteering with the exception of BCTA who run purely on paid staff. As this service is in receipt of a large percentage of the funding it likely that the commissioning will result in an increase in volunteering.

Advice Services

(1) What services are provided by the organisations receiving grants at present (that is, the organisations listed in Appendix One)? How do these services differ from what is proposed for commissioned services?

The CAB Services provide advice on a range of issues ~ including debt, housing, relationships, employment and consumer issues. KADIC are more of an information providing service as opposed to advice and this information includes tourist information. The key change is the focus on debt and advice ~ as explained in the Executive Report.

(2) What conditions are attached to existing grants? How do these conditions differ from what is being proposed for commissioned services?

Conditions are applied which include access, governance etc within a Service Level Agreement. The commissioned services will be managed through a contract with agreed service levels, outcomes etc.

(3) Section 2.20 sets out the data which would be required for monitoring performance. What data is currently available? (Essential in order to establish the base lines, set targets and monitor progress)

Data on outputs is provided by organisations in receipt of grant in their annual reports. Organisations will use this data to help inform their bids for funding.

**Information produced by Martyn Swann and Helen Town, Strategic Housing Team
July 2011**

Executive

Car Park Order Notice

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Members of any objections to the Cherwell District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) Order advertised on 4 August 2011 and to seek authority to make the Order subject to any objections received.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To receive and deal with any objections to the Order (these will be tabled at the meeting)
- (2) To authorise formal Order Making on final proposals for implementation on, or as soon after, 11 November 2011 as is practicable.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Following the Scrutiny Review of the parking arrangements introduced on 4 April 2011 and approval to a number of modifications by the Executive on 26 July, these were formally advertised in August 2011 in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 1.2 Any objections from this process will be tabled at the meeting as the deadline for receipt falls after the agenda is issued.

Proposals

- 1.3 The proposals set out in the Cherwell District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) Order are:

- the charging hours (currently 8.00 a.m. to midnight) will be revised to mean the period between 8.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m.;
 - free parking for blue badge holders will be allowed in designated disabled spaces (charges for blue badge holders in general parking spaces will continue to apply);
 - the discount for payment of Excess Charge Notices within 14 days will be increased to 50% for all contraventions;
 - The current charges relating to all car parks in Bicester will be reduced by 10p per hour;
 - the parking charges applicable to Sunday and all bank and public holidays (other than Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, when no charges apply) will be revised to the standard hourly rate (Monday to Saturday) for 1 hour and £1.00 for more than 1 hour.
- 1.4 These proposals, if adopted, would be introduced on or as soon after 11 November 2011 as is practicable as ticket machines, information boards, signage and publicity all need to be considered to enable implementation.

Conclusion

- 1.5 Subject to any objections received to the Order Notice; the Executive dealing with these objections; and the required implementation works being carried out, the proposals will be implemented on or as soon after 11 November 2011.

Background Information

- 2.1 The full Order Notice and Car Park Orders are available on the Council's website.
- 2.2 The changes to car parking arrangements were agreed by the Executive at its meeting on 26 July 2011.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 Members to consider and deal with any objections to the Order to enable implementation.

There is only one option available to the Executive

Option One Consider and deal with any objections to the Cherwell District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) Order

Consultations

Statutory, voluntary local agencies, A formal Notice of Order was advertised in the local press on 4 August 2011. Consultation letters sent to all

residents of the District

organisations that are members of the Cherwell Disability Forum and the Cherwell Older Peoples Forum.

Implications

- Financial:** There are no direct financial implications from the Order Notice. However, the Executive were advised of the financial effects in the report on 26 July 2011.
Comments checked by Denise Taylor Service Accountant, 01295 221982
- Legal:** This report deals with objections to the Order Notice and is in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
Comments checked by Malcolm Saunders Senior Legal Assistant 01295 221692
- Risk Management:** Having undertaken consultation on the Order and by the Executive considering this feedback in determining the final proposals that are set out in the Order Notice, the Council is at reduced risk of Judicial Review. The final proposals will be published in the final Notice.
Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager, 01295 221563
- Equalities** The proposals have been included in an updated Equalities Impact Assessment.

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell, a District of Opportunity

Executive Lead Member

Councillor George Reynolds
Deputy Leader

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
Objections from Order Notice- Any submitted to be tabled Executive Agenda- 26 July 2011	
Report Author	Chris Rothwell, Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services
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Executive

Kidlington Pedestrianisation and Traffic Regulation Order

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek the Council's approval to make a new Traffic Regulation Order for Kidlington High Street.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the making of a new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Kidlington High Street.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Kidlington Pedestrianisation scheme was approved for inclusion in the Council's capital programme on 12 July 2010. Since then, the proposed scheme has gone out to an informal public consultation from September to November 2010 and following the positive outcome of this, a formal draft of the Order went on deposit in July 2011. The outcome of this formal consultation produced no objections to the proposed Order.
- 1.2 A report went to the Executive on the 7 March 2011 to seek an agency agreement with Oxfordshire County Council, as the Highways Authority to allow Cherwell District Council to formally promote, advertise and make the Order. This was confirmed in June 2011.

Proposals

- 1.3 As no objections to the draft Order were received, then no public Inquiry is required and the Order can be made.
- 1.4 If the Executive are minded to approve the making of the Order then as soon as it is formally advertised, those affected by the Order are notified and the

new traffic signs are made and installed, then the Order can come into effect. This is scheduled to be the autumn of 2011.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 2.1 This project is identified as a priority in the Regeneration and Estates Service plan and is a key partnership project undertaken at the request of the Kidlington Village Centre Management Board and Kidlington Parish Council
- 2.2 The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward.

Option One Approve the making of the Order for the scheme to move forward.

Option Two Reject the making of the Order. However this will result in the postponement of any further work on the scheme and a failure to meet Service Plan targets.

Implications

Financial: A capital estimate of £25,000 is in the approved capital programme, and this is considered to be sufficient to cover the costs associated with making the proposed Order and amending any signage. As no objections were received for the proposed scheme, no costs are required for holding a public inquiry. This will mean a saving on the budget estimated at £13,000...

Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant 01295 221559

Legal: The TRO will come into force on such date as the TRO prescribes, which must not be earlier than (1) the date on which a notice of the making of the TRO and its effect is given in a local newspaper, or (2) the provision and/or modification of all traffic signs, road markings etc as necessary to give effect to the TRO.

Comments checked by Malcolm Saunders, Senior Legal Assistant 01295 221692

Risk Management: Any risks associated with the Order are low as no objections were made as part of the consultation process. Failure to grant the Order will result in a delay to the work and may damage the council's reputation, local relationships and ability to meet its strategic objectives.

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager 01295 221563

Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services A revised TRO for Kidlington High Street is considered to be essential to bring vitality to the village centre; develop improved pedestrian access; and to exclude, in the core

period, all but essential delivery vehicles.

Comments checked by Chris Rothwell, Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services 01295 221712

Wards Affected

All wards in Kidlington

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell, a District of Opportunity

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Norman Bolster
Portfolio Holder for Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Lisa Chaney, Urban Centres Development Officer
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Executive

Bicester Civic Building

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the brief and options for the procurement of a new civic building for Bicester, and determine the preferred method of procuring this building.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To resolve that the Council pursue the development of the Franklins Yard car park site with a new civic building, to comprise offices and a public library, together with a proposed hotel, on the basis that the Council finances the development in return for a future revenue income, subject to the terms of the pre-letting agreements being approved by this Committee, and completed, prior to the scheme being committed;
- (2) That any costs or expenses incurred in fees and expenses necessary to progress this proposal being met from the existing capital approval for the Bicester town centre redevelopment scheme;
- (3) To earmark £5m of general capital receipts to this project and a further report be submitted seeking the necessary capital approval, when the costs and income achievable are known.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Bicester town centre redevelopment scheme submitted for planning approval in 2007 included a new civic building to be acquired by the Council. This building comprised a local office for this Council and a new public library for Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.2 When the town centre scheme was redesigned to address financial viability issues, it was agreed that the civic building should be omitted, but that the Franklins yard car park be largely excluded from the proposals, so that this site could be developed by the Council with a civic building as a second

phase.

- 1.3 This report sets out proposals for what the civic building should comprise, and how it should be procured.

Proposals

- 1.4 The County Council's existing public library is substantially smaller than the standard which applies to a town the size of Bicester, even disregarding the planned and ongoing growth of the town. Consequently the acquisition of a replacement library having a floor area of 10,000 square feet is a high priority in the County Council's capital programme. This Council occupies 38 Market Square as its local office, a property which is held on a lease expiring in 2013. That building provides a Linkpoint on the ground floor, with offices on the first floor occupied by the Council's street wardens and Bicester Vision.
- 1.5 The proposal is that the new civic building should accommodate both a new public library, and replacement Council offices. A draft brief setting out these requirements is attached to this report as Appendix 1. The opportunity exists to incorporate other public facilities in these premises, such as offices for Bicester Town Council, and this is still being explored.
- 1.6 The site is capable of accommodating substantially more accommodation than that required by the Councils. The Council's planning guidance for the town centre development, which covers this site, makes it clear that a comprehensive development is desirable, and that the whole of the site should be included in any proposals submitted. Consequently the draft brief at Appendix 1 covers the potential development of those parts of the site which would not be occupied by the Councils. The brief has been drafted as guidance to potential development partners, should the Council choose to proceed by seeking such a partner.
- 1.7 In order to provide a regularly shaped site, which is capable of being developed efficiently, a land exchange has been agreed with the owner of Broadribb's cycle shop. Some buildings soon to become redundant to the rear of those premises are being acquired in exchange for part of the existing car park having similar site area, to the side of Broadribb's retained property. The land being transferred to Broadribb in exchange will be let back to the Council so it can continue to be used for car parking until autumn 2013, when the car park is scheduled to close. The draft brief at Appendix 1 includes the land being transferred to Broadribb, to ensure that a comprehensive scheme is designed. If the development of the Broadribb's land is procured at the same time as the Council's, it would be subject to an agreement that Broadribb meet the full cost associated with this.
- 1.8 It is anticipated that the commercial elements of any scheme will generate substantial value, and it is proposed that this be used to assist in financing this Council's office accommodation. The County Council have indicated that they will wish to finance their library through a capital payment. At this stage it is not known whether the Town Council will want accommodation within the scheme, and if they do, whether they will want to finance this through a capital payment, or by paying an annual rental.

Procurement Options

- 1.9 There are two methods of procuring the comprehensive development of this site. The first would be for the Council to act as the developer, building both the civic elements of the scheme, and any commercial elements which could be let as an investment, or possibly sold. It will be necessary for an agreement to be in place with OCC for them to take a long leasehold interest of the library premises, and to meet the costs associated with this part of the premises. If the Town council decide that they do want to acquire offices within the development, it would be reasonable to expect a suitable commitment from them too.
- 1.10 If the Council chose to develop the remainder of the site for commercial or residential purposes, without having any formal agreement in place with an occupier or occupiers for that space, the Council would be taking on a significant degree of development risk, which is not considered to be appropriate. However, it appears that an opportunity may exist to secure a pre-let in respect of the remainder of the site a significant national hotel operator. A proposal has been received from Stockdale Land, which indicates that the Council could expect to develop the site for itself, OCC and a hotel, and provide offices for Bicester Town Council, and secure a return on capital of between 6.5 and 7% per annum. The gross capital cost would be in the order of £5 million.
- 1.11 Under this proposal, Stockdale Land would act as development manager in return for a fee to be agreed. They would pull together all the commercial elements of the scheme, and ensure it is delivered on a basis which would be acceptable to the Institutional property market, should the Council ever wish to sell this asset in the future. Stockdale were selected as the Council's preferred development partner for the town centre scheme in 2005, and this land forms part of the site identified at that time.
- 1.12 The alternative procurement method would be for the Council to go out to the development market seeking competitive offers from developers. Interested developers would be provided with the Council's brief when finalised, and would be required to provide the premises specified therein. In return the appointed developer would be free to develop the remainder of the site for whatever purposes were considered to be appropriate. This approach is likely to produce a capital receipt from the developer which could be used to offset the cost of the civic building, rather than a revenue income.

Background Information

- 2.1 Relevant background information is included in the draft brief attached at Appendix 1.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The key issue is whether the Council wishes to invest further capital in Bicester town centre in return of a commercial rate of return. If it does so it can maintain full control over the project.
- 3.2 If the Council does not wish to invest in this site, it could look to the market to provide the premises required, and secure a capital contribution towards the cost of the proposed new offices. However, it would be necessary to transfer a significant degree of control over the project to the developer selected.

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

Option One

The Council to act as developer, and to build the new civic building and a hotel, assuming pre-letting agreements can be secured with OCC and a hotel operator, and Bicester Town Council if relevant. The Council will have to commission a degree of design work before it is possible to secure the binding occupier agreements, but beyond that, it would not be required to proceed unless it was reasonably satisfied that the return would be as expected. It would be possible to finance these professional fees from the existing £10m capital approval relating to the town centre scheme, as the terms agreed with the developer of that scheme indicate that the net expenditure which the Council will incur will not exceed £8.55m.

At this stage the projected return on capital appears to be very attractive, and in line with normal commercial expectations. The process of designing the scheme, obtaining planning consent and letting a building contract is likely to take around 18 months, and consequently it would not be necessary to finalise the brief until spring 2012, if a start in autumn 2013 is desired. Autumn 2013 is the time when the existing car park is scheduled to close following the opening of the new town centre scheme car park.

Option Two

To advertise the development opportunity on the open market, and seek to appoint a development partner who would enter into a development agreement with the Council to provide the civic building, in part consideration for the opportunity to develop the remainder of the site. This would be designed to allow the market to identify the

most valuable use for the site, but it is likely to be difficult to secure a revenue return rather than a capital contribution. The developer will take a proportion of the development value as profit. This approach is likely to involve a substantial lead in period before development could start, as it would be necessary to select a development partner and negotiate a development agreement. Significant legal costs are likely to be required. The process is likely to take at least two years, and hence, if the development is to commence in the autumn of 2013, an early start is needed. This presents a problem as OCC are not yet able to commit to acquiring the library, and there is no certainty as to the Town Council's possible requirement.

Consultations

Bicester Members

A briefing meeting was held to which all Members of the Council for Bicester were invited, together with Town and County Council Members, when the draft brief was discussed. The draft brief reflects comments received.

Implications

Financial:

This proposal appears to be commercial sound generating a future income stream for the Council at a rate of return on capital of between 6.5 and 7% per annum at the same time as providing a purpose built Civic Building. There is an existing capital budget available (PHEE020) to meet the costs of preparing a full business case proposal.

The costs of any development would need to be funded from general capital receipts. These receipts are reducing so in order to ensure that funds are available in the future to continue to fund investment in the District – projects such as this proposal with income streams should be considered. It is recommended that £5m of general capital receipts is earmarked for this project whilst the business case is developed. If then the project is not deemed suitable then these funds can be unearmarked.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance, 01295 221551.

Legal:

Under either option, quite complex legal documentation is likely to be required, and external legal advice may be required to handle this. Under option two in particular, the Council's experience has been that development agreements can be complex and challenging agreements to conclude.

As the Council will be procuring new civic offices through this process it will be necessary to ensure that all relevant procurement rules are observed.

Comments checked by Richard Hawtin, Team Leader,

Property and Contracts 01295 221695

Risk Management:

All construction projects carry construction related risks which need to be mitigated by proper contract arrangements and professional project management.

Any development also carries financial risks, as substantial investment is required to create new assets. The approach proposed at option one is designed to mitigate these risks by securing pre-letting agreements for all occupiers of the site before construction starts. However, the Council would be acting as investor, and incurring substantial capital expenditure

If option one is chosen there will be no market testing to establish that the most valuable commercial uses of the site are selected. Option two would achieve this, but the timescale required to do this is likely to be longer, and these can be no certainty of a successful outcome.

There will always be a balance between risk and reward in any investment decision, and the analysis of the two options is intended to address this.

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager 01295 221566

Wards Affected

Bicester Wards

Corporate Plan Themes

An accessible, value for money Council

Executive Lead Member

Councillor Norman Bolster
Lead Member for Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Bicester Civic Building - Brief
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	David Marriott, Head of Regeneration and Estates
Contact Information	01295 221603 David.Marriott@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

DRAFT
Bicester Civic Building

Brief

1. Introduction

Franklins Yard comprises a freehold site in the ownership of Cherwell District Council in Bicester town centre. The site adjoins the town centre redevelopment being undertaken by Town Centre Redevelopment (Bicester) Ltd, a company owned by Sainsbury's. That scheme will provide a new convenience store, a seven screen cinema, other shops and A3 units, replacement public facilities, and approximately 560 public car parking spaces. The site has frontage onto a new public square to be formed as part of the town centre scheme, and this will be pedestrianised between the hours of 10.00am and 4.00pm, and will be available for servicing vehicles at other times.

Franklins Yard is currently used as a public car park, but following completion of the town centre scheme, it will be available for redevelopment to provide a new civic building, together with other development in a form yet to be determined. It is anticipated that the site will be available for development to commence in the autumn of 2013. The Council is seeking to establish now the form which that development should take, and how it is to be financed.

2. The Site

The site is shown edged red on the attached plan. The plan shows the proposed Wesley Lane/Wesley Square which has yet to be constructed, but which forms the principal frontage to the site. To the east of this there is the portion of Wesley Lane which is not to be redeveloped as part of the town centre scheme. This is a narrow street of shops, comprising 73 Sheep St and numbers 1-8 Wesley Lane, and planning permission exists for the redevelopment of this with modern retail or A3 units with flats above. On the eastern side of the site lie numbers 81 to 85 Sheep Street, comprising two retail units with flats over. The owner of these units also controls a parcel of land which currently comprises part of the Franklins Yard car park, having frontage onto St John's Street, as shown hatched on the plan. The owner's plans for this land are the construction of an extension to his premises comprising retail space on the ground floor with flats above. The preference is for a comprehensive development of the site incorporating the hatched land, on the basis that the owner will be responsible for reimbursing the cost of constructing the premises to be provided on this land. The design needs to respect this ownership boundary. The site also has frontage onto St John's Street and Manorsfield Road. A new roundabout which is to be constructed at this junction, as part of the town centre scheme, is shown on the plan.

3. Access and Servicing

It is anticipated that the main pedestrian access to the site will be from Wesley Lane/Wesley Square when completed. The long frontage onto Manorsfield Road and the new St John's Street roundabout provides an opportunity for other pedestrian accesses to properties on the site. It is envisaged that the main vehicular access to the site will be via the existing vehicular access from Sheep Street.

Servicing rights exist over the site to the rear of numbers 1-8 Wesley Lane which are to be redeveloped by the owner, and also to the rear of 81 to 85 Sheep Street. In addition, rights exist to two car parking spaces used by the Bicester and District Ex-Servicemen's Club. The location of these spaces may be varied to fit in with any scheme layout.

4. Required Elements

The civic building is required to provide a public library to be occupied by Oxfordshire County Council, together with office premises to be occupied by Cherwell District Council. The library is to provide approximately 640 sq m of accommodation on one level, preferably on the ground floor, together with approximately 230 sq m of offices. If necessary the offices may be provided on the floor above. [A specification for the required premises is annexed.]

Cherwell's offices are to provide a Linkpoint comprising an office for the public to make enquiries and seek access to Council services, together with office accommodation for ? staff. Cherwell intends to work with other public authorities and agencies to provide joined up public services, and the Linkpoint needs to provide access to multi-functional office accommodation at the same level, capable to accommodating ? workstations, together with interview/meeting facilities. The estimated floor area to accommodate these requirements is 200-250 sq m. [Again a specification for the accommodation required is annexed.] [Bicester Town Council are considering the possibility of locating their offices on this site. They would require 100 to 200 sq m, although this would not provide a suitable committee room].

It is proposed that the premises should incorporate some galley or exhibition space. Further details are to be provided by Simon Townsend, although this may well be accommodated in any reception/waiting area.

A taxi rank will be provided on the Wesley Lane frontage to the site by the developer of the shopping centre. This will accommodate four taxis.

It is likely that the library and offices will have a shared entrance and lobby, although this will have to be designed in such a way that the premises can be open to the public at different times. All services to the individual premises must be metered separately.

The building will need to be accessible from the rear for servicing, including access and overnight parking by a mobile library van. The two car parking spaces used by the Ex-Servicemen's Club are required to be re-provided.

5. Other Potential Uses

The site is of sufficient size to accommodate a substantial amount of additional accommodation, and the Council is open to ideas as to what this may comprise. The uses may include retail, office, A3, residential or hotel uses. Whilst the principle frontage to the site will be onto the new Wesley lane/Wesley Square, there is a long frontage onto Manorsfield Road. This provides the opportunity to create numerous accesses to individual premises.

6. Planning

The site comprises part of the larger town centre regeneration area identified in the Council's non-statutory Local Plan, which has been saved for development control

purposes. In 2004 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for this wider regeneration area, and a copy of that Guidance can be found at the following address, www.cherwell.gov.uk/planning/regeneration. The document is amongst the downloads on the page covering regeneration projects. The Council's design aspirations, as set out in that guidance, remain relevant today, and compliance with the relevant provisions of that document will be expected.

The site is likely to accommodate development three/four stories high, and consequently there is the opportunity for a range of uses in upper parts. Whilst the majority of the development is likely to be three stories high, a localised increase in height will be appropriate to screen parts of the new shopping centre development to be constructed on the adjoining site. In particular the access and egress drums serving the new decked car park are relatively high, and consequently the design of these buildings needs to respond to that.

It is important that the scheme provides a lively and attractive frontage onto all the public roads which surround it. In particular, the frontage to Manorsfield Road and St John's Street is of high importance in visual terms, and the buildings must address this as active frontages rather than turning their backs on them. The new Wesley Square, which is to be constructed as part of the adjoining town centre development, will be a busy public space, and it is anticipated that the principal access point to the new library and offices will be from this frontage. Other uses suitable for this frontage would include A3 uses which might take advantage of the opportunity to create external seating areas.

The SPG provides further information of relevance to design and planning matters.

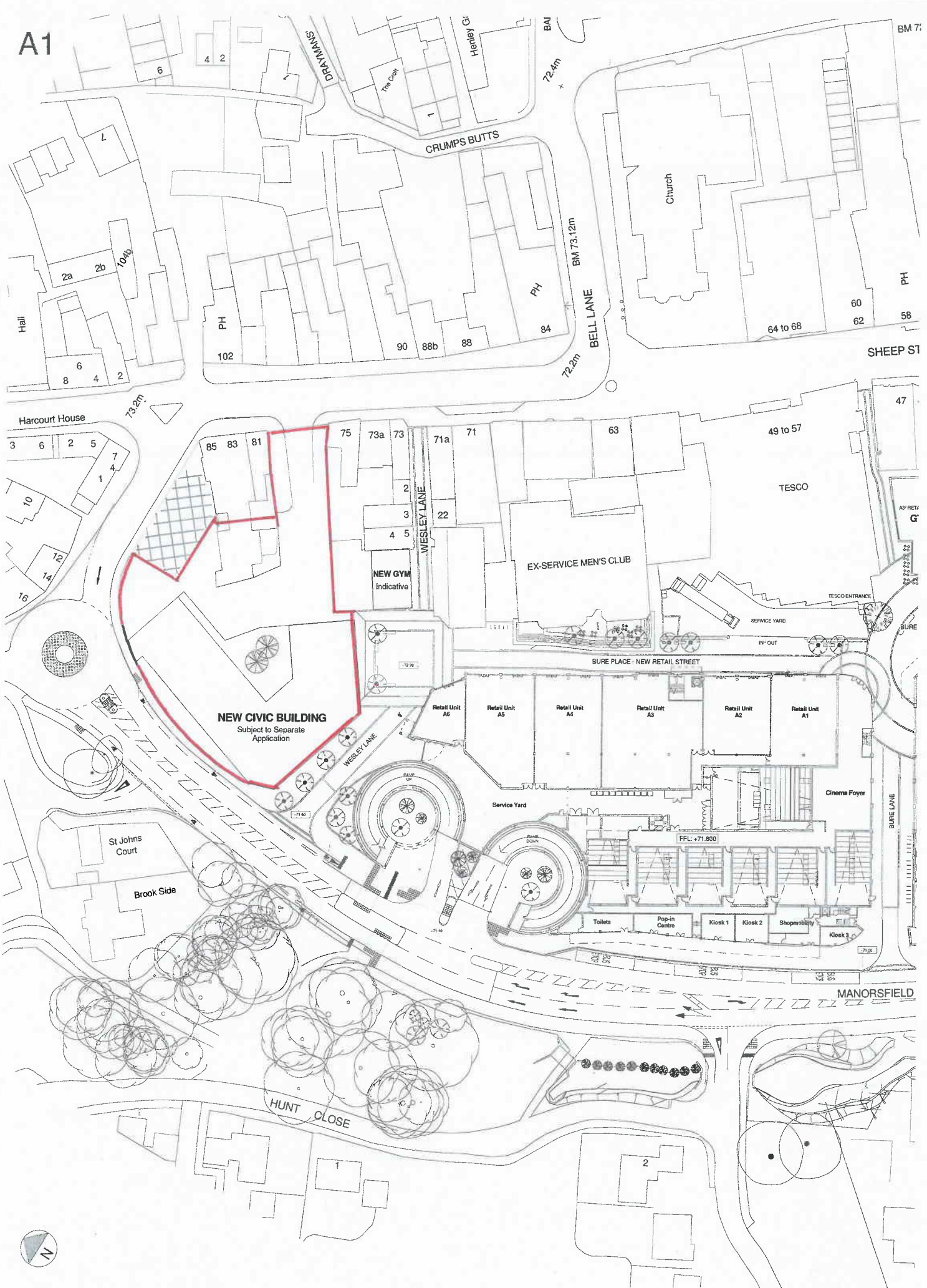
7. Ownership and Title arrangements

The Council owns the freehold of the site, and will want to retain this, with the exception of the hatched land which is owned by Broadribb Ltd, as described above. It is the intention that a long lease be granted to Oxfordshire County Council in respect of the library accommodation. It is anticipated that a long lease or long leases will be granted in respect of other parts of the site. It is likely that the structure of such leases will be driven by the form of the development proposed, and the Council is open to proposals in this regard.

The Council's aspiration is to maximise the development value created through this scheme. That value will be used to contribute to, or meet the cost of constructing the public library and offices. If it is necessary to do so, the Council will consider making a capital contribution to the cost of these works. If the development value exceeds the cost of these works, the Council is likely to wish to commute any surplus into an ongoing rental income. This may be used to mitigate the future annual running costs of the civic building.

The purpose of this scheme is primarily to provide the necessary civic building, and to minimise the capital cost to the public purse through enabling development. If residential development is proposed, it is likely that the Council will accept that no affordable housing is required within the scheme, in order to maximise the value created. The Council may choose to utilise the capital savings which it achieves through not having to finance the works from its reserves, by investing in affordable housing elsewhere.

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Executive

Award of contracts for the Design, Supply and Installation of Photovoltaic Panels to Six Commercial Buildings for Cherwell District Council

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates and Head of Finance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval to award six contracts for the Design, Supply and Installation of Photovoltaic Panels to six commercial buildings for Cherwell District Council.

This report is public

Appendix 1 to this report is exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Award contracts for Lots 1, 2 and 6 to the companies identified in the exempt Appendix 1.
- (2) Subject to finalising negotiations with Parkwood Leisure Ltd and in consultation with the Lead member for Financial Management and the Head of Finance award contracts for Lots 3, 4 and 5 to the companies identified in the exempt Appendix 1.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Background

- 1.1 CDC is an authority striving to be amongst the best performing councils in the country. We believe that tackling energy use is rooted in improving our performance environmentally and financially. This project achieves excellent environmental objectives, energy savings and income generation with a good rate of return and value for money.

During 2010/11 this council has worked in partnership with the Carbon Trust to produce a five year carbon management plan. This large scale Photovoltaic (PV) procurement is part of that strategy and provides a clear route to income and savings for the next 25 years by making use of the Government promoted Feed in Tariff launched April 1st 2010. This is in line with Council policy to release capital assets in order to 'spend to save'.

At present CDC has one 14kWp solar PV array as part of the Thorpe Lane Depot redevelopment which has attracted strong interest from partners such as Parkwood Leisure Ltd Leisure, South Northants Council and our own community. Since commissioning (September 2010) the system has performed according to expectations.

The combined effect of these new installations should achieve £30,300 savings on electricity bills and £71,981 generated from the Feed In Tariff¹ in year one, security of supply and a saving of 198 tonnes of CO2 over 25 years. This is just over 3.6% of Cherwell's commitment to reduce energy by 22%.

The Council, therefore, wishes to take advantage of this unique opportunity in achieving its environmental targets whilst obtaining good value for money.

The Process

- 1.2 The Corporate Contracts Officer, the Corporate Facilities Manager and the Energy Officer, undertook an options appraisal of the possible routes to market. They took into account the experiences of a previous procurement exercise for two buildings in late 2010, when the Council was unable to appoint due to the poor tender responses received. It was considered however that the market had matured during the interim period and it was decided that by adding additional facilities to the tender it would make the project more attractive to the market. It was agreed, therefore, to commence a further restricted procedure tender to test the market for a much larger scale programme.
- 1.3 This procurement exercise commenced in April 2011 via advertisement with 18 companies submitting Pre-Qualification Questionnaires, eight of whom were consequently invited to tender. Of these companies seven submitted tenders, one was too expensive and so the remaining six were invited to clarification meetings. One company was eliminated at the clarification meetings but the remaining five submissions were judged to be of a high enough calibre to be considered.
- 1.4 The tender submissions were evaluated on the basis of 75% of marks for quality and 25% of marks for price. Sub-criteria included peak output, annual output, annual yield, capital cost, cost per kWpeak, over all savings & Feed-in-Tariff income, return on investment and payback periods. The clarification meetings were used to test the validity of the evidence provided in the written submissions.

Recommendations

¹ *The Feed-in-Tariffs scheme was introduced on 1st April 2010 to encourage deployment of low carbon electricity generation in return for a guaranteed payment for electricity generated.*

- 1.5 Please refer to Appendix 1 for the identity and reasoning behind the recommendations.

It should be noted that Lot 3 Spiceball Leisure Centre, Lot 4 Bicester Sports Centre and Lot 5 Kidlington and Gosford Sports Centre are all managed by Parkwood Leisure Ltd. These proposals are therefore subject to agreement with Parkwood Leisure Ltd with regard to the maintenance of the proposed PV system, any roof repairs, and any liability issues. A contract variation notice will need to be arranged to accommodate any changes. Agreement is currently being sought from Parkwood Leisure Ltd to accept the energy produced at an acceptable rate. It should also be noted that these proposals are subject to Listed Building Consent for Lot 1 and Planning Permission for all six lots.

1.6 Outcome

Costs

1. The total whole life cost of the project will be £1,117,972. This will include the design, supply and installation of the system, monitoring equipment and on going revenue costs (for 25 years).

Income and Savings

2. Guaranteed income will come from the index linked Feed-in-Tariff for the next 25 years. This is at £0.314 per kWh of electricity generated for Lot 1 and at £0.19/kWh for Lots 2-6. This is expected to be an income sum of £71,981 for year one.
3. Electricity savings are expected to be £30,341 for year one (at today's electricity rates).
4. This provides combined estimated income and savings of £102,322 for year one.
5. CO2 savings are expected to be 198tCO2 per annum for the life of the solar panels (25 years).
6. Using year one figures the average return on investment will be 9.2 with an average payback period of 11.1 years.

Revenue Costs

7. Maintenance: There are no maintenance liabilities to conform to warranties. Warranties are dependent on correct design and installation. However, following recommendations to ensure optimum performance, a budget of £500 a year per Lot has been allocated for cleaning solar panels (particularly panels installed under a 5 degree pitch). As well as a visual inspection of the entire system. This will reduce the total savings on an annual basis by £500 per Lot.
8. Other: In the event of a roof needing works in the next 25 years, a budget for decommissioning, removal, storage, reinstallation and re-commissioning has been allocated (at today's rates). It is not envisaged that any works will be carried out on Lots 1,2,3 and 5 as roofs are in sound condition or are relatively new (under 5 years). Lots 4 and Lots 6 have roofs that are older than 5 years. Structural roof surveys will be carried out on each Lot before any works are conducted.

Proposals

- 1.7 To accept the recommendations listed in 1.5 with Lots 3-5 to being subject to

completion of successful negotiations with Parkwood Leisure Ltd and the granting of the relevant listed building and planning consents.

The Executive are requested to award as recommended as on completion of successful negotiations with Parkwood Leisure Ltd the Council will be able to meet the Feed in Tariff installation completion deadline of March 2012 which is the main driver for achieving Value for Money for the Council from this project.

Conclusion

- 1.8 It is recommended that the Executive award the design, supply and installation of photovoltaic panels to the six commercial buildings for Cherwell District Council to the companies listed in the recommendation.

The approval of this Executive report will benefit the Council with a guaranteed income and savings. This is expected to be a combined sum of £102,322 for year one with a carbon reduction of 198t CO₂ per annum for the next 25 years. The Council will continue to benefit from these systems for a 25 year period but the actual savings will depend on fluctuating electricity costs and the manufacturer's efficiency factors applying to the panels as stipulated in the manufacturer's warranty i.e. 90% minimum power output guaranteed for 10 years and 80% minimum power output guaranteed for a further 15 years

This project is identified in Cherwell's Carbon Management Plan (approved by the May 2011 Executive) and will achieve approximately 3.6% of the overall 22% energy reduction target.

The Council will demonstrate leadership in the community on being environmentally conscious through good value for money procurement with an excellent return on investment. Energy generated will also increase the Council's security against future energy cost increases and allow energy budget savings.

Implications

Financial:

The output summary table detailed in Appendix 1 and summarised in 1.6 of this report details the capital and revenue costs associated with this project and the ROI and payback period. The annual income received is likely to improve over time as the feed in tariff is index linked over the 25 year life of the panels. In addition, the return is assessed against current electricity prices; the market expectation is that these will continue to increase at more than the rate of inflation

Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant 01295 221559

Legal:

The recommendations in this report arise from a competitive tender process undertaken in pursuance of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and other relevant public procurement rules and regulations.

Comments checked by Richard Hawtin, Team Leader Property and Contracts 01295 221695

Risk Management:

The anticipated return from electricity generated, and the feed in tariff, is to some extent weather dependent, but the experience from the existing installation at Thorpe Lane depot is that the estimated return has been achieved.

The risks associated with attaching panels to existing roofs will be mitigated by structural surveys to approve the roof load, fixing methods etc, and by warranties provided by the suppliers

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Community and Corporate Planning Manager 01295 221563

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Cleaner, greener and an accessible, value for money Council

Lead Members

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management,
Councillor James Macnamara, Lead Member for Environmental Services
Councillor Norman Bolster, Lead Member for Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Financial Appraisal and Proposed Contract Award (EXEMPT)
Background Papers	
N/A	
Report Author	Ken Fowler, Corporate Contracts Officer
Contact Information	Ken Fowler 01295 223749 ken.fowler@cherwell-dc.gov.uk David Wade 01295 227988 David.wade@cherwell-dc.gov.uk Chiko Wade 01295 221964 Chiko.wade@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Executive

Value for Money Review of Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management

5 September 2011

Report of Strategic Director for Environment and Community, Head of Environmental Services and Improvement Project Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the findings of the Value for Money Review of Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management and the recommendations arising from the report.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to :

- (1) Endorse the VFM conclusion that the service offers good value for money and has actively driven down its cost base, providing a top performing, high quality service
- (2) Adopt the Service Plan Framework as a guide for the service in future years including areas for future improvements, savings and increased income
- (3) Note the projected MOT Bay income shortfall in 2011/12 and the plans in place to reduce costs and increase income to address the shortfall in-year
- (4) Agree the following recommendations to achieve additional savings and income:
 - £8k per annum from 2012/13, through improved fleet procurement and reduced spending on parts
 - Potential future revenue savings and income of £12k from a number of sources including working in partnership with other agencies, neighbouring councils and procurement partnerships
 - Additional new capital income source totalling £12k in both 2011/12 and 2012/13, rising to £24k in future years, as a result of improving the re-sale value achieved at auction from Council-owned equipment.

Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Corporate Improvement Plan 2011/12 includes a number of Value for Money (VFM) Reviews aimed at contributing to the Council's public promise

to save £1m 2012/13.

- 1.2 The Value for Money Review for Cherwell's Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management Service found it offers good value for money to the Council. It has actively driven down its cost base, while the number of vehicles it maintains has increased and is highly praised by client departments. In comparison to others, the team is top performing on a range of productivity and quality measures. Further, the service highly values its 'low risk' assessment for its Large Good Vehicle operation and MOT bay from VOSA, the Vehicle and Operators Service Agency. The Review's Executive Summary and Recommendations is attached as Annex 1.
- 1.3 A Service Plan Framework has been developed setting out the function's aims and a range of actions to reduce costs, increase income and add value. The framework is set out in Annex 2.
- 1.4 This Review sets out a projected shortfall in MOT income of up to £30k, and a range of measures to address this within the year.
- 1.5 A range of further revenue savings and income of £8k, with a potential further £12k, are identified and also a capital income stream of £12k rising to £24k by 2013/14. All of which contribute towards achieving the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.6 The full Value for Money Review is on deposit in the Members' Room and available on-line.

Proposals

- 1.7 To adopt the recommendations of the VFM Review in full:
 - note the Value for Money conclusion reached by this Review set out in Annex 1
 - adopt the future Service Plan Framework for the Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management Service set out in Annex 2
 - Note the MOT Bay income shortfall and proposed measures to address this situation
 - agree to achieving additional savings and income, both revenue and capital, as set-out in this report.

Conclusion

- 1.8 Cherwell's Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management Service offers good value for money to the Council.
- 1.9 The Service Plan Framework sets out a guide to planning the future service, within which the service can undertake its annual service and budget setting activity.
- 1.10 Agreeing to the level of income and savings proposed by this review assists the Council in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Implications

- Financial:** This service has continued to drive down its costs while maintaining high standards. The benefit of these cost reductions are reflected in the budgets of those clients departments who use this service and a recharged accordingly. The service also generates income for the Council and this Review has identified a shortfall of potentially up to £30k by the end of 2011/12 brought about by refurbishment of the depot, reduced bookings believed to be in response to the economic downturn and potential impact on income of a severe Winter like last year. The service has identified a range of measures to address the shortfall in-year. This will be tracked through the Council's budget monitoring and the income target reviewed as part of the 2012/13 service and financial planning process. Further, a range of additional savings and income options are offered as part of this Review, both revenue and capital, to contribute to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance, 01295 221551
- Legal:** There is a strict legal framework for the operation of Large Goods Vehicles and an MOT service. The Council has in place all the necessary processes and procedures for compliance with the legal requirements and values its low risk assessment by the regulators VOSA. Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Team Leader – Planning and Litigation, Legal & Democratic Services 01295 221687
- Risk Management:** This is a service that underpins the delivery of many of the Council's main public services. Given the regulatory environment for the operation of this function, a balance needs to be struck between the wish to save Council funds and the investment in staff skills and equipment that is fit for purpose. This review shows that this balance is well understood and the improvement proposed in management information systems will add further to the quality of decision making in future years. Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager 01295 221566
- Data Quality** Unlike other VFM reviews, there is no appropriate data collected across Revenue Estimates 2010/11 from the Council's CIPFA defined group of similar authorities. Equally, not all authorities have a service retained in-house. Therefore, to make comparisons and reach conclusions, the data used has been collated across authorities with similar functions and broadly comparable services. Other information is sourced from VOSA assessments, APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) benchmarking information. This has been supplemented with an in-house satisfaction survey. Financial data/comparison has been prepared by the relevant service accountant.

Comments checked by Neil Lawrence, Project Manager,
Improvement 01295 221801

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

A Cleaner, Greener District

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Macnamara
Lead Member for the Environment

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Annex 1	VFM Review Executive Summary & Recommendations
Annex 2	Service Plan Framework
Background Papers	
Full VFM Review of Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management on deposit in the Members' Room and available on-line	
Report Author	Alison Davies, Improvement Project Manager
Contact Information	01295 221580 Alison.davies@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Introduction

This review establishes if the Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management function is offering value for money, develops a forward plan for the service, and seeks to identify a full range of savings required to contribute towards the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy savings target.

The Service

Since 2003, the Council has pursued a policy of purchasing vehicles and maintaining these using the established in-house team. This approach was endorsed when the Council undertook a Waste and Collection Service Value for Money Review in 2008. This established that the Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management Service needed to maintain its high quality service while introducing a range of measures to improve its efficiency and reduce its cost base.

In 2011, the Council's Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management service supports:

- 65 Council owned vehicles, up from 48 in 2007/08, looked after by the vehicle maintenance team split between the Banbury and Bicester Depots
- 18 Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) and 6 other Large Goods Vehicles collecting 53,000 tonnes of waste and recycling from the kerbside
- 18 street cleansing vehicles including 5 mechanical sweepers keeping the district clean
- More than 20 other vehicles for supervisors, car park wardens, property maintenance, etc.
- A MOT testing centre at Thorpe Lane depot, requiring a dedicated vehicle maintenance technician, testing Council vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes. The centre also tests Class IV vehicles (cars), Class VII vehicles (Vans) and Class V (Minibuses) from members of the public and commercial organisations, generating around £70k annual income.

The service needs to provide the Council with cost effective, reliable vehicles to move this amount of waste efficiently and keep Cherwell's streets clean. Therefore the selection and on-going maintenance of vehicles is important not only to ensure efficient, legally compliant operations, but also to minimise the risk to staff and the public.

The service costs £½ m to run and is operated by a team of seven, with a transport manager, supervisor, four technicians and a young apprentice.

Statutory Requirements of a Transport Operation

To operate Large Goods Vehicles (LGVs) a vehicle operators licence, 'O' licence, is required, which has to be applied for every five years. This licence is issued by the Traffic Commissioners and monitored by the Vehicle and Operators Service Agency (VOSA).

There is capacity to expand within the Council's current licence, which is capped to 29 vehicle; the Council currently operates 24 designated LGVs, most of which are RCVs. The 'O' licence requires regular maintenance and a six weekly vehicle inspection programme.

Failure to follow the conditions of the 'O' licence can result in the Traffic Commissioner curtailing, suspending or revoking the licence. By law, the transport operation must be overseen by a competent individual who possesses a Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC). At Cherwell, the transport manager is the named individual on the 'O' licence. The waste collection manager also holds a CPC in the

event that the transport manager is not available for any extended period. Cherwell's LGV operation is current assessed as 'low risk' by VOSA, who operate a risk based points system.

Cherwell's MOT bay is also governed by VOSA and this is also assessed as 'low risk'. The transport manager is authorised examiner for MOT compliance.

Value for Money Conclusion

Cherwell's Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management Service offers good value for money to the Council. It has actively driven down its cost base, while the number of vehicles it maintains has increased and is highly praised by client departments. In comparison to others, the team is top performing on a range of productivity and quality measures. Further, the service highly values its 'low risk' assessment for its Large Good Vehicle operation and MOT bay from VOSA, the Vehicle and Operators Service Agency.

Recommendations and Savings/Income Options

This Review recommends the Board to:

- (1) Endorse the VFM conclusion that the service offers good value for money and has actively driven down its cost base, providing a top performing, high quality service
- (2) Adopt the Service Plan Framework as a guide for the service in future years including areas for future improvements, savings and increased income (attached as Annex 2)
- (3) Note the projected MOT Bay income shortfall in 2011/12 of up to £30k brought about by refurbishment of the depot, reduced bookings believed to be in response to the economic downturn and potential impact on income of a severe Winter like last year. Note the measures in place to reduce costs and increase income to address the shortfall in-year
- (4) Agree the following recommendations to achieve additional savings and income:
 - £8k per annum from 2012/13, through improved fleet procurement and reduced spending on parts
 - Potential future revenue savings and income of £12k from a number of sources including working in partnership with other agencies, neighbouring councils and procurement partnerships
 - Additional new capital income source totalling £12k in both 2011/12 and 2012/13, rising to £24k in future years, as a result of improving the re-sale value achieved at auction from Council-owned equipment.

The Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management function plays a key role in enabling the Council's amenity services to perform well and to a high standard.

The function aims to maintain its low risk status with VOSA, the government agency for regulation and inspected service, by delivering high standards of maintenance within the Council's health and safety framework.

The function aims to continually improve its standards delivered by highly trained and well equipped technicians and support staff and systems. This requires a balance between capital investment in the fleet, including the upgrading of systems, and driving down the running costs of the function.

Reduce costs, taking a whole-of-life perspective:

- Adopt as on-going policy the principle of outright capital purchase of equipment, as the lowest cost option currently available to the Council
- extend the life of vehicles where economically advantageous: RCVs from 6 to 7 years and also road sweepers from 6 to 7 years
- Increase team skill set: increasing in-house maintenance capability for specialist equipment to reduce reliance on costly external support; improve diagnostic capabilities and client management
- Improve value-based purchasing decisions: review buying consortiums. buying more robust vehicles; smarter use of warranties, refurbished parts and re-moulds (tyres, etc.) having regard to safety thresholds
- Improve contract terms from suppliers: negotiation of discounts, stockholding and parts supply arrangements
- Improve management information systems to support whole-of-life performance and cost appraisals. The purchase of a new Fleet Management System is on the 2011/12 capital programme which will enable significant improvements in evidence based decision making.

Increase income by increasing the client base and the utilisation of the MOT bay, recognising that the Council does not want to be seen as undermining local businesses in the same market:

- Promote services such as MOTs & servicing to other public sector bodies
- Improved utilisation of the MOT bay, especially in the winter months, by attracting new clients
- Increase re-sale return: improve the rate of return at auction for the re-sale of the Council's vehicles and equipment.

Continue adding value:

- Reduce the carbon footprint: investing in improved fuel usage and delivery systems & wash down systems
- Increase staffing stability and investing in the younger generation: Reduce the need for agency, servicing support staff from external companies and improve succession planning by participating in the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme
- Continue providing a caretaking role for Thorpe Lane depot: the Vehicle Maintenance team manages activities within the overall Thorpe Lane depot such as unloading delivery vehicles & operating the fork lift truck so the Council does not need to invest in a security, storeman/yard person arrangement.

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Executive

Performance and Risk Management Framework 2011/12 First Quarter Performance Report

5 September 2011

Report of the Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report covers the Council's performance for the period 01 April to 30 June 2011 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.4.
- (2) To request that officers report in the second quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.5 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.
- (3) To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This is a report of the Council's performance in the first quarter of 2011/12 measured through the performance management framework. Central to this is the Corporate Scorecard, which is made up of the Council's priority performance targets. The Corporate Scorecard covers key areas of performance, these are: performance against the Council's 14 public pledges; financial performance, human resources performance and customer feedback.

The scorecard also provides a wider summary of performance covering the Corporate Plan, Priority Service Indicators, the Corporate Improvement and Value for Money Programme, the Corporate Equalities Plan, Brighter Futures

in Banbury (the Council's work programme to address disadvantage in Banbury) and Significant Partnerships. The appendices to this report provide a detailed overview of performance in each of these areas.

The Council continues to develop its integrated risk and performance management framework which means that performance and risk is monitored and reviewed as part of a single process. This report includes a review of all strategic, corporate and partnership risks.

To measure performance we use a 'traffic light' system where Green is 100% of the target met, Amber 90% and above, and Red below 90% and detailed performance indicators and commentary is presented in the appendices to this report.

1.2 It should be noted that although this is primarily a report of corporate performance the Council's performance management framework also includes monitoring at the directorate level against service plans and strategies. The majority of operational performance issues are dealt with at service and directorate level. However significant service successes and issues are reported upwards and where appropriate included in this report.

1.3 It is also important to note that during 2010/11 significant changes were made to the national performance management regime. As a result the statutory requirement to report on national indicators was withdrawn. The Council has fully reviewed its performance management framework and streamlined its reporting focusing on key areas of public priority, and the draft framework for 2011/12 was agreed by Executive at their meeting on 7 March 2011. This framework has now been finalised to reflect new targets and national requirements and forms the basis of this report.

The Council remains committed to publically reporting its service and financial performance and continues to do so on a quarterly basis at Executive and by providing a monthly performance summary on the Cherwell District Council website.

Proposals

1.4 We ask the Executive to note the significant progress made in delivering the Council's objectives. Particular highlights include:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Job clubs continue to provide a strong service with solid attendance and special events planned for the next quarter to improve accessibility.
- Business support – good progress has been made with support to local business through the advisory service and the investment partnership. In addition a business breakfast in Banbury was held around the theme of apprenticeships, local business were asked to make pledges to improve local opportunities. This resulted in more than 140 pledges including ten apprenticeships and 28 placements lasting from one to eight weeks. The Council is also continuing its successful business apprenticeship scheme.

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell

- Feasibility work has been commissioned to explore potential sites for

more bring bank recycling centres.

- A neighbourhood litter blitz has taken place in Kidlington, helping to work with local communities to improve the environmental quality of their areas.

A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Cherwell

- Good progress towards securing the long term future of the Banbury Museum through work to develop a museum trust.
- The Council continues to provide a strong community leadership role for local health provision. During the first quarter the Council has supported the first meeting of the new Community Partnership Network to ensure effective stakeholder engagement in local health issues. The Horton Hospital paediatric appointments and anaesthetic service models are now complete and in place.

An Accessible, Value for Money Council

- Additional resources will be available over the summer to ensure that processing times for housing and council tax benefit claims do not increase. Briefing sessions for voluntary and other agency advisors supporting those affected by benefits changes have continued and been very successful.
- The Council has continued its programme of public engagement and consultation with work to consult on long term budget priorities undertaken. Successful community engagement events aimed at improving the accessibility and delivery of services have taken place, these include the parish, faith and disability forums as well as a number of consultations undertaken using the Council's web based consultation portal.

- 1.5 The performance management framework allows Councillors to monitor the progress made in delivering our objectives and to take action when performance is not satisfactory, risks to performance are identified or new issues arise. There are a number of such items identified in this report and we recommend officers should report on the latest position, implications, and the action they are taking in the next quarterly performance report. These are:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Number of households living in temporary accommodation: a rise in the figures has occurred during June with 36 households against a predicted number of 33. Preventative and advisory work continues and the implications of national policy changes are being monitored.
- Deliver 500 new homes: performance against this target is off track with 32 completions against a target of 125. During the year it is expected that the rate will increase but the national economic context is still suppressing performance.

A Safe, Healthy and Thriving District

- Leisure centre usage: visitor figures are down in comparison to the same period as last year. Issues such as extended bank holidays are

likely to be a cause; however the issue will be reviewed with the provider to ensure there are no other factors.

Conclusion

- 1.6 In this report we show that at the first quarter Council continues to make strong progress on delivering its ambitions to improve the services delivered to the public and against key projects and priorities. Risks and opportunities have been reviewed and the report highlights a small number of areas which the Council needs to keep under review to ensure targets are met. This report also identifies emerging issues which will be reported on in the next quarter.

Background Information

2.1 Progress on issues raised in the last Executive performance review

The Executive on 4 July 2011 requested progress reports on a number of issues identified in the year end performance report as areas where targets had not been met or where there were emerging issues. The position in relation to these is outlined below:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Delivery of the Rural Strategy: at year end delivery against some of the actions in the strategy was slightly off track.

A review of the delivery plan has been undertaken with the number of actions reduced and re-prioritised in line with funding constraints. The guiding vision for the Cherwell Rural Strategy remains the same 'to achieve and maintain inclusive, sustainable rural communities in an inclusive and sustainable countryside2.

The 2009 delivery plan had 81 actions, to be delivered by the Council and a range of local partners and other organisations. The new delivery plan for 2011/13 has 75 actions, prioritised from 1 to 3. The prioritisation is based on a match with local priorities and the availability of resources. This delivery plan has been prepared in consultation with local partners.

A Cleaner, Greener District

- Reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill: at year end performance was slightly off target with the target of a 4000 tonne reduction and performance of 3700 tonnes.

A review of performance has been undertaken and a number of factors considered. Landfill tonnages fell in 2010/11, which was the first full year of operation of the food waste recycling scheme. However, despite promotion and raising awareness the reduction in landfill tonnages in the last quarter of 2010/11 and 2011/12 flattened off. Around 45% of food waste is being captured by the food recycling scheme, this was a very good start but it is slightly disappointing that food waste recycling hasn't increased further in recent months. In addition there are still several thousand tonnes of recyclables still in residents green bins.

A number of actions are in place which should push landfill tonnages

down and divert more waste from landfill, these include:

- The collection day changes in late July/early August meant that additional recycling literature was sent to over 20,000 properties to encourage recycling
 - A review of the larger 360 bins is underway and several hundred households have 360 bins but do not have sufficient number of people in the household to warrant having a larger bin. Residents in some of these properties were found not to be fully utilising the recycling services
 - The vending machines for kitchen caddy sacks were installed in mid July and these will be promoted - access to liners is often a barrier to people recycling food waste
 - More bring bank sites, especially now the collection of glass from bring banks has been brought in house should make it easier for residents to recycle their glass
 - A door stepping campaign in September targeting residents with overflowing green bins in Banbury
- Tackling Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency: at year end this target was off track and issues around the high cost of fuel are recognised to be an ongoing issue for local residents.

The housing and environment teams have undertaken a review of the issues and remain focused on a number of activities to improve energy efficiency. Actions in quarter 1 have included:

- Insulation schemes with 52 homes taking up the Cherwell £99 offer and 257 homes taking up the Bicester £49 scheme.
- The advice and signposting service took and gave advice on 2157 enquiries.
- Private rented accommodation – 40 homes have benefitted through council grants
- Thermal imaging – 4 additional parish councils have asked to be involved in this project and 14 parishes have expressed interest in borrowing energy monitors
- 5 energy efficacy roadshows have taken place promoting energy efficiency and offering advice.

2.2 Overview of Performance

Paragraphs 2.3 – 2.13 provide a more detailed summary of the Councils performance against its comprehensive performance and risk framework. The detailed performance indicators and commentary against each of these are contained within appendices one to eight.

2.3 Corporate Scorecard – Corporate Plan Pledges

The Corporate Scorecard includes the 14 pledges which were included in the 2011/12 Council Tax Leaflet which was sent to every household in Cherwell. Of these 13 are Green and 1 Amber. These pledges directly reflect the Council's four strategic priorities and public priorities.

Successes

- Good progress has been made on the Eco-Bicester demonstration

projects with the official launch of plans for Bryan House which will lead to 23 more affordable homes for the area and replacing a derelict building which was unfit for purpose.

Issues

- Recycling rates: for quarter 1 these are slightly of track and reporting amber. This is due to an exceptionally dry spring and reduced amounts of garden waste collected.

2.4 Corporate Scorecard: Financial Performance

There are two finance targets, relating to predicated variance against revenue and capital budgets. Both are Green. There are no issues of concern at this point.

Work has commenced on preparing the budget for 2012/13 and the first phase of public consultation has been completed. A staff 'efficiency think tank' has also been established and a staff survey is being undertaken to ensure staff suggestions for efficiency savings are identified and actioned.

2.5 Corporate Scorecard: Human Resources

Three Human Resources indicators are monitored: staff turnover; days lost through sickness; and organisational resilience/staff satisfaction. Turnover and sickness are both green. Staff resilience and satisfaction will be measured through a survey which will report in the next quarterly performance update.

2.6 Corporate Scorecard – Customer Feedback

Two key measures are covered: speed of telephone response and customer satisfaction as measured through bi-annual mystery shopping. The first wave of mystery shopping will take place after all telephony changes have been made as part of the project review.

Successes

- Telephony performance has continued to show improved performance with the introduction of messaging and menus.

Details in Appendix 3

2.7 Corporate Plan

The corporate plan is made up of 39 priority performance targets under the Council's four strategic priorities. In this quarter good progress has been made:

Successes

- 31 Affordable Homes have been delivered in this quarter against a target of 25.
- In spite of the challenging economic situation there have been no cases of repeat homelessness this year, preventative work continues.

- The successful programme of work with Age UK continues with a wide range of activities and events undertaken to help older people remain active and healthy.

Details in Appendix 2

2.8 Priority Service Indicators

In addition to the corporate plan the Council has identified a set of 42 priority service indicators that reflect core service provision. Of these 34 are due to report in this quarter, full details are included in appendix 2 but highlights include:

Successes

- Planning performance: processing of minor and other applications exceeds target.
- Risk based food inspection: target number of inspections completed in first quarter.
- Fly tipping remains at low levels and on track for a 5% reduction.
- Benefits claims: average time to process new claims and the average time to process changes, both targets are on track. The Council has worked with Capita to secure additional resources to maintain performance.

Issues

- Planning: appeals and major applications. Both performance targets are off track, however both have been reviewed by the senior management team. No underlying causes have been identified with regards to planning appeals and the Council remains committed to working with developers to ensure the quality of major applications is the focus rather than the speed.

Details in Appendix 3

2.9 Corporate Improvement and Value for Money Programme

The improvement and value for money programme is an important part of the Council's medium term financial strategy and improvement objectives. Projects within this programme aim to secure performance improvement and efficiencies across the whole organisation.

Successes

- Progress on the shared management team is ongoing with consultation on the new management structure complete and the recruitment process underway.
- The final four service value for money reviews have been completed and efficiencies identified will help balance the 2012/123 budget.

Issues

- Development fees and charging: this project is on hold pending central government policy announcements.

- The managing information project is yet to commence. This is likely to be delayed until the share management team is in place in order to ensure that the requirements of the joint team are fully considered.

Details in Appendix 4

2.10 Corporate Equalities Plan

The corporate equalities plan is a cross-council plan that aims to improve customer access, tackle inequality and disadvantage, build strong communities and improve community engagement. It also ensures that the Council is compliant with all equalities legislation.

During the last year there have been a number of changes to the legislation and the Council's plans and policies reflect this. As legislation changes Cherwell District Council equalities policies are reviewed. First quarter performance is summarised below:

Successes

- The Banbury Cohesion Working Group has published a community newsletter and participation in events remains strong.
- Work with youth councils in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington continues and a new youth forum (The Hill) has been set up to liaise with young people in Banbury. An online forum is now available on the youth microsite.
- During the first quarter Cherwell District Council services have had strong representation at a significant number of community events, Pride in Oxford, the Grimsbury Food Festival, the Banbury Old Town Street Party, Connecting Community events and various forums.

Issues

- Given the significant amount of policy change and national financial constraints there has been an increased requirement to undertake equalities analysis of decisions to ensure they do not adversely affect any particular group. The Council has worked to achieve this and will ensure this approach continues.

Details in Appendix 5

2.11 Brighter Futures in Banbury

The Brighter Futures in Banbury programme is a long term and strategic priority for the Council and the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership. It is part of a wider county approach to break the cycle of deprivation and tackle disadvantage. In Banbury the programme aims to address five key themes:

- Improving financial and employment support
- Improving educational attainment and the aspirations of young people
- Improving housing and the local environment
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Supporting the development of safe and strong communities

Successes

- Connecting communities: successful community events have been held to take local services from across the public sector to local communities, improving access and take up. The events also aim to provide local people with the opportunity to feedback their concerns and issues.
- Teen conceptions: the work to reduce teenage conceptions is showing progress and rates have reduced by over 16% since 1999/2000.
- Young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs): the programme's work to reduce the number of NEETs has seen a good deal of success. A project to provide transitional support to young people at risk of 'dropping out' estimates it has prevented 129 young people becoming NEET.
- A food bank is being developed to support people in significant financial hardship.
- Briefing sessions on the impact of changes to the national benefits system have been well attended and more are planned.

Issues

- The cardio-vascular disease health check programme which was due to commence in April 2011 has been delayed, it is currently still under development.
- The next phase of the programme will be to ensure there is strong engagement from the voluntary sector. A successful faith forum event was held to begin this process in June and momentum will need to be sustained.

Details in Appendix 6

2.12 Significant Partnerships

The Council has identified 18 partnerships as significant due to the level of resources involved, and the impact on the local community. Many of the most significant and difficult issues we face, crime, the environment, economic development, can only be tackled if agencies work together. Of these partnerships 8 are county wide (including the County Local Strategic Partnership and its supporting thematic partnerships) the remaining partnerships are specific to the Cherwell district and directly support our strategic priorities.

Successes

- The Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership has held its annual reference group conference with strong attendance and positive feedback. The event was themed around support to the voluntary sector and supporting its role in Cherwell.
- Bicester Vision: the partnership has become an independent business led group, funded by contributions from the private sector and moving away

from Cherwell District Council co-ordination and resourcing. This reflects the value the local business community places on the partnership and a strong commitment to its work.

Issues

- Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Partnership: there is still some uncertainty regarding the future role and remit of the partnership given the health and social care reforms going on at a national level. The issue is being kept under review and district level working relations remain strong.

Details in Appendix 7

2.13 Strategic, Partnership and Corporate Risks

In order to effectively manage its performance and resources the Council needs to be aware of the risks it faces, the impact they may have on the delivery of strategic properties and to have arrangements in place to manage these.

We have 21 strategic, corporate and partnership risks identified on our register that are reviewed on a monthly basis. The risk register is also subject to a fundamental review by the extended management team on an annual basis. Operational and service risks are reviewed at the directorate and service level and escalated to the strategic risk register where appropriate. The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee also monitors the strategic, partnership and corporate risk registers.

Status this quarter

- All current strategic, corporate and partnership risks and mitigation actions have been reviewed and updated on a monthly basis during the first quarter. The only risk that has changed relates to equalities where an increased likelihood of an equalities challenge to policy or service change has been identified as part of a wider national trend. Managers have been reminded about the corporate equalities policy and equalities consultation opportunities are in place to ensure the Council consults effectively.
- There are no additional issues arising with regards to any of our strategic, corporate or partnership risks. However, all risks continue to be reviewed in the light of changing policy, budgetary requirements and constraints.

Details in Appendix 8

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 This report presents the Council's performance against its corporate scorecard for the first quarter of 2011/12. It includes an overview of our successes, areas for improvement and emerging issues to be considered.

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

- Option One** 1. To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.3.

2. To request that officers report in the first quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.4 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.
3. To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.

Option Two

To identify any additional issues for further consideration or review.

Consultations

No specific consultation on this report is required. However, it should be noted that several indicators are based on public consultation or customer feedback.

Implications

Financial:

Financial Effects – The resource required to operate the Performance Management Framework is contained within existing budgets. However the information presented may lead to decisions that have financial implications. These will be viewed in the context of the Medium Term Plan & Financial Strategy and the annual Service & Financial Planning process.

Efficiency Savings – There are none arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551

Legal:

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Interim Monitoring Officer, 01295 221687

Risk Management:

The purpose of the Performance Management Framework is to enable the Council to deliver its strategic objectives. All managers are required to identify and manage the risks associated with achieving this. All risks are logged on the Risk Register and there is an update on managing risks recorded at least quarterly.

Comments checked by Helen Hayes, Performance and Risk Officer, 01295 221801

Data Quality

Data for performance against all indicators has been collected and calculated using agreed methodologies and in accordance with Performance Indicator Definition Records (PIDRs) drawn up by accountable officers. The council's performance management software has been used to gather and report performance data in line with performance reporting procedures.

Comments checked by Helen Hayes, Performance and Risk Officer, 01295 221801

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

The Performance Management Framework covers all of the Council's Strategic Priorities

Executive Lead Member

Councillor Nigel Morris
Lead Member for Change

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Corporate Scorecard 2011/12
Appendix 2	Corporate Plan
Appendix 3	Priority Service Indicators
Appendix 4	Corporate Improvement and Value for Money Programme
Appendix 5	Corporate Equalities Plan
Appendix 6	Brighter Futures in Banbury
Appendix 7	Significant Partnerships
Appendix 8	Strategic, Corporate and Partnership Risks
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Contact Information	01295 221563 claire.taylor@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Corporate Scorecard 2011/2012		Total GREEN	19
		AMBER	1
		RED	0
		NO DATA (N/A)	1
Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Comment on Performance to date	
Reporting Frequency	Quarter 1		
Corporate Plan Pledges			
A District of Opportunity			
Work with our partners to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training across the district	Strategic Director - Environment & Community	Monthly	In the three Brighter Future Wards preventing NEETs overall is proving successful, however, the existing 16-19 year old NEET levels have improved in Grimsbury and Castle, but not in the other two Wards. The total number of NEETs dropped initially reflecting the impact of the Princes' Trust Programmes. Despite the success of the transition project at preventing significant numbers of young people from becoming NEET, the actual numbers remaining NEET has not dropped substantially. This core of NEET in the three Wards (totalling 119 at May 11), is the subject of an intensive action planning exercise beginning June. Jobseeker Allowance rates are increasing in the three Wards and the under 25 group remain high, with Grimsbury & Castle increasing. Stats Updates: a)The unemployment rate across Cherwell has climbed back to 1.9% by May 2011, where it was at May 2010, from a low point during Q3 of 2010/11 at 1.7%. b)Number of NEETs in Banbury has dropped from 8.27% in May 2010 to 6.37% May 2011. c)Across Cherwell, NEET percentages across Banbury and surrounding area have dropped from 7.48% at March 2011 to 5.71% NEET at end June 2011; Bicester/Killington and surrounding area has very slightly from 4.08% in March 2011 to 4.22%
Deliver 100 affordable homes in the district	Housing Services	Monthly	We have exceeded our target, 31 affordable homes have been delivered to date against a target of 25.
Start building the new shops and cinema in Bicester Town Centre	Regeneration & Estates	Monthly	The date when work will start on site depends on when the CPO is confirmed. Currently the start date is most likely to be in January 2012, but could move forward if a speedy confirmation of the CPO were to be issued by the Secretary of State. However this appears unlikely.
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell			
Increase the household recycling rate to above 60%	Environmental Services	Monthly	Recycling rate slightly behind expectations, 61% against a target of 65% - less garden waste collected due to weather patterns in May & June. Reasonably confident targets will be met by the end of the year.
Maintain high levels of residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness	Environmental Services	Monthly	Customer satisfaction survey results available in September.
Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by installing solar panels on Council buildings and generating savings in our energy costs	Environmental Services	Monthly	On track.
Work with partners to improve the energy efficiency of homes and enable more residents to achieve affordable energy bills	Housing Services	Monthly	Working with Parish Councils using electricity monitors during the summer and thermal imaging camera during the winter.
Deliver the Eco-Bicester demonstration projects	Planning Policy and Economic Development	Monthly	All projects are progressing.
A Safe, Healthy and Thriving District			
Continue to provide a wide range of recreational opportunities and activities for young people across the district.	Recreation and Health	Monthly	Significant number of activities and programmes for young people are being delivered directly and in conjunction with partners.
Work with partners to maintain already low levels of crime in the district	Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services	Monthly	Joint working continues.
An Accessible, Value for Money Council			
Secure savings of at least £1m to help meet the reduction in our government funding.	Finance	Monthly	Work progressing to secure reductions.
Improve the information available to the public about our costs and performance, maintaining the publication of all items of expenditure over £500	Corporate Strategy and Performance	Monthly	Performance and spending information continues to be published on the website. During quarter 2 the info available on the CDC website will be reviewed and improved.
Maintain high levels of customer satisfaction with our services	Corporate Strategy and Performance	Quarterly	There are risks associated with performance in this measure given the national economic context. However, the customer improvement project is underway and connecting communities has launched both aimed at improving customer service.

Corporate Scorecard 2011/2012		Total GREEN	19		
		AMBER	1		
		RED	0		
		NO DATA (N/A)	1		
Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Quarter 1	
Improve access to our services by increasing online payment and appointment options	Customer Services and Information Systems	Monthly	Online payments will be improved from August following the scheduled change to our payments technology at the end of July. The project to deliver more online bookings is on track and a specification is being developed now, following some pilot process mapping, and procurement is scheduled for the next quarter. Plans to introduce appointments at the One Stop Shops are in train to implement in September, after the payment kiosks are embedded and the bin round changes are in place.	G	
Corporate Scorecard					
Financial Performance					
Percentage variance on revenue budget expenditure against profile (+2%/-5%)	Finance	Monthly	Projected to be within target variance levels (+2% / -5%).	G	
Percentage variance on capital budget expenditure against profile (+2%/-5%); Other projs	Finance	Monthly	Projected to be within target variance levels (+2% / -5%).	G	
Human Resources					
Staff turnover (voluntary leavers)	People and Improvement	Quarterly	Turnover remains low due to current economic climate and is currently 0.81%.	G	
Number of days lost through sickness	People and Improvement	Quarterly	Average days sick absence per employee FTE = 1.6 (broken down as 0.86 days short term sick absence and 0.74 days long term sick absence). Within target for this quarter, but slightly higher level of sickness than for the same period last year.	G	
Organisational Resilience / Staff Satisfaction	People and Improvement	Quarterly	Due to Start in July.	n/a	
Customer Feedback					
Speed of response to telephone calls	Customer Services and Information Systems	Monthly	Telephony performance continues to be improved with the introduction of the telephony menus and messages.	G	
Achieve above average performance in a nationally comparative telephone mystery shoppers survey	Customer Services and Information Systems	Bi - annual	Mystery shopping will be undertaken after the introduction of all the telephony changes.	G	
Corporate Performance Frameworks - Summary of Performance					
Performance Framework	Performance targets %			Reporting Frequency	Comments
	Red	Amber	Green		
Corporate Plan : Pledges	0%	5%	95%	Monthly	All but one indicator is green. Household recycling narrowly missed its target due to unusual weather in May and June, but reasonably confident that targets will be met by the end of the year.
Corporate Plan (Exc Pledges)	8%	10%	82%	Monthly	31 are green, 4 amber and 3 red. The reds relate to new homes (2 indicators) and leisure centre usage.
Priority Service Indicators	9%	9%	82%	Monthly	27 are green, 3 amber and 3 red. The reds relate to determining major planning applications, planning appeals and CO2 emissions.
Corporate Improvement Programme	0%	31%	69%	Monthly	9 are green and 4 amber. The ambers primarily refer to initiatives held up awaiting central government guidance or put on hold pending the management restructure.
Corporate Equalities Plan	0%	0%	100%	Quarterly	All 12 indicators are green. The Corporate Equality Scorecard confirms that performance against the Corporate Equalities Action Plan has been green throughout the first quarter of this year. Further information in relation to completion timescales of some of the measures will be available during the 2nd quarter equality scorecard.
Brighter Futures in Banbury	11%	22%	67%	Quarterly	6 are green, 2 amber and 1 red. The red relates to reducing the clear inequality gaps with low life expectancy. On the whole, good ongoing multi agency actions agreed and underway. Connecting to Communities engagement activities also underway. Cherwell Faith Forum considered Brighter Futures Programme. New activities being considered for funding from residual LAA reward money.
Significant Partnerships	0%	6%	94%	Quarterly	17 are green and 1 is amber. The amber relates to the Health and Well Being Partnership Board because of the uncertainty about its future.
Risk Register - Summary of Changes					

Corporate Scorecard 2011/2012		Total GREEN	19
		AMBER	1
		RED	0
		NO DATA (N/A)	1
Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Quarter 1
<p>All risks were reviewed at the start of the year and 4 new risks added. Most changes to net risk ratings between this quarter and last quarter have been minor and a result of this review and not the risk itself. The only risk that has changed within the quarter relates to equalities where an increased likelihood of an equalities challenge to policy or service change has been identified as part of a wider national trend. Managers have been reminded about the corporate equalities policy and equalities consultation opportunities are in place to ensure the Council consults effectively.</p>			
Comment on Performance to date			

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Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan		
Cherwell: A District of Opportunity	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Work with partners to tackle disadvantage in the District		
Support vulnerable residents through challenging economic times	G	A range of work is underway to support vulnerable residents. For example improved financial viability work is assisting negotiations to secure affordable extra-care housing at Yarnton. There has been an increase in reactive and proactive work to ensure properties are safe and have adequate amenities. This has resulted in the best outputs to date in resolution of hazards, decent homes standards, and an improved inspection programme for homes in multiple occupation. In the light of much reduced funding for the national mortgage rescue 2 scheme housing services are continuing to offer high-quality housing options work to prevent the need to refer wherever possible, but have referred three cases of individuals threatened with homelessness by repossession.
Work with our partners to reduce the number of young people not in education employment or training across the district	G	In the three Brighter Future Wards preventing NEETs overall is proving successful, however, the existing 16-19 year old NEET levels have improved in Grimsbury and Castle, but not in the other two Wards. The total number of NEETs dropped initially reflecting the impact of the Princes' Trust Programmes. Despite the success of the transition project at dropped substantially. This core of NEET in the three Wards (totalling 119 at May 11), is the subject of an intensive action planning exercise beginning June. Jobseeker Allowance rates are increasing in the three Wards and the under 25 group remain high, with Grimsbury & Castle increasing. Stats Updates: a) The unemployment rate across Cherwell has climbed back to 1.9% by May 2011, where it was at May 2010, from a low point during Q3 of 2010/11 at 1.7%. b) Number of NEETs in Banbury has dropped from 8.27% in May 2010 to 6.37% May 2011. c) Across Cherwell, NEET percentages across Banbury and surrounding area have dropped from 7.48% at March 2011 to 5.71% NEET at end June 2011; Bicester/Kidlington and surrounding area has risen very slightly from 4.08% in March 2011 to 4.22%
Support local people into work by helping another 1000 local people at our Bicester and Banbury Jobs clubs	G	Job clubs have continued to be successful with 52 job seekers helped in April, 57 in May and 128 in June (including in June; 60 at Bicester Village Job Fair), making a total of 237 for the quarter. Special events are planned for later in the year which it is hoped will increase the number of beneficiaries.
Deliver the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme	G	Good ongoing multi agency actions agreed and underway. Connecting to Communities engagement activities also underway. Cherwell Faith Forum considered Brighter Futures Programme. New activities being considered for funding from residual LAA reward money.
Balance economic development and housing growth		
Deliver 500 new homes including through planned major housing projects	R	The projection for the year is 500 (an average of 125 per quarter), making a return of 32 very low. The level of house building continues to be affected by national economic conditions and sites on which it is expected to see housing completions during 11/12 have yet to progress significantly. Nevertheless first completions have now been recorded at South West Bicester (Kingsmere) and on Land South of Milton Road, Bloxham.

Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan		
Deliver 100 affordable homes in the district	G	We have exceeded our target, 31 affordable homes have been delivered to date against a target of 25.
Promote local economic development through business advice and support, inward investment and the Local Enterprise Partnerships	G	20 Cherwell residents received Oxfordshire Business Enterprise (OBE) business planning advice during quarter 1. 19 detailed enquiries dealt with by Cherwell Investment Partnership (CHIP) service.
Develop a robust and locally determined planning framework		
Develop a clear long term local development framework for the district	G	Following approval in May by Executive of a revised development strategy for the district, a revised draft of the Core Strategy is currently being prepared for public consultation. The longer term progress of the Core Strategy will depend upon progress of the Localism bill through Parliament.
Prepare an updated policy for developer contributions and deliver at least £1million funding for infrastructure improvements	G	Should be achieved through permission for Phase 1 of Eco Bicester (NW) Exemplar development.
Protect and enhance the quality of the built environment	A	Reduced staff resources caused by loss of two staff members, staff sickness and secondment to the Eco Bicester Team has meant we have needed to concentrate on statutory services. However the appointment of a temporary officer should partially assist in enabling us to produce more guidance documents.
Work to improve the quality and vibrancy of our town centres and urban areas		
Start building the new shops and cinema in Bicester Town Centre	G	The date when work will start on site depends on when the CPO is confirmed. Currently the start date is most likely to be in January 2012, but could move forward if a speedy confirmation of the CPO were to be issued by the Secretary of State. However this appears unlikely.
Make progress on the Canal Side Regeneration programme in Banbury	G	Work is still taking place with the Environment Agency to agree the flood risk, and extent of the developable land. This needs to be resolved before the SPD can be completed. Meanwhile discussions are taking place with the principal landowners about a possible first phase of the development.
Prepare detailed planning guidance for the future redevelopment of the Bolton Road area in Banbury	G	Work is proceeding on the preparation of SPD. It is anticipated that a draft will be reported to the Executive in September.

Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan				
A District of Opportunity : Performance Indicators				
	Quarter 1 Actual	Quarter 1 Target	Quarter 1 Performance	Comment
NI 156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation	36	33	A	The numbers in temporary accommodation have experienced a short but significant rise over the last month. This is due to the effects of the recession which are now catching up with local residents and the reduced number of properties in the private rented sector that are available due to housing benefit changes. However, a great deal of pro-active and preventative work around homelessness has taken place to ensure this figure did not increase more steeply. The current national changes around housing are still being monitored and acted upon, whilst longer term, the current commissioning of the advice services project will ensure greater support to residents around financial issues. Continued strong advice work is essential.
Housing advice: repeat homelessness cases	0	2	G	Effective prevention of homelessness has contributed to no cases of repeat homelessness so far this year.
NI181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	10.96	11	G	Capita have made additional resources available to ensure that performance does not slip over the peak summer holiday period.
NI154 Net additional homes provided	32.00	125.00	R	The projection for the year is 500 (an average of 125 per quarter), making a return of 32 very low. The level of house building continues to be affected by national economic conditions and sites on which it is expected to see housing completions during 11/12 have yet to progress significantly. Nevertheless first completions have now been recorded at South West Bicester (Kingsmere) and on Land South of Milton Road, Bloxham.

Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan		
A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Cherwell	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Work with partners to support the development of safe and thriving local communities and neighbourhoods		
Continue to provide a wide range of recreational activities and opportunities of young people across the district	G	Significant number of activities and programmes for young people are being delivered directly and in conjunction with partners.
Work with partners to maintain already low levels of crime in the district (all crime)	G	Joint working continues.
Improve the condition of homes in the district to make them safer and healthier	G	In the first 4 months we have resolved category one hazards in 52 premises (compared with 47 for the same period last year) and category 2 hazards in a further 10 homes (compared with 19 for the same period last year). 28 private rented properties with improved energy efficiency grants through CHEEP grants (9 for the same period last year). 580 homes insulated through Cocoon (incorporating the Council's £49 and £99 schemes) in the first quarter compared with 532 for the whole of last year (the principle difference being active promotion of the Bicester £49 scheme).
Support the local community, voluntary and not for profit sectors to play an active role in the district		
Work with the local voluntary sector to provide advisory services for the local community	G	On August 15th an invitation to tender will be issued and advertised for the re-provision of advice services in Cherwell.
Support volunteering across the district	G	A series of meetings were held with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council to help inform plans to support volunteer driver schemes for people in rural areas.
Prepare a new community development strategy to ensure the Council's work in this area provides value for money and addresses local need	G	Initial work has started to produce a Community Development Strategy for Cherwell. This work involves a scoping exercise to ascertain what community development activities are currently undertaken by the council. A number of workstreams will need to be reflected in the strategy including community land trusts, community engagement, the work on voluntary sector grants and capacity building. The strategy will fit more effectively with the visioning work that will happen in October.
Provide good quality recreation and leisure opportunities in the district		
Make progress on the South West Bicester multi-sports village	G	Project report agreed at Executive in June. Planning application submitted to be determined in July.
Maintain current levels of visits/usage to the recently modernised district leisure centres (Spiceball, Bicester and Kidlington)	A	Figures indicate that the 'honeymoon period' for the modernised sports centres is over and along with the economic downturn throughputs have dropped. Discussed with Parkwood Community Leisure, health and fitness memberships holding their own and performing well against regional sales position. The Cherwell contract is performing well when compared to other contracts. Working in partnership to boost usage with promotional free Olympic Countdown Open Days planned for all centres in July. Parkwood reviewing programme to look at area's where numbers have dropped to target additional marketing.
Work with partners to deliver 40 active lifestyle sessions for older people each month	G	A wide range of programmes and sessions are being delivered on behalf of CDC by Age UK Oxon. Regular monitoring and review undertaken.
Secure the long term future of Banbury museum, reducing the cost for local taxpayers and maintaining access for the community	G	Project Board reports good progress with the various work streams. Report expected to go to Executive in September.

Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan				
Support improvement of local health facilities, services and standards across the district				
		G		
Work to promote active and independent lifestyles amongst older people				A wide range of programmes and sessions are being delivered on behalf of CDC by Age UK Oxon. Regular monitoring and review undertaken.
Support the local NHS to retain and develop health services at the Horton General Hospital		G		First meeting of new Community Partnership Network held in June with good stakeholder buy in. Ongoing uncertainty about relationship with stakeholder engagement functions of Health and Well Being Boards, Healthwatch and Clinical Commissioning Groups. New Horton paediatric appointments and anaesthetic service models complete and in place. Additional appointments to obstetrics and gynaecology underway to establish robust operating model pending further clarification of training posts and numbers.
Continue to support new and improved health services in Bicester and the surrounding area		G		Pre Qualification Questionnaire issued for new procurement process ahead of formal Strategic Health Authority sign off.
A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Cherwell : National Indicators				
	Quarter 1 Actual	Quarter 1 Target	Quarter 1 Performance	Comment
Leisure Centre usage - all centres (Spiceball, Bicester, Kidlington, Woodgreen, North Oxfordshire Academy, Cooper School)	285294	317943	R	Whilst we are still below the cumulative target the gap between actual and target is decreasing each month. In April we were 16,339 below target, in May 10,829 and in June 4,481. It is hoped that by the end of the year will meet the monthly targets, but it is unlikely that we will meet the cumulative target.
% of nuisance cases dealt with within the prescribed timescale (maximum of 48 hours)				To be reported from Quarter Two.
% of nuisance cases resolved within 8 weeks				To be reported from Quarter Two.
Change in the number of Anti-Social Behaviour cases				To be reported from Quarter Two.
Serious acquisitive crime rate per 1,000 popn. (NI 016)	1.60	1.38	R	Issues around vehicle theft. Juggernaut operations planned by Thames Valley Police.

Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan		
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Provide excellent waste collection and recycling services, working to reduce the amount of waste produced and to increase recycling across the district		
Increase the household recycling rate to above 60%	A	Recycling rate slightly behind expectations (61% against a target of 65%) - less garden waste collected due to weather patterns in May & June. Reasonably confident that targets will be met by the end of the year.
	G	<p>Landfill tonnages fell in 2010/11, the first full year of operation of the food waste recycling scheme. However despite promotion and raising awareness the reduction in landfill tonnages in the last quarter of 2010/11 and 2011/12 have flattened off. Around 45% of food waste is being captured by the food recycling scheme, this was a very good start but it is slightly disappointing that food waste recycling hasn't increased further in recent months. In addition there are still several thousand tonnes of recyclables still in residents green bins.</p> <p>A number of actions are in place which should push landfill tonnages down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The collection day changes in late July/early August meant that additional recycling literature was sent to over 20,000 properties to encourage recycling - A review of the larger 360 bins is underway and several hundred households have 360 bins but do not have sufficient number of people in the household to warrant having a larger bin. Residents in some of these properties were found not to be fully utilising the recycling services - The vending machines for kitchen caddy sacks were installed in mid July and these will be promoted - access to liners is often a barrier to people recycling food waste - More bring bank sites, especially now the collection of glass from bring banks has been brought in house should make it easier for residents to recycle their glass - A door stepping campaign in September targeting residents with overflowing green bins in Banbury <p>These actions and others are expecting to divert more waste from landfill.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction survey results due in September.</p>
Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill	G	
Maintain the current high levels of customer satisfaction with our recycling and waste collection services	G	
Work to ensure our streets, town centres, open spaces and residential areas are clean, well maintained and safe		
Maintain high levels of residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness	G	Customer satisfaction survey results available in September.
Increase the number of bring bank recycling sites in the district	G	Several possible new sites identified - feasibility work underway.
Work with local communities to continue the programme of neighbourhood litter blitzes	G	First neighbourhood blitz event - Kidlington successfully completed.

Corporate Plan 2011/2012 Action Plan			
Work to reduce our impact on the natural environment, limit our use of natural resources and support others in the district to do the same			
Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by installing solar panels on Council buildings and generating savings in our energy costs	G	On track.	
Work with partners to improve the energy efficiency of homes and enable more residents to achieve affordable energy bills	G	Working with Parish Councils using electricity monitors during the summer and thermal imaging camera during the winter.	
Work with partners to support the development of Eco-Bicester, creating a centre of excellence in terms of green or sustainable living			
Deliver the Eco-Bicester demonstration projects	G	All projects are progressing.	
Work with all parties to achieve an acceptable scheme on the initial 400 home development	G	The Eco Bicester Project team continues to work with the private sector development consortium to deliver the proposals for the first phase of development at NW Bicester.	
Ensure there are opportunities for local people to participate in the Eco-Bicester programme	G	The Eco Bicester Project Team and Private Sector continue to develop a communications strategy to ensure opportunities for local people to participate.	
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell : performance indicators			
Quarterly	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter
	Actual	Target	Performance
Residual household waste per household	5927.00	5900.00	A
Landfill tonnages fell in 2010/11, the first full year of operation of the food waste recycling scheme. However despite promotion and raising awareness the reduction in landfill tonnages in the last quarter of 2010/11 and first quarter of 2011/12 have flattened off and the target has been narrowly missed. Around 45% of food waste is being captured by the food recycling scheme, this was a very good start but it is slightly disappointing that food waste recycling hasn't increased further in recent months. In addition there are still several thousand tonnes of recyclables still in residents green bins. A number of actions are in place which should push landfill tonnages down.			

Corporate Plan 2012/2012 Action Plan		
An Accessible, Value for Money Cherwell	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Provide value for money and a financially sound organisation, minimising the impact of smaller council budgets on frontline and priority services		
Secure savings of at least £1m to help meet the reduction in our government funding	G	Work progressing to secure reductions.
Ensure the Council's budget is matched to strategic priorities and services are able to demonstrate they provide value for money	G	Budget based on priorities and final VFM's going to September 2011 Executive.
Work with partners to reduce Council costs		
Reduce senior management costs by implementing a single shared senior management team with South Northamptonshire Council	G	Implementation of team underway - recruitment in Sept 2011. Savings from Oct 2011.
Explore opportunities to reduce costs by working with partners including South Northamptonshire Council, to develop alternative service delivery models or shared services.	G	Being reviewed through the Joint Arrangements Steering Group.
Demonstrate that we can be trusted to act properly for you by being transparent about our costs and performance		
Improve the information available to the public about our costs and performance, maintaining the publication of all items of expenditure over £500	G	Performance and spending information continues to be published on the website. During quarter 2 the info available on the CDC website will be reviewed and improved.
Consult with local residents in a cost effective manner to ensure the Council has a good understanding of local priorities	G	The annual satisfaction survey has been commissioned and is well on the way to meeting the required number of completions for robust statistical analysis. The survey is also available online. The budget consultation has been commissioned. This year the consultation will be quantitative rather than qualitative to build on the strong perception information we already hold.
Work to ensure we provide good customer service through the delivery of high quality and accessible services		
Maintain high rates of customer satisfaction with our services	G	There are risks associated with performance in this measure given the national economic context. However, the customer improvement project is underway and connecting communities has launched both aimed at improving customer service (measure reviewed and comment remains the same as May 2011).

Corporate Plan 2012/2012 Action Plan		
Maintain existing levels of satisfaction with information provided by the Council	G	Information provided in a variety of formats. Communications material confirms with the Plain English - Crystal Mark and takes into consideration, a wide range of factors, ethnicity, gender and geographic location.
Improve access to our services by increasing online payment and appointment options	G	Online payments will be improved from August following the scheduled change to our payments technology at the end of July. The project to deliver more online bookings is on track and a specification is being developed now, following some pilot process mapping, and procurement is scheduled for the next quarter. Plans to introduce appointments at the One Stop Shops are in train to implement in September, after the payment kiosks are embedded and the bin round changes are in place.

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Priority Service Indicators 2011/2012					
	Quarter 1 Actual	Quarter 1 Target	Quarter 1 Performance	Comment	
A District of Opportunity					
NI 159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.	
NI 170 Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.	
NI 157a Processing of major applications within 13 weeks	10.00	60.00	R	Target cannot be achieved with current low number of major applications. Management approach is that key, complex applications may over-run processing time targets in the interest of sound planning outcomes.	
NI 157b Processing of minor applications within 8 weeks	84.21	65.00	G	Performance continues to exceed target.	
NI 157c Processing of other applications within 8 weeks	87.02	80.00	G	Performance continues to exceed target.	
% Planning appeals allowed against refusal decision	38.46	30.00	R	Performance measure is volatile as based on low overall appeal numbers at present. No evidence of poor decisions at present. Will be carefully monitored.	
Number of planning appeals	13.00	n/a	n/a	There have been 13 planning appeals and 5 have been allowed.	
NI 159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.	
% houses developed on previously developed land			G	For the first quarter, 78% of completions were on previously developed land. It should be acknowledged that this was out of a total of only 32 completions.	
Contribute to the creation of 200 new jobs			A	1 business (four jobs) created. Four jobs created at hair salon through business advice, and guidance around property, through Oxfordshire Business Enterprise (OBE). 63 job gains and 49 losses recorded.	
Prepare design, planning and conservation guidance documents to protect and enhance the built environment			A	Loss of one staff member, staff sickness and secondment to the Eco Bicester Team has reduced staff resources to about half the previous level, resulting in a need to concentrate on statutory services. The appointment of a replacement member of staff to start in August will partially assist in getting back on target.	

Priority Service Indicators 2011/2012

	Quarter 1 Actual	Quarter 1 Target	Quarter 1 Performance	Comment
A Cleaner Greener Cherwell				
NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area	1.70	0.00	R	Compared to the baseline (2009/10) overall CO2 emissions have increased slightly by 1.7%. Many of the initiatives to reduce CO2 emissions have yet to be fully realised, so we do expect to meet targets by the end of the year by implementing projects from Cherwell's Carbon Management Plan, including: Thorpe Lane Depot refurbishment (inc. solar PV, improved lighting), passive infra red light sensors at Bodicote House, variable speed drives at leisure centres, behavioural Change (inc. Green Champions network, Energy Policy, Energy Saving Guide, Workplace Travel Plan), and improved energy monitoring.
NI 188 Planning to adapt to climate change (score)				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.
Inform all residents and businesses how to reduce carbon emissions			G	Leaflet available in one stop shops and on the website.
NI 194i Emissions of NOx				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.
NI 194ii % reduction of Nox emissions				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.
NI 194iii Emissions of PM10				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.
NI 194iv % Reduction in PM10 emissions				Annual Target : Data not due until March 2012.
Reduce the number of fly tips by 5%			G	On track - fly tip level similar to last year not yet reached 5% reduction but should be achieved by year end.

Priority Service Indicators 2011/2012						
	Quarter 1 Actual	Quarter 1 Target	Quarter 1 Performance	Comment		
A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Community						
Number of risk based food premises inspections completed	104.00	104.00	G	First quarter achieved on target.		
% of residents when asked feel safe being home alone after dark			G	This is measured annually in the satisfaction survey.		
% Residents when asked say they feel safe in town centres			G	This is measured annually in the satisfaction survey.		
Delivery of Olympic Legacy actions and events leading to 2012 and beyond			G	Regular planning meeting with Urban Town Council's to coordinate district wide events with a 2012 theme. Legacy leaflet produced and web site created to bring all information to one place.		
Violence Against the Person incidents per 1,000 population	0.12	1.14	G	Exceeds target.		
008 Increase participation in active recreation by 1%			G	We have continued to deliver Go Active initiatives and started on the new Active Women initiative which will have a positive effect on getting more people participating in sport and activity.		
An Accessible Value for Money Council						
BV009 % Council Tax collected	29.90	30.00	A	On track to budget.		
BV010 % NDR collected	32.42	30.00	G	On track to budget.		
BV078a Average time for new HB/CTB claims	16.42	18.00	G	Performance being maintained on target as processing volumes return to normal levels after Year End. Capita have made additional resources available to ensure that performance does not slip over the peak holiday period.		
BV078b Average time to process change in circumstances	9.62	13.00	G	Performance remains on target. Capita have made additional resources available to ensure that processing does not slip over the peak holiday period.		

Priority Service Indicators 2011/2012

	Quarter 1 Actual	Quarter 1 Target	Quarter 1 Performance	Comment
BV079bi.05 % HB Recovered: Overpayment	80.10	70.00	G	Under review.
BV079bii.05 % HB Recovered: including outstanding	13.10	11.00	G	On track to budget.
BV079biii.05 % HB O'Pay: Written Off	1.28	1.50	G	No reason for concern.
% Invoices paid within 30 days	98.32	98.30	G	On track.
Deliver a council tax increase in 2012/13 which is below inflation				Commences February 2012.
Percentage of telephone calls abandoned compared to same period last year	9.20	20.30	G	Performance continues to be excellent compared to 1st quarter last year answer rate was 71.7%, same quarter this year answer rate 91.3%.
Percentage of complaints are resolved within Stage One			G	This is amber for the month of June, 25 complaints were received. 22 stage 1, 2 in stage 2 and 1 stage 3. The quarter April - June 75 complaints received: 71 stage 1 = 94.66% 2 stage 2 = 2.6% 1 stage 3 = 1.3%
95% of all complaints that are escalated to Stage Two are resolved			G	2 stage 2 were received in June, 3 in total for the quarter.
Number of complaints escalated from Stage Three to the Ombudsman			G	4 ombudsman complaints were received in June 2 Planning and 2 Parking.
Produce a combined annual report of performance and finance in June 2011			G	Report produced, awaiting publication.
Increase the readership of Cherwell Link			G	Wide readership targeted through all publications, based on feedback from research.
Develop a preventable contact measure			G	In year one of this two year target, the measure of reduced avoidable contact will focus on avoidable visits with the target of 50% fewer face to face customers by the end of the year, following the implementation of appointments.
Car parking revenue			G	Provisional June revenue figures indicate 25% up on budgeted income.
% of buildings audited that are accessible	100.00	0.00	G	All buildings open to the public are accessible. Previous audits have been reviewed and a number of further improvements have been suggested, which are likely to be considered when the next capital programme is drafted.

Corporate Improvement Plan and Value For Money Programme 2011/2012

Quarter	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Corporate Improvement Plan		
Exploiting the potential for sharing services	G	The new joint management structure arrangements have been consulted upon.
2 year finance settlement	G	Project Completed - budget strategy being developed.
VFM programme	G	Final 4 VFM Reviews completed and reported to Use of Resources on 20 June. Two reports to July Exec and two others postponed to September.
New Homes Bonus use/ Budget Strategy	G	Project team formed and project brief adopted by CMT in June. Preparations for a Member Board meeting are on schedule for the autumn.
Legislation changes in housing and response	G	National housing changes are being examined in detail. The Cherwell Housing and Economic Climate Action Plan is being implemented in partnership with a number of external organisations; in particular the evidence emerging has been utilised to inform guidance to RPs in producing their RP investment package submissions to the HCA. The action plan is on-track.
Development Control fee / charge setting and VFM	A	Waiting publication of Government Regulations; project on hold.
Banbury Museum Trust Status	G	Project progressing. Initial report on operating framework considered by CMT and Project Board in June. Full report to Executive postponed until September to allow for detailed financial implications to be assessed.
Customer Service Improvement Programme	A	Programme is progressing but delays in hosted payments project have impacted on kiosk implementation, which in turn has caused benefits appointments to be postponed. No progress made on SMS project. Work has commenced on Right First Time reviews with an initial focus on Parking and Benefits services. Online Payments project is progressing well. Phone system changes are nearing completion. A new website enhancement project has been included in the programme and is making early progress. Early performance monitoring shows a significant improvement in telephone performance, but contact volumes are not yet reducing.
Dealing with the impact of the Localism Bill	G	Not due to report yet.
Deprivation / Brighter Futures in Banbury (local co-ordination)	G	Brighter Futures in Banbury Annual Report presented to Executive on 23 May.
Services to Young People	A	Waiting to establish OCC Hub changes and links to CDC Community Development Strategy. Agreed to commence the project in earnest during summer months.

Corporate Improvement Plan and Value For Money Programme 2011/2012

Quarter	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Community development improvement plan	G	Strategy development on track. EMT workshop held to consider innovative ways to deliver community development. LSP likely to review draft strategy in September.
Managing information	A	Project start has been delayed. A project brief is currently under development. There may be merit in postponing this project and reviewing its scope after the joint management team is in place.
Responding to the Changing Needs of an Ageing Population	G	Allocation of first extra care housing in Cherwell. The social rented units at Orchard Fields Extra Housing in Banbury have now been allocated.

Corporate Equalities Plan 2011/2012		
	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Fair Access and Customer Satisfaction		
To ensure Cherwell District Council and our Partners treat the public fairly regardless of their background or way of life	G	During quarter 1 we have held a successful 'Connecting the Communities' outside event at Bradley Arcade whereby many young children took part and various partner organisations joined the day to be able to provide information etc. The Disability Forum has taken place whereby the specialist subjects for discussion were the Oxfordshire Fire Service and Oxford County Councils Adult Social Care/Personalised Budgets. The Disability Forum Steering Group will discuss all feedback and highlight to the correct agency.
To improve our services to the older generation within the Cherwell district	G	During Quarter 1 the (DFG) Disabled Facility Grants Policy has been implemented.
To ensure all our services both internal and external are accessible to all Equality Groups at a high standard	G	Actions plans are all on targets and further projects will start later during this year in terms specific service experience days etc.
Tackling Inequality and Deprivation		
To break the cycle of deprivation within the district (Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme)	G	Good ongoing multi agency actions agreed and underway. Connecting the Communities engagement activities also underway. Cherwell Faith Forum considered Brighter Futures Programme. New activities being considered for funding from residual LAA reward money.
Building Strong and Cohesive Communities		
Promote integration between communities and groups through the use of sport, leisure, cultural activities and opportunities for community involvement	G	During Quarter 1 the Banbury Community Cohesion working group have met once, reviewed the group aims and objectives, reviewed current membership, created, published and distributed the Summer Cohesion Newsletter.
Positive Engagement and Understanding		
To continue to increase engagement and work with young people within the district	G	Ongoing work with youth councils in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. New youth forum (The Hill) set up to liaise with young people in the more deprived wards in Banbury. Online forum now available on the youth microsite. (www.cherwell youth.co.uk or www.cherwell youth.org).
Increase Cherwell's knowledge and understanding of the wider community to ensure we fulfil all residents' needs within our services	G	The Equality Officer continues to sit of both the HALT and Mantra steering groups and is a funder of the HALT programme. Continued success in relation to engagement with young people throughout the district.

Corporate Equalities Plan 2011/2012		
	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Raise internal awareness of diversity within our community	G	The first Knowing your community event for 2011/2012 is booked for September 12th 2011 and the theme is deaf awareness.
Demonstrating Our Commitment to Equality		
Review and publicise all documentation in line with government framework	G	All documents have been reviewed and are published accordingly.
Review achieving standard to research and develop improvement programme	G	This work will commence during Q2/3 of this year.
Ensure staff and services promote and embed equality into their work	G	The Fair & Aware Training course is a continuous mandatory course for all CDC employees. The last module 'Equality & the Community' is due to go live during this financial year.
ALIA's and Equality documents to be reviewed by the Corporate Equality and Diversity Steering Group	G	The Corporate Equality Steering group have reviewed any completed Equality Impact Assessments prior to being published and all Corporate Equality documents. The group have also discussed service take up with regard to the Fair & Aware internal course and have responsibility for reminding SMT's about planning for this training course.

Brighter futures in Banbury Programme 2011/12

	Quarter	Comment
Financial & Employment Support		
Improve skill levels and educational attainment	G	Planning a business breakfast in July with local employers to encourage them to employ local young people. This event is led by Cherwell District Council and will be hosted by the college working in partnership with the County, Job Centre Plus and Connexions.
Improve employability, focusing particularly on young people	G	Objective: Improve employability, focusing particularly on young people a) NEET Prevention (Not in Employment, Education and Training): Brighter Futures funded a 9 month NEET Transition project to May 2011 which prevented 129 young people from becoming NEET by employing dedicated NEET prevention workers, 80 (62%) of whom were from the three Brighter Futures Wards of Ruscombe, Neithrop and Grimsbury and Castle. This project has exceeded its stretch target of preventing 100 young people in the Banbury area from becoming NEET. At average life time savings per NEET of £165,000, based on Audit Commission research, the estimated saving to the public purse arising from preventing 129 young people from becoming NEET is over £20m. b) Princes Trust Programmes: Brighter Futures and the County jointly funded for two Princes Trust Programmes in Banbury for existing long-term NEETs. 50% of participants have moved on to positive activities (such as employment or learning). Although not achieving the 75% positive destination outcome target, this has been a positive achievement for this client group. All the young people who completed the programme gained a wide range of experience that will aid their future development.
Improve financial situations, addressing debt and financial exclusion	G	Objective: Improve financial situations, addressing debt and financial exclusion a) Due to high attendance and positive feedback from the first briefing session for voluntary and other agency advisors across Cherwell supporting those affected by Housing Benefit and Incapacity Benefit changes, a follow-up session was held at Banbury Campus in May attended by over 60 advisors. b) Banbury Food Bank set-up funding now secured and scheme development underway, led by the People's Church in Banbury, with an anticipated launch in September.
Young People Aspirations & Attainment		
Improve educational attainment through better skills in numeracy / maths and more effective family engagement	A	8 Home School Community Link Workers have been employed, case studies show evidence of the successful impact of these Workers. The Family Learning Course has been delayed at the North Banbury Childrens Centre.
Housing & Environment		
Good quality mixed housing, affordable for all income levels, and set in a well-managed environment	G	Affordable Housing Delivery is on-track and completions in the first quarter 6 units of temporary accommodation at Edward Street, the continued development of Cassington Road in Yarnton this included homes built to lifetime homes standards, and also a small number of acquisition schemes in Banbury to support young people.

Brighter futures in Banbury Programme 2011/12

	Quarter	Comment
Good access to amenities, including shops, health centres and leisure facilities		This is measured as part of the annual satisfaction survey which is due to report in the autumn.
Health & Wellbeing		
Improve life expectancy with improved overall health and well-being	G	Over 200 people attended a successful Food Festival in Grimsbury in May.
Reducing the clear inequality gaps with low life expectancy	R	The Cardio Vascular Disease health check programme, which was due to commence on 1 April 2011, has been delayed and is still being set up.
Reducing high rates of teenage pregnancy	G	Teenage pregnancy rates have gone down 16.4% since 1999/2000.
Safe & Strong Communities		
Build a safer and more connected community, where residents feel socially included	A	Three very successful engagement events have been held; Connecting Communities at Bradley Arcade, Grimsbury Food Festival, and an event at North Oxfordshire Academy. The Neighbourhood Action Group that covers Ruscombe and Neithrop is being reconstituted. Although overall crime levels have fallen, there is a rise in Serious Acquisitive offences and anti-social behaviour. These increases have been attributed to the number of bank holidays and warm weather in April. The implications for the imminent changes to the nature of service provision to Children, Young People and Families by Oxfordshire County Council are still being explored. The Cherwell Community Safety Partnership has provided funding for 'Youth Activators' to address any reduction in provision for activities for young people.

Significant Partnerships 2011/2012		
	Quarter 1 30/06/2011	Comment
Sub-Regional Partnerships		
Oxfordshire Partnership Board	G	Oxfordshire Partnership has refreshed its Sustainable Community Strategy, Oxfordshire 2030 and launched an Armed Services Community Covenant.
Children's Trust	G	Clr Macnamara is Oxon DC's rep on the Childrens Trust. Clr Sames and Head of Recreation & Health sit on the North and West Safeguarding Board.
Health and Well Being Partnership Board	A	Some uncertainty about the future nature, remit and structure of the new Boards proposed through the health and social care sector reforms.
Environment and Waste Partnership	G	The Partnership continues to operate effectively.
Oxfordshire Safer Community Partnership	G	Paper submitted to last OSCP on its future role and make-up. Concerns expressed as to the feel this had for county scrutiny over CSCP, but assurances given that this not intended. Revised arrangements are proposed as the way to gear up to new ways of working under a Crime Commissioner (awaiting Government proposals on this having being rejected by House of Lords).
Stronger Communities Alliance	G	OSCA exploring new initiatives OSCA are looking at options around community bonds and big society initiatives. Representatives of Housing Services are represented on the board.
Local Enterprise Partnerships (Oxford City Region)	G	CDC has participated in early Partnership work; particularly around Regional Growth Fund and Enterprise Zone initiatives. Thus far it has been difficult to influence thinking/decisions in LEPS. Promotion of a Bicester Enterprise Zone (EZ) was not successful.
Local Enterprise Partnerships (South Midlands)	G	CDC has participated in early Partnership work; particularly around Regional Growth Fund and Enterprise Zone initiatives. Thus far it has been difficult to influence thinking/decisions in LEPS. Promotion of a Bicester EZ was not successful.
Cherwell-specific Partnerships		
Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership	G	Over 80 representatives from local public, private and community groups attended the Local Strategic Partnerships successful annual Reference Group in June. The event, hosted by Kidlington Parish Council, provided an opportunity for consultation, networking and celebrating the role of community groups and volunteers across the district.
Cherwell Safer Community Partnership	G	June meeting were introduced to likely role in Domestic Homicide Reviews and in the Government's proposals for ASB Tool Kit and in particular the 'Community Trigger'.
Cherwell M40 Investment Partnership	G	CHIP Working Group held in May. Arrangements for international trade & investment clarified. Eco-town economic strategy explained with challenges identified. Commercial interest in strategic investment sites in Banbury has grown, with major investment to start imminently.
Banbury Town Centre Partnership	G	Limited effectiveness other than as a reporting of work of the partners. Needs to consider its ongoing role and purpose.
Bicester Vision	G	New Bicester Vision (BV) Partnership Manager appointed and will be taking up post in September 2011. At this point, CDC will cease to "host" BV for personnel and finance purposes, however will continue to support BV as previously.
Kidlington Village Centre Management Board	G	June meeting discussed the need for an overhaul and more of a business planning approach being adopted. Further proposals to be generated by small working group for submission at next meeting.
Homelessness Strategy Partnership	G	Homelessness prevention will be embedded within the forthcoming housing strategy.
Cherwell RSL Partnership & Sanctuary Housing Group	G	Future housing investment and local housing delivery- Officers have worked closely with registered providers and the Homes and Communities Agency to support the RP packages which will help to secure future affordable housing provision. In addition the annual 2 way appraisal between the Council and Sanctuary Group has taken place and former Charter Community Housing organisation has been integrated into the Sanctuary Housing business transfer of engagements.
NW Bicester Strategic Delivery Board	G	The Strategic Delivery Board continues to meet to deliver the Eco Bicester Project. The next meeting will take place on 21 July 2011.
Banbury Brighter Futures	G	The Partnership met in July and will meet again in the Autumn.

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Risk Register 2011/2012

Risk Heading	Owner	Description	End of Year 2010/11		Quarter 1 30 June 2011		Direction of Travel	Comments this quarter
			Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating	Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating		
RS01 Deprivation & Health Inequalities	Ian Davies	The risk is not breaking the cycle of deprivation and addressing inequalities across the District is that the life opportunities of residents in the greatest need will not be improved. As a result the reputation of the Council will suffer. The risk is particularly acute in areas such as the Neithrop, Ruscate and Grimsbury wards in Banbury where there is a high level of deprivation as measured by the Government's indices of multiple deprivation.	High Medium 12	Medium 9	High Medium 12	Medium 6		Risk continues to be managed with controls, the net risk has reduced slightly.
RS02 Bicester Eco Town	John Hoed	The risks are that national and local policy support and resources will be inadequate to support the development of the NW Bicester Eco-Town. As a result the Council may fail to fully exploit the Eco-Town as an opportunity to develop a centre of excellence in terms of sustainable living.	High 16	Medium 8	High 16	Medium 9		Progress on scheme is good. A new element of risk has emerged; competing land owner (MOD) has threatened judicial review of the Council's planning decisions. This will consolidate around forthcoming Planning Committee decision on first (exemplar) phase.
RS03 Local Development Framework	Philip Clarke	The risks are that the Local Development Framework is not prepared adequately, in time, or is found unsound at public examination. Such outcomes would result in further risks arising from speculative planning applications, undesirable major developments and / or expense for the Council in contesting planning appeals. An unsound plan would mean that the Council would have to repeat 2 to 3 years work at high cost.	High 20	High 15	High 20	High 15		Management of this risk has become harder for the following reasons:- 1/ the demise of the national network of Government Offices 2/ the Government has made it clear that less guidance will be provided for local planning authorities preparing development plans 3/ uncertainty created by the emerging changes brought about by the Localism Act All of this makes proposing control measures more difficult. The Council will put the following control measures in place:- 1/ We will continue to liaise with CLG regarding appropriate the procedures we should be following. 2/ We will take legal advice as necessary to further inform our position 3/ We will consider asking our MP to ask relevant questions to Government ministers in the event that there is a lack of clarity from the Government on matters regarding the new localism bill. 4/ We will engage in further public consultation on the new Revised Draft Core Strategy (proposed to commence in late July / August 2011) 5/ We will work with the LDF Advisory Panel to formulate revised policies and will be advised by them as to how to best involve all councillors.
RS04 Economic & Social Changes	John Hoed	The risk is that the Council does not identify and respond to general economic and social changes and as a result would not fulfil its role as a community leader and a provider of top quality services driven by a clear understanding of community and individual needs.	High 16	High 12	High 16	High 12		The Council's Economic Development Value for Money study has resulted in some resource reductions for economic development work. External funding sources are also at risk in the medium term as a result of public sector financial pressures. The situation will need to be carefully managed and alternative contingency funding options sought. New Economic Development Strategy for District is well advanced and picks up on the need for greater voluntary/business response to local economic pressures.
RS05 Horton Hospital	Ian Davies	The risks to maintaining the Horton Hospital as a facility that meets community aspirations for local health provision are the deliverability and affordability of a revised consultant delivered service model for paediatrics and obstetrics. Failure of either will jeopardise current service provision and could result in a service reduction from the Horton.	High 16	Medium 9	High 16	High 12		The risk has been reviewed.
RS06 The Natural Environment	Ed Potter	The risk is that the Council does not take the necessary actions to meet its obligation, as set by National Government, to ensure its own operations and that of its District's residents and businesses reduce their carbon footprints.	High Medium 15	Medium 9	High Medium 15	Medium 9		Use of Natural Resources group performing well with input from across the Council.

Risk Register 2011/2012									
Risk Heading	Owner	Description	End of Year 2010/11		Quarter 1 30 June 2011		Direction of Travel	Comments this quarter	
			Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating	Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating			
Strategic Risks									
RS08 Financial Resources	Karen Curtin	The risk is that in an uncertain economic and financial climate the Council will not have the resources to deliver its corporate priorities. Poor economic conditions also lead to reduced income from council services. As the Council's income from capital reduces our dependency on interest to support revenue expenditure must also reduce and capital assets will need to be rebuilt to fund future infrastructure investments. Failure to do either will result in budgetary shortfall, service reductions, above inflation increases to council tax and lack of capital to fund future compulsory schemes.	High 16	High Medium 12	High 16	Medium 9		The risk has been reviewed and it is considered that the net risk to the Council has reduced.	
RS09 Shared Management Services with South Northamptonshire District Council	Ian Davies	The risk that the shared management arrangements fail to be effectively managed and implemented and will adversely impact upon the Council's financial position and ability to balance its budget with further cutting service budgets. Other potential adverse affects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of key staff and declining morale Loss of organisational reputation Legal challenge Decline in organisational performance Failure of ICT system to be effectively integrated for shared management Political Challenge <p>There is a comprehensive list of risks established in the development of the shared management business case and these are detailed in Appendix 6 of the business case and contain details of risk, controls and mitigations.</p>	High Medium 12	Medium 6	High Medium 12	Medium 9		The risk has been reviewed.	
RS10 Managing Policy & Legislative Change	Claire Taylor	The risk that the Council fails to implement the requirements of new legislation or policy change. In addition there is a risk that the council does not capitalise on new opportunities. Key areas of change are the impact of the localism bill, the big society agenda, peer assessment, changed models of service delivery, new financial requirements etc.							Reviewed. Example of new policy picked up and successfully actioned (e.g. armed forces community covenant).
		Failure to address policy change could result in the council not being legally compliant, failing to maximise new opportunities such as new funding streams or Pathfinder projects, a negative impact on the council's reputation as a high performer and a community leader, possible damage to local partnerships.		new risk in 2011/2012	High 16	Medium 6			
Corporate Risks									
RC01 Health & Safety	David Marriott	The risk is that a failure to comply with health and safety and welfare legislation and policies could lead to injuries and death, high sickness absence and claims and litigation against the Council.	High 20	High Medium 10	High 20	High Medium 10		There is no change to the overall risk rating. Adequate controls are in place, and there have been no incidents which require action. However, the shared services with South Northants means that the resources available to CDC are diminished, and steps are to be taken to put additional consultancy support in place to remedy this.	
RC02 Capital Investments	Karen Curtin	The risk is to the Council's ability to fund its activities because of a reduction in investment income or income from other capital assets such as buildings.	High 16	Medium 9	High 16	High Medium 12		The risk has been reviewed.	
RC03 ICT Systems	Pat Simpson	1) ICT unable to provide Disaster Recovery Services as required by the Business Continuity Plan. 2) Loss of ICT systems that would have a significant negative impact on service delivery and cause exceptional costs to the Council.	High 20	Low 4	High 20	Medium 8		At the end of the quarter, the transition from the old to the new datacentre at Thorpe Lane was delayed as a result of delays installing the new fibre connection. This temporarily reduces the effectiveness of our DR provision pending the successful implementation of the fibre connection. Three yearly full audit against ISO27001 (Information security) was successfully completed this quarter. Works at Thorpe Lane need to be completed before a further disaster recover test can be carried out.	

Risk Register 2011/2012

Risk Heading	Owner	Description	End of Year 2010/11		Quarter 1 30 June 2011		Direction of Travel	Comments this quarter
			Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating	Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating		
Corporate Risks								
RC04 Equalities Legislation	Claire Taylor	The risk is the Council may be open to litigation and loss of reputation if it is not compliant with equalities legislation.	High 20	High Medium 12	High 20	High Medium 12	▲	A further reminder to EMT will be made with regards to early engagement with the strategy and performance team to ensure impact analysis and consultation is planned and undertaken.
RC06 Civil Emergency	Paul Marston-Weston	The risk is that Civil Emergency arrangements are not adequate, leading to loss of property, personal injury or death, civil unrest and loss of confidence in local authority leadership.	High Medium 15	High Medium 10	High Medium 15	High Medium 10	▲	Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plans are regularly updated and training undertaken as necessary.
RC07 Managing Data & Information	Claire Taylor	The risk is that unreliable data sources are used to support decision and policy making putting the Council at risk of making poor decisions. Decisions are made on the basis of information about the population and the nature of the district. If data is out of date, incomplete or inaccurate, those decisions may turn out to be inappropriate and they could be challenged. Lack of effective information management means that the Council will not be able to effectively respond to FOI or EIR requests putting CDC at risk of a complaint to the Information Commissioner. Poor information will also mean that the Council is unable to deliver against the transparency agenda.	High 16	High Medium 12	High 16	Medium 9	▲	Local Information System launched and training given at CDC. LSP presentation in July.
RC08 Corporate Fraud	Karen Curtin	As with other large organisations the size and nature of our services puts us at risk of loss due to fraud both from within and outside the Council. We have always taken this risk seriously and have many structures and control mechanisms in place to counter fraud. According to research, fraud in the workplace is likely to accelerate during the global economic downturn. This is because managers may falsify figures to make performance look better and debt-strapped employees are more likely to commit fraud.	new risk in 2011/2012		High Medium 12	Medium 9	▲	This is a new risk for the corporate risk register.
Partnership Risks								
RP02 Local Strategic Partnership	Claire Taylor	The risk is the failure of the Local Strategic Partnership to deliver its objectives having a negative impact on service delivery to the public, the Council's reputation with other local agencies and this being reflected in national reputation. There is also a risk that with the reduced focus on partnership working, opportunities for increased efficiency and improved services are lost due to less effective networks and relationships.	High Medium 12	High Medium 12	High Medium 12	Low 4	▲	LSP currently ongoing. Partners exchanging information regarding impacts on new policy. Resources allocated for this year.
RP03 Cherwell Community Safety Partnership	Chris Rothwell	The risk is the failure of the Community Safety Partnership to work collaboratively to deliver safer communities and achieve reduction in crime and fear of crime.	High Medium 12	High Medium 12	High Medium 12	Medium 9	▲	Risk continues to be managed with controls, the net risk has reduced slightly.
RP04 Local Enterprise Partnerships (Oxford City & South East Midlands)	John Hood	The risk is the failure of the Local Enterprise Partnerships to establish themselves as effective bodies locally and in relations with National Government. The consequences may be reduced funding for the local area and failure to fully exploit economic growth, development and infrastructure provision opportunities. A related risk is the ability/inability of Cherwell District Council to influence the work of the Partnerships to the benefit of the District.	High Medium 12	Medium 8	High Medium 12	Medium 9	▲	CDC has participated in early partnership work; particularly around Regional Growth Fund and Enterprise Zone initiatives. Thus far it has been difficult to influence thinking/decisions in LEPS. Promotion of a Bicester EZ was not successful.
RP05 Oxfordshire Waste Partnership - Financial Arrangements	Ed Potter	Financial arrangements exist to regulate funds flowing between the collection authorities in Oxfordshire and the disposal authority (Oxfordshire County Council). These are legally binding. However Oxfordshire County Council have indicated that they are not prepared to continue all these payments (landfill diversion payments) in the future. This could threaten the future of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership.	new risk in 2011/2012		High 16	High Medium 12	▲	OWP Strategy being reviewed during 2011/12 and financial arrangements to be reviewed during 2011/12.

Risk Register 2011/2012

Risk Heading	Owner	Description	End of Year 2010/11		Controls	Quarter 1 30 June 2011		Direction of Travel	Comments this quarter			
			Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating		Gross Risk Rating	Net Risk Rating					
RP06 Health & Wellbeing Partnership	Paul Marston-Western	The risk is that failure to effectively participate in and influence new county wide partnership arrangements will put CDC at risk of not meeting its Safe, Healthy and Thriving Strategic Objective. The potential role of County Councils as the public health authority under new legislation will require effective partnership arrangements to ensure Cherwell's priorities are reflected and issues around health inequalities are addressed	Medium	new risk in 2011/2012	RP06.a Strategic Director leadership role on health related issues • RP06.b Participation in county-wide partnership discussions • RP06.c support local stakeholder group to hold service commissioners and providers to account • RP06.d Communicate the health sector changes to the wider population	Medium 9	A	Medium 6	A	new	This is a new risk for the partnership risk register.	
Indicated by:-												
High		Requires Active Management High impact / High Probability: this risk requires active management to manage down and maintain the exposure at an acceptable level. Escalate upwards.										
High/Medium		Contingency Plans Required A robust contingency plan is required, together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from the profile. Escalate upwards.										
Medium		Monitoring Required This risk may require some additional risk mitigation to reduce the likelihood (if it can be done cost effectively), but good housekeeping to ensure that the impact remains low should be adequate. Monitor to identify any change in the risk.										
Low		Review Periodically This risk is unlikely to require further mitigating actions, but the status should be reviewed quarterly to ensure that conditions have not changed.										
↑		Risk rating stayed the same Last quarter compared to this quarter										
↓		Risk rating improved Performance increased (risk rating decreased) Last quarter compared to this quarter										
↔		Risk rating worsened Performance declined (risk rating increased) Last quarter compared to this quarter										

Executive

Quarter 1 Finance Report

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Finance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report summarises the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the first 3 months of the financial year 2011/12 and projections for the full 2011/12 period. These are measured by the budget monitoring function and reported via the Performance Management Framework (PMF) informing the 2011/12 budget process currently underway.

To receive information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2011/12 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the projected revenue & capital position at June 2011.
- (2) To note the Q1 performance against the 2011/12 investment strategy and the financial returns from each of the 3 funds.
- (3) To note the contents and the progress against the Corporate Procurement Action Plan (detailed in Appendix 1) and the Procurement savings achieved at June 2011 (detailed in Appendix 2).

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 In line with good practice budget monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis within the Council. The revenue and capital position is reported monthly to the Corporate Management Team and formally to the Executive on a quarterly basis. This report includes the position at Q1.
- 1.2 The revenue and capital expenditure in Q1 has been subject to a detailed review by Officers and reported monthly to management as part of the corporate dashboard. An additional benchmark has been included this year to

measure the accuracy of projections by budget holders on a month by month basis.

- 1.3 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which this Council has adopted requires a regular budget monitoring report - this report is included in Appendix 2.

Conclusion

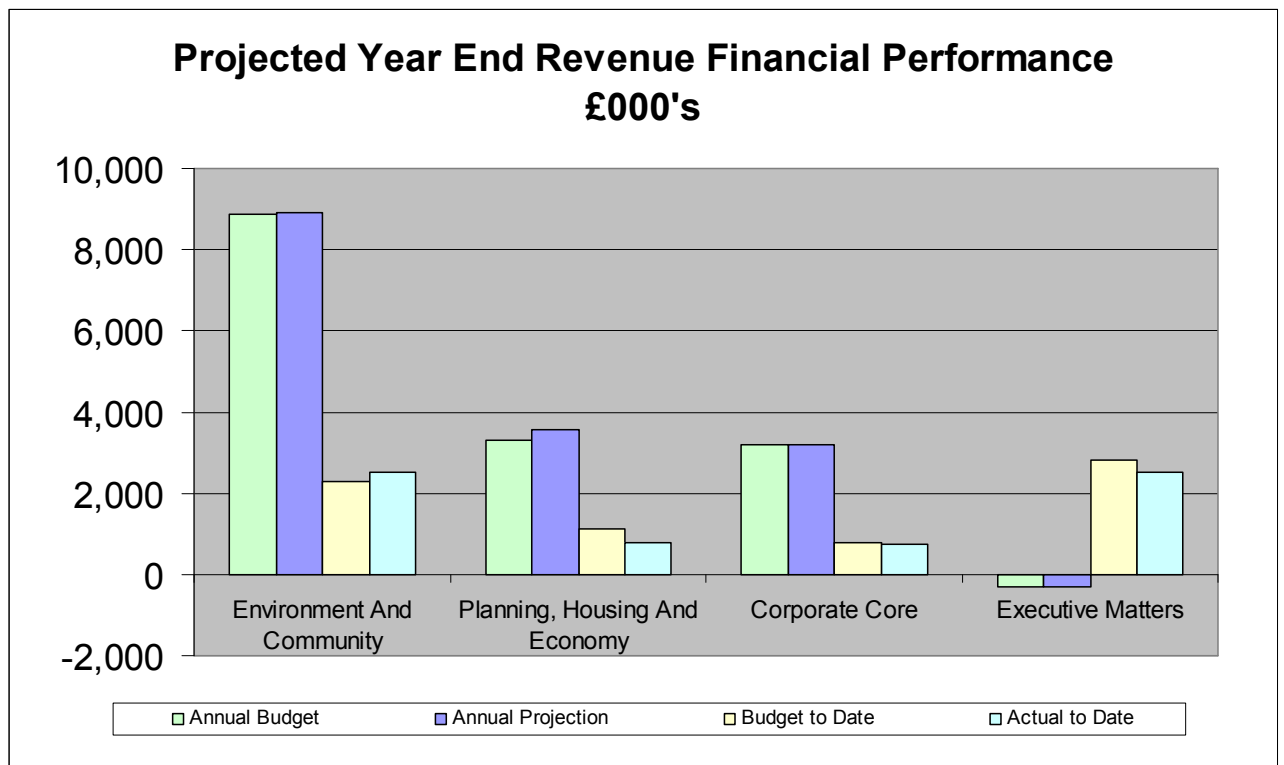
- 1.4 Due to the downturn in the economy, impact of the credit crunch on Council services and the volatility of the financial markets, the Council is keeping a watching brief on any challenges that they may need to face which may result in a redirection of budgets.
- 1.5 The variances on the revenue and capital projections are within the Council's stated tolerances of +2% / -5%.
- 1.6 The Council has a General Fund Revenue reserve to meet any budgetary surplus or deficit.
- 1.7 At the end of quarter 1, interest received was 35% more than budgeted and shows a positive result across all three funds. This was mainly due to higher than planned balances when creating the budget as we had a higher level of capital programme slippage from 2010/11, obtaining better than projected rates from our investments, and the change in allocation of funds.

Background Information

Revenue Projected Outturn 2011/12

- 2.1 We are currently projecting to be on track to budget at the year end.

June 2011 PROJECTIONS	Full-Year Budget 2011/12 £000's	Projected Out-turn 2011/12 £000's	Projection Variance 2011/12 £000's
DIRECTORATES			
Corporate Core	3,205	3,201	-4
Environment & Community	8,875	8,904	29
Planning Housing & Economy	3,311	3,574	263
Net Expenditure Services	15,391	15,679	288
Use of General Risk Reserve		(100)	(100)
Increase in Investment Income		(188)	(188)
	15,391	15,391	0
Net Revenue Projected (under) / overspend 2011/12 @ June 2011			0



- 2.2 Corporate Core shows a projected underspend of £4k and is therefore primarily on target for the year. An underspend arising from an 8% reduction in Audit Commission fees offsets minor overspends in the remaining service areas. Within Finance, we are awaiting the completion of the Mid Year Subsidy Estimate to determine any over / under spend in relation to Rent Allowances and associated subsidy. This will be reported in Q2.
- 2.3 The majority of service areas within Environment & Community are currently projecting to be on target for the year. The impact from the recently approved changes to Car park tariffs will be reported at a later date once we have more detailed knowledge of the impact these have had. There is a projected overspend within Customer Service & Information systems of £29k which are part offset by a reduction in the cost of printing. We are also currently investigating the potential to cover this shortfall from both in service underspends and the use of the general risk reserve which allows for 1% budget deviations.
- 2.4 Planning Housing and Economy is currently projecting an overspend of £263k. We are projecting a reduction in rental income from both Castle Quay and Industrial Estates of up to £180k. Additionally there are various small overspends within Housing of £18k. Building Control is currently projecting an overspend of £65k however this is based on the expenditure and income processed by CDC and there is further reconciliation and invoicing to be undertaken with SNC once their Q1 position is also finalised.
- 2.5 Investment Income: We are currently projecting an over recovery of interest of £188k based on interest received to June 2011 and the forecasted cash flow for the remainder of the year.

Joint Working Arrangements – SNDC

- 2.6 Our 2011/12 budget has been prepared on the basis that we will achieve £333k worth of savings in this current year.
- 2.7 The joint chief executive started earlier than anticipated in the business case and there will be savings as a direct result of this. It is anticipated that there will be further savings in the joint senior management team as the salaries are lower than assumptions contained in the business case.
- 2.8 We can confidently project that at the end of September – Q2 we will have achieved £124K of savings relating to staffing budgets as a result of vacancies and the earlier start of the CEX. We are also projecting additional income of approximately £33k through other Joint Working initiatives within Health & Safety and Democracy. This represents 47% of the £333k target.
- 2.9 Using this information and estimating a projection forward to the end of the year we do anticipate in excess of £333K worth of savings being achieved, however, as stated previously it is very difficult to quantify this accurately until appointments have been made. Further detailed information will be prepared for the Q2 report.

Capital Projection 2011/12

- 2.10 Total capital spend to June 2011, including commitments, amounts to £337K. This represents 2% of the total annual budget and 10% of the periodic budget.

JUNE 11 PROJECTIONS	Full-Year Budget 2011/12 £000's	Projected Out-turn 2011/12 £000's	Projection Variance 2011/12 £000's
DIRECTORATES			
Corporate Core	65	70	5
Environment & Community	4,112	4,107	(5)
Planning Housing & Economy	11,417	10,658	759
(see below)	15,594	14,835	759
<u>Analysed:-</u>			
Net (Under) / Overspends Identified Slippage (no approvals requested at this stage)			-4
			763
		As above	759

The Capital Budget for 2011/12 can be analysed as follows:-

Capital Budget 2011/12	£000's
Approved Capital program for 2011/12 (including Supplementary)	4,012
Prior Year Approvals profiled for 2011/12	1,245
Slippage from 2010/11 Programme	10,337

2.10 The projected 2011/12 spend for capital schemes as at June 2010 is £14.8M.

Treasury Management Performance Q1 2011/12

Update on UK and Global Treasury Performance

2.11 The first quarter of 2011 saw:

- The economic recovery struggle to regain momentum;
- Conditions on the high street deteriorate;
- Mixed signals on the strength of the labour market recovery;
- Public sector borrowing come out disappointingly high;
- The near-term outlook for CPI inflation deteriorate further;
- The Monetary Policy Committee move away from raising interest rates;
- UK equities stay broadly flat over the quarter and gilt yields fall;
- Economic growth slow in the US and euro-zone.

2.12 Interest Rate Forecast

Most Monetary Policy Committee members still think that the rise in inflation will be only temporary and that inflation will fall back sharply next year. So despite the worsening of the near-term inflation outlook, the weakness of the activity data has pushed most members further away from an interest rate rise.

The Council's treasury adviser, Sector, provides the following forecast:

Sector's Interest Rate View												
	NOW	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14
Sector's Bank Rate View	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.25%	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%	2.75%	3.00%
5yr PWLB Rate	3.12%	3.55%	3.65%	3.75%	3.90%	4.00%	4.15%	4.25%	4.45%	4.60%	4.65%	4.75%
10yr PWLB View	4.45%	4.75%	4.75%	4.80%	4.95%	4.95%	5.00%	5.05%	5.15%	5.20%	5.25%	5.25%
25yr PWLB View	5.24%	5.40%	5.40%	5.40%	5.40%	5.40%	5.45%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.60%	5.65%
50yr PWLB Rate	5.20%	5.40%	5.40%	5.40%	5.40%	5.40%	5.45%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.60%	5.65%

The Sector central forecast is for a November 2011 first increase in Bank Rate but with reservations that it could well slip back in time, unless there is some good news on the UK economic recovery before then.

We have used these rates to project our investment income in our Q1 projections and in refreshing our MTFS.

Update on Cherwell's Treasury Performance

2.13 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 18th May 2011. It sets out the Council's investment priorities as being:

- Security of Capital; Liquidity; and Yield

2.14 The Council will also aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover short term cash flow needs but also to seek out value available in significantly higher rates in periods up to 12 months with highly credit rated financial institutions, using Sector's suggested creditworthiness approach, including sovereign credit rating and Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay information provided by Sector: this applies in particular to nationalised and semi nationalised UK banks.

2.15 Given the turmoil in peripheral Europe, our investments list does not have direct exposure to any sovereign debt of Portugal, Ireland Greece, Spain or Italy and that includes their national banks, with the exception of Abbey National (Santander). However, indirectly the banks on our lending list, in all probability do have exposure in some shape or form to either or both. Our lending criterion is very stringent and only the very largest banks are considered through negotiable securities, providing us with the greatest liquidity and flexibility.

2.16 Investment rates available in the market have continued at historically low levels. The average level of funds available for investment purposes during the quarter was £72.4m. These funds were available on a temporary basis, and the level of funds available was mainly dependent on the timing of precept payments, receipt of grants and progress on the Capital Programme and ECO Bicester.

2.17 Investment performance for quarter ended 30th June 2011 was:

Fund	Amount at 30th June 2011	Interest Budget	Actual Interest	Variance	Rate of return %
TUK	£17,000,000	£44,974	£48,534	£3,560	3.22%
Investec	£18,548,176	£11,250	£20,000	£8,750	0.56%
In House	£39,580,438	£24,010	£39,567	£15,557	1.20%
Total	£75,128,614	£80,234	£108,101	£27,867	1.66%

At the end of quarter 1, interest received was 35% more than budgeted and shows a positive result across all three funds. This was mainly due to higher than planned balances when creating the budget as we had a higher level of capital programme slippage from 2010/11, obtaining better than projected rates from our investments, and the change in allocation of funds between TUK, Investec and in-house.

As a result we have reviewed our interest project and as you can see from the Q1 revenue report it is projected to achieve an additional £188k.

Update on recovery of Iceland Funds

- 2.18 The appeal date has been set for September 26th 2011 after which we will expect a decision on whether priority creditor status has been upheld and plans to repay principal and interest.
- 2.19 We continue to work in collaboration with LGA and Bevan Brittan and we will continue to keep members updated on the recovery process.

Procurement Action Plan and Record of Savings 2011/12

- 2.20 Progress against the Council's procurement action plan is detailed under Appendix 1 with a record of savings achieved to June 2011 detailed under Appendix 2.
- 2.21 The procurement target for securing ongoing cashable savings in 2010/11 is £150,000 and to date total savings achieved amount to £41,633 – i.e. 27% of the total at the end of Q1. One highlight has been the substantial savings achieved with the re-negotiation of the contract for the multi-functional printing devices with a reduction in the annual rental costs of £12,250 coupled with estimated annual printing reduction costs based on current usage levels of £4,202, a saving of £8,640 on the cost of additional software and additional equipment savings – increasing the speed and efficiency of the service – of some £3,244. A substantial saving of some 20% has also been achieved with public toilet maintenance with the appointment of the company currently undertaking the cleansing operations resulting in annual savings of £4,860.
- 2.22 A growing percentage of the cashable savings have been secured by including a range of initiatives within tender documents, such as fixed pricing for the second and third year of the contract or at least fixing increases by 1% below the Consumer Price Index; requesting prompt payment discounts against invoice payments – the average being 3% but discounts offered being as high as 5%; requiring the contract to be made available to other local authorities and public bodies with retrospective discounts agreed in the event that there is an increase in expenditure over the year. One initiative, whereby for the second year of the public toilet cleansing contract we pay the service charge up front as a single annual payment has resulted in a net saving of £2,191.
- 2.23 The initial 14 high profile projects identified for the Joint Arrangement Steering Group with SNC have been continually added to on a project by project basis. Highlights to date include;
- Telephony maintenance – contract set up by CDC joined by SNC.
 - Postal Services – CDC has adopted framework for 2nd class post reviewed by SNC.
 - SNC have been included on a range of facilities management tenders including reactive buildings maintenance and lift maintenance.
 - Review of Internal Audit has resulted in a proposal for a joint tender exercise with a view to a 1 April 2012 contract start date.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2011/12 Financial Targets for Revenue, Capital, Treasury and Procurement Monitoring.

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

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Option One | To review current performance levels and considers any actions arising. |
| Option Two | To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information. |

Consultations

The revenue and capital position has been subject to regular review by the Corporate Management Team.

The investment and procurement strategies have been subject to regular review with Members and the Corporate Management Team.

Implications

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Financial: | <p>Financial Effects – The financial effects are as outlined in the report.</p> <p>Efficiency Savings – There are no efficiency savings arising directly from this report however the budget 2011/12 was based on a number of efficiencies. In addition we made a public promise of £1m savings which are being actively pursued as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process.</p> <p>Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant 01295 221559</p> |
| Legal: | <p>There are no legal implications. Presentation of this report is in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice.</p> <p>Comments checked by Nigel Bell Team Leader – Planning & Litigation / Interim Monitoring Officer, 01295 221687.</p> |
| Risk Management: | <p>The position to date highlights the relevance of maintaining a minimum level of reserves and budget contingency to absorb the financial impact of changes during the year.</p> <p>It is essential that the treasury annual report is considered by the Executive as it demonstrates that the risk of not complying with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy has been monitored in 2011/12.</p> <p>Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager, 01295 221563.</p> |

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

An Accessible and Value for Money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Ken Atack
Lead Member for Financial Management

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Record of progress Against Procurement action Plan 2011/12
Appendix 2	Procurement Savings Achieved April to June 2011
Background Papers	
2011/12 Budget Booklet 2011/12 Capital Asset Strategy Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 Investment Strategy CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice 2011/12 Procurement Strategy and Action Plan	
Report Author	Karen Curtin, Head of Finance Karen Muir Corporate System Accountant Jessica Lacey Technical Accountant Viv Hichens, Corporate Strategic Procurement Manager
Contact Information	01295 221551 karen.curtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Appendix 1 - Record of Progress Against Procurement Action Plan for 2011/12

APPENDIX 1

7.1 Embed and Develop the use of the Procurement Strategy objectives across the Council	
Action	Progress Narrative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate the key officers group already trained via workshops for continued development of options appraisals for all service planning and contract management to enable better planned and managed contracts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consult on further needs and undertake a gap analysis on a project by project basis; ○ Build on workshops held in 2010; ○ Monitor progress and build case studies for use in workshops and to encourage buy-in. 	<p>Onward going</p> <p>Training continues on a project by project basis as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing – options appraisal, specification writing and evaluation process for HCA funding and voluntary commissioning projects; • Environmental Services – entire procurement process and contract management for Transport and Street Cleansing teams.
7.2 Governance and compliance	
Action	Progress Narrative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all operational procurement and contract management activity complies with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) and statutory regulations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referring to the CPR with workshops; ○ Refreshers on a project by project basis; ○ Use of the rolling carousel news function on the intranet; ○ Regular meetings with HoS; ○ Visiting DMTs. ○ Circulating key learning points and case studies via Cascade and Inside Cherwell. • Enhance the scrutiny and policy development role of the Procurement Steering Group Strategy Group by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Holding first quarterly meeting by the end of May 2011 at which key objectives for the year will be agreed; ○ Rollout to HoS with rolling membership of two to three HoS. 	<p>Onward going</p> <p>Continued regular dialogue with HoS and officers both via 1-2-1 and team meetings. Recently provided refresher on frameworks and procurement best practice to Housing team.</p> <p>A lot of work carried out on whether contracts set up prior to joint arrangements working with SNC can be utilised by SNC.</p> <p>Onward going</p> <p>Two meetings held to date with focus on improving understanding of whole life costing, the development of a contract management template and the review of key procurement projects – such as Photovoltaic (PV) installations and reactive buildings maintenance.</p> <p>Onward going</p>

7.3 Achieve greater efficiency and demonstrate improved value for money	
Action	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue supplier rationalisation and elimination of spend with non-approved suppliers via analysis of data from across the South East and Agresso. Aim for 100% on contract expenditure for existing corporate contracts. 	<p>Progress Narrative</p> <p>Maintenance contract where SNC have joined contract set up by CDC.</p> <p>Recent expenditure review exercise has turned up opportunities for testing the market in areas such as civil engineering, drainage, vehicle workshop supplies and short-term vehicle rental.</p>

7.4 Develop the corporate contract management methodology and promote across all service areas	
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly contract review for all contracts on the register including record of any additional savings and efficiencies. Implementation of the three contract management templates developed by the Corporate Contracts Officer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly review of templates in action both for new and existing contracts with brief case studies to promote good practice. 	<p>Progress Narrative</p> <p>Register has been further developed by the Contracts Officer with categorisation in line with the South East Business Portal (used by 74 local authorities and other public bodies across the South East and providing free information for local SMEs). The register is also being used by the Oxfordshire Procurement Hub Officer to identify further opportunities for collaboration with Oxfordshire local authorities.</p> <p>Contracts Officer has drawn up a draft template and proposals for moving this project forward which are scheduled to be reviewed by CMT in August ahead of being rolled out in October.</p>

7.5 Sustainability	
Action	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the costs and benefits of environmentally preferable goods/services as alternatives as part of the full lifetime cost calculation process. Promote awareness, train and encourage buyers to review their consumption of goods and services, reduce usage and adopt more environmentally friendly alternative products. 	<p>Onward going</p> <p>Onward going</p>
<p>Ensure sustainability is addressed with each procurement exercise by including it as a section within the stakeholder questionnaires and encouraging sustainability to be included within evaluation criteria as well as the assessment/pre-qualification stages.</p>	<p>Onward going</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage buyers to break down larger contracts to match SME and Social Enterprise capacity where appropriate. 	<p>Onward going</p>

7.6 Joint Working	
Action	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop framework for cooperation with South Northamptonshire Council in 2011/12: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review forward plans for all procurement exercises in 2011/12 across both Councils; Agree collaboration projects and targets for economies of scale in procuring together; Review value for money of existing draw down contracts where there 	<p>Onward going</p>

Progress Narrative

The initial 14 high profile projects identified have been continually added to on a project by project basis:

- Telephony maintenance – contract set up by CDC joined by SNC.
- Postal Services – CDC has adopted framework for 2nd class post reviewed by SNC.
- SNC have been included on a range of facilities

7.6 Joint Working	
Action	Status
<p>is the option of switching to whichever contract demonstrates the best VFM;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review existing common contracts and options for collaborative negotiating of the scope and pricing structures. ○ Provide quarterly reports on additional savings achieved by above activities. 	<p>Progress Narrative</p> <p>management tenders including reactive buildings maintenance and lift maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of Internal Audit has resulted in joint tender exercise commencing for 1st April 2012 contract start date. ● Agresso (financial management system) upgrade being undertaken as a joint exercise in conjunction with the wider ICT review.

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) ● Northamptonshire procurement partnerships ● Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Procurement Partnership (MKOB) ● Procurement arm of Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE) – and future partners – PCT, Thames Valley Police, Universities and Colleges. ● The South East Business Portal. 	<p>Progress Narrative</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Procurement Hub Officer is providing support on two tender projects and continues to review opportunities for joint working.</p> <p>Effective dialogue with SPPO over joint working on facilities management tenders and contract management best practice and facilitating the use of apprenticeships with contracts let by the Council.</p> <p>IESE continue to provide some useful information on best frameworks available for key goods and supplies.</p> <p>The South East Business Portal being used to advertise all tenders and promoted to SMEs as a free source for information on tender opportunities.</p>

7.9 Corporate Procurement Resources		
Action	Status	Progress Narrative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the profile of the Procurement Service and its achievements, both internally and with external stakeholders by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arranging bi-monthly 1-2-1's with key Heads of Service; ○ Regular updates via intranet carousel, Cascade and Inside Cherwell focusing on corporate contracts, the contracts register, updates and tips.; ○ Meetings with the partners listed in 7.6 	Onward going	<p>The increased flow of officers approaching the Procurement team – especially ahead of a project – demonstrates how right across the Council officers understand the importance of engaging procurement at the earliest possible stage with impromptu 'drop-in' surgeries occurring on a daily basis.</p> <p>The increased experience of the Corporate Contracts Officer and the Corporate Purchasing Officer has also been recognised by the way in which officers at all levels approach them for advice rather than going straight to the procurement manager.</p>

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Procurement Cashable and Non-Cashable Savings Achieved for Financial Year 2011 to 2012 as at end of June 2011

APPENDIX 2

Service Area	Contract Description	Cashable with budget reduction	Cashable but no budget reduction	Non-cashable	Capital
Various	P Cards			£13,283	
Environmental Services	Public Toilet Maintenance	£4,860			
Customer Service and IT	Supply of multifunctional printer/copiers	£16,452	£8,640	£3,244	
Environmental Services	Vehicle Spare Parts - price increase 1% below CPI - i.e. 3.5% i/o 5.2% & 2.5% prompt payment discount	£2,900			
Regeneration and Estates	PAT Testing - fixed price for 2nd year - CPI saving of 4.5%	£180			
Regeneration and Estates	Heating plant maintenance - price increase 1% below CPI on £8681 & prompt payment discount	£260			
Regeneration and Estates	Cooling plant maintenance - price increase 1% below CPI on £6148 & prompt payment discount	£480			
Housing	Housing Register Software - inflation clause reduced to CPI	£160			
Urban & Rural	Supply of Pay & Display Tickets	£750			
Urban & Rural	Supply of lone worker devices	£4,398			
Regeneration & Estates	Provision of door & shutter maintenance	£2,662			
Customer Service and IT	2nd class postal services	£2,500			
Environmental Services	Public Convenience Cleansing - agreement to hold prices at 2010 rates	£2,191			
Environmental Services	Pest Control - agreement to fix prices at 2010 rates	£2,350			
Leisure	South West Bicester Sports Village Pitches	£1,240			£124,000
Regeneration & Estates	Cleaning materials	£250			
	Total YTD	£41,633			

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Executive

2012/13 Budget Strategy, Service & Financial Planning Process and 2012/13 Budget Guidelines

5 September 2011

Report of Head of Finance and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Executive of the service and financial planning process for 2012/13, approve 2012/13 budget strategy and to agree budget guidelines for issue to service managers to enable the production of the 2012/13 budget and update the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2012/13 onwards.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Note the latest forecast for the Council's revenue budget for 2012/13 to 2015/16 at Para 2.17.
- (2) Note the preliminary results from the public consultation and proposed prioritisation framework at Appendix 1.
- (3) To endorse the overall 2012/13 budget strategy and service and financial planning process set out in the report.
- (4) Consider and agree the proposed budget guidelines and timetable for 2012/13 budget process. (Appendix 2 and 3)

Executive Summary

- 1.1 The service and financial planning process is underpinned by a robust evidence base that is used to inform decision making. This evidence base includes a social and demographic profile of the district (Living in Cherwell and local profiles on the Oxfordshire Local Information System) and a corporate consultation programme.
- 1.2 The consultation programme is comprised of an annual customer satisfaction survey and a budget survey to understand people's priorities for service expenditure. Both pieces of research are statistically representative and produce robust information regarding resident's budget priorities and satisfaction with the different services the Council provides. The information,

refreshed annually, provides a sense of trend and captures new issues that need to be taken into account when service and financial planning.

- 1.3 The results of the public consultation are used to develop a prioritisation framework which, alongside the corporate strategy, medium term financial forecast (Appendix 1) and the corporate improvement plan, provides the context for budget setting and service planning. The prioritisation framework for 2012/13 is shown at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The Council needs to set guidelines and a timetable for the preparation of draft estimates for 2012/13. These guidelines should support the objectives contained in the Corporate Plan, Improvement Strategy and enable an update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.5 In the context of the current challenging economic climate the council alongside local residents and businesses are experiencing the effects of the economic downturn and credit crunch. We have made a public promise to reduce expenditure by £1m in 2011/12 and as such it is important we plan for a period of prudent budgeting.
- 1.6 The Executive are already well advanced in planning to meet this promise. However additional savings will be required to meet the national challenge of public spending reductions. Executive and CMT are preparing options for these further savings. These will be identified as savings “building blocks” and will be used to build the final budget.
- 1.7 The attached guidelines in Appendix 2 proposed for the coming year provide a framework to identify areas of potential cost reductions across the organisation informed by our public consultation, previous investment, value for money reviews and our strategic priorities.
- 1.8 The budget timetable can be seen in Appendix 3.
- 1.9 Updates to this report will be brought before Executive and Council between December 2011 and February 2012, building on the framework identified below.

Background Information

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Financial Uncertainty

- 2.1 The local authority finance settlement announced on 9 February 2011 (draft settlement announced 13 December 2010) while ostensibly a four year settlement, actually provided only a fixed two year allocation of formula grant for local authorities for the periods 2011/12 and 2012/13.
- 2.2 The Spending Review 2010 only gave indications of how the overall level of funding for local authorities will change in the following two years, 2013/14 and 2014/15, which provided only limited clarity of the financial landscape over the medium term.
- 2.3 Government has announced that a review of local government finance will be conducted in 2011 which will feed into the distribution of local authority resources in 2013/14. This increases the level of uncertainty around forecasting resources beyond 2012/13.

- 2.4 On 17 March 2011 the Government launched the Local Government Resource Review to consider the way that formula grant and business rates are distributed to local authorities.
- 2.5 The terms of reference for the first phase of the review focus primarily on ways to;
- Reduce the reliance of local government on central government funding
 - Increase local accountability
 - Ensure that the benefits of economic growth are reflected in the resources authorities have.
- 2.6 In practice, the first phase concentrates on changes to the business rates system by exploring relocalisation of business rates with some system of equalisation. Under existing arrangements, non-domestic rates (business rates) revenue collected by local authorities is pooled for redistribution to local authorities in England. So while local authorities have a vital role to play in supporting the local economy, there is limited direct fiscal incentive to do so.
- 2.7 On 18 July 2011, the Local Government Resource Review (Phase One) published for consultation its proposals to allow councils to retain their locally-raised business rates. These proposals represent a fundamental shift in the way that local authorities are funded, freeing councils from dependence upon central Government grant and giving them a strong financial incentive to drive local economic growth.
- 2.8 On 19 August 2011, the Government published eight technical papers which provide more details of the Government's proposals. In addition, and to enable consultees to make informed responses to the consultation exercise, the Government has published an interactive calculator.
- 2.9 We are currently in the process of evaluating the implications for Cherwell District Council and preparing our response.
- 2.10 The second phase of the review focuses on community budgets and how they can be used to:
- give communities and local people more power and control over local services and budgets
 - develop outcomes, service solutions and a single budget, or options for pooling and aligning resources, comprising all spending on public services in an area
- 2.11 The current intention is that any new arrangements will be in place for the 2013/14 financial year. Until the outcome of the review is known there will be considerable uncertainty regarding resources for the Council after 2012/13.
- 2.12 Beyond 2014/15 the projections for expenditure and funding are less certain. However, by creating a plan that looks at the longer-term, that is constantly updated to reflect new information, the Council will be in a stronger position to approach future challenges proactively rather than reactively.

Forecast Update

- 2.13 We continually update our medium financial strategy and model scenarios with the Executive members and Corporate Management Team to test our planning rigorously. The last public forecast can be seen along with assumptions in the Budget Report to Full Council on 21 February 2011 which reported a cumulative budget deficit over the life time of the MTFs of £5.3m.
- 2.14 All known cost pressures are built into the model and assumptions are made for unknown pressures. This modelling leads directly to a target for cost reduction 18 months or so before the savings are required. The target to be achieved during 2011/12 is £1m – our public promise. Our current year VFM programme, building block process and the full year effect of the shared senior manager team will deliver the majority of this target.
- 2.15 With regard to the medium term, there are a number of pressures facing the Council in the context of the national framework being applied to local government, which, amongst other things, requires increasing efficiencies and restrictions on council tax increases. Against this backdrop the expectation is that, future year's budgets will come under increasing pressure with a growing emphasis on prioritisation, efficiency, innovation and collaboration in service delivery. The Council may therefore face difficult decisions in later years in order to sustain a balanced budget over the medium term.
- 2.16 As part of the development of the MTFs and budget, analysis is undertaken of the key financial assumptions on which the budget will be based. The key areas covered included:
- Economic factors, such as inflation
 - Treasury Management, including interest rates
 - Demographic pressures on spending
 - Asset Management, including a review of the Council's portfolio
 - Other spending pressures opportunities (revenue and capital)
- 2.17 Using the assumptions presented at MTFs workshops held in March 2011 and July 2011 the cumulative summary now shows a shortfall of £5.0m over the 4 year period and is summarised below:

Cumulative Forecast	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
	£M	£M	£M	£M
Net Expenditure	15.6	14.8	15.1	15.6
Gov't Grant	-7.6	-7.4	-7.2	-7.1
Council Tax	-6.4	-6.4	-6.4	-6.3
Investment Income	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Collection fund	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Use of Reserves	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Savings requirement	1.2	0.7	1.2	1.9
				5.0

- 2.18 Utilising this updated forecast and considering the outputs from the public consultation exercise detailed in section 3, the 2012/13 budget guidelines are prepared.

Corporate Consultation Programme

- 3.1 The corporate consultation programme and the recently published local profiles on the Oxfordshire Local Information System and the Council's Living in Cherwell document provide a robust and up to date evidence base for the service and financial planning process 2012/13. The development of the evidence base has been undertaken in accordance with Market Research Society guidelines (for consultation events) and uses social and demographic data with clearly identified sources.
- 3.2 The prioritisation framework is based on priorities identified through the public consultation, the focus of previous investment decisions and the strategic challenges facing the district to develop a hierarchy of services. Where services are rated as 1 they are suggested as the highest priority and, where a rating of 7 is given, the lowest. It should be noted that not all services are considered as part of the consultation (for example back office services or transactional services where members of the public may not come into direct contact or usage). As such the prioritisation framework provides a context and information to inform decision making, rather than a comprehensive statement of all council priorities.
- 3.3 The main findings of the consultation this year can be summarised as following:
- Rates of general satisfaction with the Council have dropped slightly (68% of respondents satisfied with the Council in comparison with 73% in 2010). This drop has been anticipated and reflects the national economic context and issues around public sector cuts. The Council's satisfaction rating remains higher than in 2009.
 - Increased satisfaction with the Council's garden and food waste collection scheme from 76% in 2010 to 80% in 2011.
 - The general improvement trend continued with regards to leisure facilities, reflecting the Council's investment programme. .
 - Given changes made to car parking charges in recent months it is not surprising that the survey shows a reduction in satisfaction from 63% in 2010 to 49% in 2011.
 - The economic context is still having an impact on people's views across the district with 'supporting the creation of jobs in local areas' still being viewed as a higher priority than has been seen prior to 2009.
 - There is a good deal of consistency in terms of public priorities between 2010 and 2011. However, the national context continues to have an impact on people's views about which services should be prioritised if overall budgets are cut. The Council's budget consultation found that local residents wanted to see Economic Development services retained and also valued waste services. Affordable housing, tackling anti-social behaviour and activities for young people also remain higher priorities. These priorities are outlined in Appendix 1 the Prioritisation Framework.
- 3.4 Formal consultation on the draft budget will take place in December with sessions with the Chambers of Commerce. Members of the public who have participated in the first phase of consultation will be informed of the decisions in line with our consultation and engagement strategy. During

December 2011 and January 2012 the draft budget and corporate plan will also be available on the Council's consultation portal for comment.

2012/13 Budget Strategy, Budget Guidelines and Timetable

- 4.1 The Council needs to set guidelines and a timetable for the preparation of draft estimates for 2012/13. These guidelines should support the objectives contained in the 5-Year Corporate Plan, Improvement Strategy and in particular the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 4.2 The attached guidelines in Appendix 3 proposed for the coming year provide a framework to identify areas of potential cost reductions across the organisation informed by our public consultation, previous investment, value for money reviews and our strategic priorities.
- 4.3 The associated budget timetable is detailed in Appendix 4.
- 4.5 Council will be asked to agree the 2012/13 budget and corporate plan (and the service plans that underpin delivery) at their meeting in February 2012.

Implications

Financial:	These are contained in the body of the report. There are no direct costs or other direct financial implications arising from this report.
Legal:	None directly from this report however a local authority must budget so as to give a reasonable degree of certainty as to the maintenance of its services. In particular, local authorities are required by section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to calculate as part of their overall budget what amounts are appropriate for contingencies and reserves. The Council must ensure sufficient flexibility to avoid going into deficit at any point during the financial year. The Chief Financial Officer is required to report on the robustness of the proposed financial reserves.
Risk Management:	The Council is required to set both revenue and capital budgets. Failure to integrate the preparation of these budgets with service priorities and planning will compromise the Council's ability to deliver on its strategic objectives. Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant 01295 21559
Equality and Diversity	Impact assessments will be carried out in advance of formulation of budget proposals. Comments checked by Caroline French, Equalities and Diversity Officer, 01295 221586
Data Quality	Consultation work has been undertaken by external market research organisations using industry guidelines to ensure findings are significant and consistent. Where low base sizes have been used

these have been highlighted

Comments checked by Helen Hayes Data Quality
Lead Officer 01295 22221751

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All

Executive Lead Member

Councillor Ken Atack
Lead Member for Financial Management

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Prioritisation framework 2012/13
Appendix 2	Proposed Budget Guidelines 2012/13
Appendix 3	Budget Timetable
Background Papers	
Report to Full Council, 21 February 2011 – 2011/12 Budget and Council Tax	
Report Author	Karen Curtin, Head of Finance Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Contact Information	01295 221551 karen.curtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221563 claire.taylor@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Frontline Service Priority Framework for 2012/13

Service Area	Priority Ranking 2011/12	Priority Ranking 2012/13	
Refuse collection and recycling	1	1	↔
Strategic Housing	1	1	↔
Economic Development and Regeneration	2	1	↗
Anti-social behaviour	2	2	↔
Sports facilities	3	3	↔
Local Development	3	3	↔
Community Development	3	3	↔
Housing Needs	3	3	↔
Private Sector Housing	3	3	↔
Local Transport and Concessionary Fares	4	4	↔
Leisure development	4	4	↔
Revenues and Benefits	4	4	↔
Cleansing	4	4	↔
Environmental Protection	4	4	↔
Rural Areas	4	4	↔
Car Parking	4	4	↔
Estates	4	4	↔
Safer communities	5	5	↔
Health Promotion	5	5	↔
Building Control and Engineering	5	5	↔
Public Protection	5	5	↔
Conservation & Urban Centres	5	5	↔
Planning & Enforcement:	5	5	↔
Arts	4	6	↘
Planning control	6	6	↔
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GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE 2012-13 BUDGET

Principles

- Protect Frontline Services
- Focus attention on corporate and service priorities and improving performance
- Maximise joint working potential
- Maximise Procurement Opportunities and Contract Negotiations
- Consideration to be given to impacts of Localism, Reform Agenda's and any legislation changes.

These budget guidelines have been developed within a consistent corporate framework to ensure:

- implementation of agreed savings and efficiency proposals
- resources are allocated to Council priorities
- inappropriate competition between services for resource allocations is minimised
- there is a transparent method for charging a fair cost between internal Council services.

The guidelines are designed to positively encourage managers and elected members to do the following:

- bring forward innovative ideas and options to make more effective use of existing resources, clearly identifying how the ideas may develop over a 3-year period, including any requirements for pump priming money.
- link the budget setting process to Service Plans, Action Plans already in place, Value for Money Reviews and the requirement for the identification of options, which will produce efficiency savings.
- focus attention on corporate and service priorities and improving performance.

Budget Deliverables

1. Prepare and submit draft revenue estimates for 2012/13 and the next 4 years which fully reflect the service priority and consultation event findings and match the current duration of the MTFS.
2. Prepare and submit a draft four-year capital programme. All schemes to carry a full project appraisal including strategic objective, priority, value for money assessment, and details of any revenue impacts. All capital project appraisals will be validated by the Capital Investment Delivery Group. All schemes previously approved for commencement in 2012/13 and onwards will be carried through for consideration.
3. The 2011/12 projected outturn at September 2011, adjusted to take account of the full year effect of savings identified in setting the 2011/12 budget, and one off items will be assumed to be the "**base budget**". This will then be further adjusted for savings identified within the Executive's £1m promise action plan and the savings "Building Blocks" that have been identified and approved, (these savings building blocks are options for additional savings that are being identified as part of

preparation for the 2012/13 budget process.) The budget will be prepared by the Service Accountant and signed off by Head of Service.

4. The final draft of the budget should be accompanied by a one page word document which will include key expenditure indicators, efficiency targets and overview of service and key projects for 2012/13. This template will be sent out in December 2011 for completion.

Budget Timetable

The revenue and capital budget is agreed by full Council before 11 March each year. The 2012/13 budget will be considered at Council in February 2012. (or Reserve – March 2012)

A summary timetable is attached in Appendix 3. This timetable dovetails with the service and financial planning timetable.

Revenue Budget Guidelines

Income

In building income budgets it is essential that a realistic assessment of income achievement is undertaken. Budget holders should use their knowledge of past trends and current market conditions in assessing income levels for the future and the scope for increases in fees and charges.

It is important to look at not only financial information but also non-financial information such as activity data on customer usage and trends to help build realistic income estimates.

Variations to the existing approved budget for income must be clearly identified and explained.

Variations in fees and charges need to be considered taking into account the Council's priorities and objective to ensure that proposals are consistent with these priorities and objectives.

Growth

- The net impact of all growth items should be **ZERO**.
- Growth arising from changes in legislation/ regulation or service planning will **ONLY** be allowed if it is fully funded by transferring resources within the same service or from within the same Directorate. Any such transfer either within the same service or the same Directorate can only come from demonstrably lower priority services. A growth proforma should be completed detailing full requirements.

Financial assumptions - should be used in estimating changes in expenditure and income over the medium term.

- Provide for general inflation in 2012/13 on all expenditure (excl payroll) and fees and charges as per forecasts in our MTFS (based on MTFS realistic model) and will be used in the budget module as below:

Year	CPI %
2012/13	3.0%
2013/14	3.0%
2014/15	3.0%
2015/16	3.0%

(current July CPI is 4.4%)

- Payroll - there is currently no local agreement in place and negotiations will commence in Q3. We will therefore provide for payroll inflation at 1% below our inflation forecast as detailed above until such time as the outcome of these negotiations is known.

Year	%
2012/13	2.0%
2013/14	2.0%
2014/15	2.0%
2015/16	2.0%

- Council Tax should be forecasted with 0% increases (based on MTFS realistic model) and held at 2009/10 levels.

Year	CPI %
2012/13	0%
2013/14	0%
2014/15	0%
2015/16	0%

- Interest rates should be forecasted as below (info from Sector- based on three month money rate)

Year	Average Interest Rate
2012/13	1.5%
2013/14	2.25%
2014/15	3.25%
2015/16	3.25%

All financial indices above are subject to further review in the budget process and may be subject to change.

Savings

Over an above the £1m public promise, each Directorate is required to work up a full range of budget savings options for consideration that will result in a cumulative 2% reduction in the Directorate's controllable expenditure.

These options will be presented as potential Budget savings "Building Blocks". A standard template will be provided (requesting information on lead in times, one off costs and impact on priorities, services and policies.

Directorates are encouraged to be "free thinking" in drawing up options which:

- identify opportunities for new efficiency savings, consistent with the requirements of the Efficiency Savings Review process.
- identify areas with reducing levels of income and identify opportunities for reducing corresponding expenditure.
- challenge current methods of service delivery and identify alternative ways of providing services.
- challenge existing policies and service levels so a complete range of service reductions are identified.
- have considered every issue relating to the potential saving. (including lead-in times, one-off costs and impact on services and policies).
- have considered the statutory requirement to provide the service and at what minimum level, or whether the service is discretionary.
- Explicitly consider if there is scope for efficiencies via closer working with other local authorities particularly in light of our own and South Northants current considerations on closer working.

Capital programme Guidelines

- Officer arrangements for drawing up and monitoring the capital programme and generation of resources is via the Capital Investment and Delivery Group (Officer led group with representation from across the Council)
- The development of 4 year rolling capital programme and resources should be drawn up within the context of the following objectives:
 1. The generation of additional reserves and balances, with appropriate contingencies.
 2. The opportunities to invest to save.
 3. Maintaining Council assets and the Council's infrastructure to agreed standards.
- A capital project appraisal is required for each bid and this will be validated by the Capital Investment Delivery Group. All schemes previously approved for commencement in 2011/12 and onwards will be carried through for consideration.

Procurement

When setting both the 2012/13 budget and future years, regard should be given to the Corporate Procurement Strategy and The Council's Contract Procedure rules. In particular, budgets and projections should be based on Corporate and agreed framework contracts. Further advice and guidance can be obtained from the Councils Procurement Team.

Risk

The budget process is fundamental to the Council's financial management regime and Members need to be assured that all pertinent issues are properly considered when making key decisions on the Council's future finances.

In drawing up revenue budget proposals, risk assessments should be undertaken to test the robustness of proposals and to identify key factors which may impact on the proposals put forward. Where appropriate

action plans should be put in place to manage/mitigate the risks identified – this may include a risk provision within the budget which can be calculated by your service accountant.

With a ~ £15.8m Revenue Budget and ~ £15m annual Capital Budget covering all the Council's services and activities the potential for an issue to be missed or not considered properly will always be there. The budget process is designed to minimise this risk and throughout the process there are frequent meetings with Corporate Management Team and Executive to review

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TIMETABLE

Activity / Report	Month	Year	Output
Budget Workshops with Executive	March and July	2011	Activity
Public Consultation and Satisfaction Survey	July - August	2011	Activity
Budget Strategy and Guidelines to Executive	September	2011	Report
Budget Scrutiny Commences	October - December	2011	Activity
Budget Workshops	October	2011	Activity
Service Plans and Budget Forecasts prepared	October - November	2011	Activity
Draft Budget 1 to CMT	November	2011	Report
Draft Budget 1 to Executive	December	2011	Report
Council Tax base to Executive	January	2012	Report
Final Budget Proposal to Executive	February	2012	Report
Budget Proposal to Council	February	2012	Report

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