

Committee: Executive
Date: Monday 28 May 2012
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 Tony Ilott	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 - 6)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2012.

Strategy and Policy

6. Bicester Masterplan Update (Pages 7 - 14)

6.35pm

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

Summary

To brief members on the progress with the development of the Bicester Masterplan.

The completed Masterplan will set the strategy for shaping the development of Bicester and be used to inform the determination of planning applications.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Receive a presentation by WYG on progress being made with the development of the Bicester Masterplan.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor changes before publication of the Bicester Masterplan (WYG presentation) for public consultation.

7. Local Plan 2012 (Pages 15 - 50)

7.00pm

** Please note that due to the size of the document, Appendix 2, the Local Plan 2012 will be circulated under separate cover **

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

Summary

To submit to members for their consideration the Proposed Submission draft of the Local Plan 2012. Once adopted the Local Plan 2012 will replace the Local Plan 1996 and will form the basis for determining development applications in the Cherwell District.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the Local Plan 2012 for public consultation.
- (2) To delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor changes to the document before publication for consultation.

8. Local Development Scheme (Pages 51 - 82)

7.20pm

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

Summary

To seek approval of the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS is used to project manage the production of the Local Plan and provides a programme for completion of Local Development Documents

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Agree and approve the revised Local Development Scheme.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor changes to the document before publication.

**9. Consultation and Engagement Strategy Update 2012-2015
(Pages 83 - 108)**

7.40pm

Report of Head of Transformation

Summary

This report outlines the Council's updated Consultation and Engagement Strategy performance for the period 2012 -2015.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Note past achievements in this area as a foundation for the updated strategy and action plan.
- (2) Agree the proposed consultation and engagement strategy and action plan and request that performance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Service Delivery and Innovation

**10. Participation in a Community Interest Company to Deliver the Green Deal
(Pages 109 - 116)**

7.50pm

Report of Head of Regeneration and Housing

Summary

To seek approval for the Council to become a shareholder member of a Community Interest Company established to act as a Green Deal Provider.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To authorise the Council's participation as a founding, shareholder member of the proposed Community Interest Company (CIC), subject to confirmation by the Head of Finance and Procurement and the Head of Law and Governance that the terms of membership and participation are acceptable and place the Council at no financial, legal or reputational risk.

11. Eco Bicester: A Garden City of the Future? (Pages 117 - 124) 7.55pm

Report of Head of Public Protection and Development Management

Summary

To enable Members to consider the potential to explore garden city designation for Bicester.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To agree that DCLG are contacted to explore the identification of Eco Bicester as a next generation garden city.

12. Member Champions (Pages 125 - 130) 8.05pm

Report of Head of Law and Governance

Summary

The purpose of this report is to allow members to consider proposals to adopt a scheme for the appointment of Member Champions

Recommendations

Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Consider the proposed Terms of Reference, Role Description, and proposals for new Member Champions.
- (2) Subject to agreement of recommendation (1), to appoint Member Champions.

Value for Money and Performance

13. Update on Major Programmes (Pages 131 - 144) 8.10pm

Report of Head of Transformation

Summary

To provide an update on progress toward implementing robust governance of major change projects, following the approval by Members in January of resources to support major projects.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended, subject to South Northamptonshire Cabinet resolving in similar terms, to:

- (1) Approve the amended governance structure for the Council's major projects detailed at Appendix 1
- (2) Note the requirement for member nominations for each of the major projects, and additional project board members where required
- (3) Agree that the Programme Board responsibilities in respect of the Transformation Programme be absorbed into the remit of the Joint Arrangements Steering Group (JASG) and that the JASG terms of reference be varied accordingly as shown in Appendix 2

14. Joint Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2012/13 8.20pm (Pages 145 - 176)

Report of Head of Finance and Procurement

Summary

This report brings forward for Members' approval, the joint procurement strategy and action plan for 2012/13 for the council. The primary objective of the procurement strategy is to procure goods, services and works that assist in reducing service budgets in line with severe funding reduction while being fit for the purpose, meeting the needs of local people and service users, and providing value for money over their lifetime.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To consider and approve the joint corporate procurement strategy and action plan for 2012/13 for the council which is attached at Appendix 1.

Urgent Business

15. Urgent Business

Any other items which the Chairman has decided is urgent.

(Meeting scheduled to close at 8.25pm)

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to

democracy@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk or 01295 221589 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 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.

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.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections
natasha.clark@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk, 01295 221589

Sue Smith
Chief Executive

Published on Friday 18 May 2012

Agenda Item 5

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 2 April 2012 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Councillor G A Reynolds, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Norman Bolster, Lead Member for Estates
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Banbury Brighter Futures
Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor James Macnamara, Lead Member for the Environment
Councillor Nigel Morris, Lead Member for Change
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Customer Services

Also Present: Councillor Leslie F Sibley, Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor Tim Emptage, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Calvin Bell, Director of Development
Martin Henry, Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance and Procurement
Linda Rand, Design and Conservation Team Leader (for agenda item 6)
Martyn Swann, Strategic Housing Manager (for agenda item 7)
Helen Town, Strategic Housing Officer (for agenda item 7)
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

102 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

104 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

105 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

106 **Draft Conservation and Urban Design Strategy for Cherwell**

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report which sought the approval of the Draft Conservation and Urban Design Strategy for Cherwell for public consultation purposes.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Planning advised Members that an addendum to the report had been circulated as since publication of the Executive agenda the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had been published, which replaced existing Planning Policy Guidance and Statements. Additionally, the Budget Statement had removed the provision of zero rating for VAT purposes of new works to listed building from 1 October 2012.

The Lead Member for Planning explained that if approved for consultation purposes, the Draft Conservation and Urban Design Strategy would be updated to reflect the changes arising from the NPPF and the budget statement.

Member agreed that the Draft Conservation and Urban Design Strategy was important for the district as it supported the protection of local heritage and the promotion of local design.

The Lead Member for Planning reported that Linda Rand, Senior Conservation Officer, would be retiring at the end of the week. The Executive thanked Linda for her hard work for the authority expressing their appreciation for her services to planning and wished her all the best for her retirement.

Resolved

- (1) That the content of the Draft Conservation and Urban Design Strategy be considered.
- (2) That the Draft Conservation and Urban Design Strategy be approved for public consultation purposes and that authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor amendments to the Strategy prior to consultation.

Reasons

This draft strategy sets out the Council's remit in the areas of conservation and urban design, illustrates what has been achieved and what we will strive to achieve in the future. The document covers a three year period from April 2012 to March 2015.

Options

- Option One** To accept the recommendation
- Option Two** To not consult on the draft strategy and miss the opportunity to establish and then set clear priorities for the way the Council approaches conservation and urban design matters for the next three years.

107

Cherwell Housing Strategy 2012-17

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted a report which presented Cherwell's 2012 - 2017 Housing Strategy to the Executive for approval.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Housing explained that the Strategy covered six Strategic Housing Priorities. It superseded and incorporated any existing or former strategies and carried over any outstanding actions.

Members commended Officers for the strategy making particular reference to the innovative approach to housing strategies and policies which had aided in securing significant inward investment and agreed that work should continue in this way. The Executive requested that officers arrange a briefing for all Members on the refreshed allocations policy and benefits reforms.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed Cherwell Housing Strategy for 2012 – 2017 be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing to produce an annual delivery plan for each year of the strategy that will prioritise actions in line with resources and opportunities.

Reasons

Cherwell's proposed Housing Strategy is ambitious. It clearly sets out the need to understand the business case for all new areas of development. In producing a business case we can look at rationale, resources, risk and outcomes to assess if this is a prudent way forward. An example of this is the emerging Build! ® self build housing programme. A business case was made, which identified the level of investment and the likely return. This is a good example of how innovation can provide leverage to secure significant inward investment. To date the HCA has committed (subject to contract) £2.45 million pounds towards the Build! ® programme for new build and refurbishment of empty homes.

As well as being a statutory requirement, the proposed Cherwell Housing Strategy is a tool to communicate our priorities to partners in the public,

private and voluntary sector. We have taken into consideration feedback from a range of partners through one-to-one meetings and groups and tried to capture all the key challenges and opportunities ahead. Whilst no strategy can be 'all things to all people' we believe that the holistic approach to housing provides a balanced set of actions which if implemented will enable the District to be investment ready and for local people to be 'housing ready' ~ financially resilient and able to secure and manage a home.

Options

- Option One** To accept all the recommendations in this report and:
- (1) To approve Cherwell's 2012 – 2017 Housing Strategy
 - (2) To delegate authority to the Head of Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing to produce an annual delivery plan that prioritises actions in line with resources and opportunities.
- Option Two** To approve the proposed housing strategy, but not the recommendation for an annual action plan. The benefit of an annual action plan is that it allows the Council to maintain its flexibility and responsiveness during changing economic times.
- Option Three** To not accept any of the recommendations in this report. The implication of not accepting the proposed is the Council's strategic direction for housing including its role in supporting wider Council priorities is delayed.

108

Police and Crime Commissioner Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel

The Head of Community Services submitted a report which reported on progress to date on the implementation of the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (PCP) and to seek approval to establish a Joint Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the establishment of a Joint Committee and delegate to it signing-off the arrangements for the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel be approved.
- (2) That Councillor Reynolds be appointed as the Cherwell District Council representative on the Joint Committee.

Reasons

This decision is the next step in implementing the decision of the Executive of 5 March 2012 in establishing the Thames Valley Police Crime Panel

Options

- Option One** To agree the appointment of a Joint Committee and the Council's representation on it.
- Option Two** Not to agree the above, with the resultant consequence that arrangements may be imposed on the Thames Valley Police area by Secretary of State.

109 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

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

110 **Finance and Procurement Business Case**

The Head of Finance and Procurement submitted an exempt report which sought support for the business case to implement some shared finance functions across Cherwell District Council (CDC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC).

Resolved

That, subject to approval of the staffing implications by Personnel Committee and similar approval by the respective SNC decision making bodies:

- (1) The consultation comments and responses contained in the log be noted.
- (2) The business case to implement some shared finance and procurement functions across Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council be endorsed.
- (3) Subject to South Northamptonshire Council resolving in similar terms, authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Procurement to take all necessary steps to implement the team in compliance with the Organisational Change Policy and in consultation with the HR Managers at both Councils.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Procurement, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Management, to fund the implementation costs from earmarked reserves.

Reasons

The Option recommended is seen as the proposal that would bring the most benefit to both Councils, would impact on JMT in a timely manner, deliver the required savings and allow a further review once the full impact of the Local Government Resource Review (LGRR), Welfare reform and Localism is known. This would also allow for the shared IT service to be implemented with the full benefits of more streamlined technology being considered in a further review of the finance and procurement function when there is greater certainty.

There are clear benefits to be gained from shared Finance and Procurement functions by both organisations in terms of increased resilience, consistent policies and procedures, best practice across the two authorities, efficiency and effectiveness.

Options

The options are set out in detail in the business case. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Executive

Bicester Masterplan Update

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To brief members on the progress with the development of the Bicester Masterplan.

The completed Masterplan will set the strategy for shaping the development of Bicester and be used to inform the determination of planning applications.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To receive a presentation by WYG on progress being made with the development of the Bicester Masterplan.
- (2) To delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor changes before publication of the Bicester Masterplan (WYG presentation) for public consultation.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Since the endorsement of the Conceptual Plan by the Executive in February 2012, WYG have undertaken detailed site assessment and stakeholder engagement around the themes of employment, housing, movement and open space.

Proposals

- 1.2 Securing integration of development with the existing town
- 1.3 Helping unlock the potential of the town.

Conclusion

- 1.4 It is proposed that the Bicester Masterplan update be approved. The update illustrates the substantial progress being made and the next steps being developed to conclude the plan making process.

Background Information

2. The Cherwell District Council appointed consultants WYG to prepare a Masterplan for Bicester in November 2011
- 2.1 Following the appointment Oxfordshire County Council confirmed a major contribution to the funding of the work and are actively involved in the coordination of the project jointly with CDC.
- 2.2 WYG were asked to complete a conceptual plan by the end of January 2012, which was agreed by the CDC executive at its February 2012 meeting with a full Masterplan in the process of being completed being completed adoption by the Council as planning policy guidance for the town.

The role of the Masterplan process

- 2.3 The Masterplan has been commissioned to examine the town and its future needs over the next 20 years. It aims to provide a clear vision for the future of the town and set a framework for the integration of new developments with the rest of the town, to ensure that opportunities for securing a stronger economy are realised.
- 2.4 A number of opportunities exist in Bicester which are critical to consider in a comprehensive, coordinated and planned way. The Masterplan process has proved itself as a powerful means to capture the aspiration of the town and to consider how best to realise its full opportunity to bring benefit to the economy, environment and wellbeing of residents.
- 2.5 The Masterplan seeks to amplify and build upon the strengths of the town. Bicester has a range of current strengths, from the development of the Eco-Bicester concept, a strong commercial and retail partnership in Bicester Vision, the Bicester Outlet Village which draws millions of visitors per annum, an attractive historic core, a substantial amount of defence estate land for potential redevelopment, a dynamic local College, access to the M40, good rail links to Birmingham and London and proximity to the major economic driver of the City of Oxford. The Masterplan for Bicester seeks to harness these factors into a coherent view of how the town might grow by building on these assets.
- 2.6 These include taking advantage of the new East –West Rail link, the potential for creating a larger town centre with more shops, restaurants and overnight accommodation. The Masterplan is also considering areas such as transport pressures, retail needs, green infrastructure and future education needs and other aspirations for the coming decades. It will also consider the potential gains from proposed development in the wider Bicester area including the Graven Hill MoD site.
- 2.7 The Masterplan is intended to help ensure that all new development is fully integrated into the existing town. The Masterplan will also propose a new green edge to the town, a new boundary that sets a limit to the town's growth

which has been taken up in the Local Plan Submission draft.

2.8 The main aims of the Bicester Masterplan are to:

- Guide the growth of the town up until 2031 and beyond.
- Identify opportunity sites in the town and potential land uses.
- Identify the key physical and social infrastructure that is required to meet the requirements of the current and future population
- To inform the development of the Local Plan.
- Set out an urban design framework for the town.
- Identify how best to present the town as a destination and to examine how the town's considerable heritage might be used to develop new cultural activities and a new tourism offer.
- Highlight to potential landowners, developers and investors the opportunities that Bicester has to offer.
- Secure the future role of the town centre, ensure its vitality and viability, widen and secure the retail offer, reduce the number of vacancies and prevent against unsuitable out of town development that would undermine the role of the town centre.
- Provide a sustainable movement strategy for the town.
- Secure a stronger employment base for the town.
- Provide a robust document that the Local Planning Authority can use in pre-application discussions, to assess future planning applications and assist in the determination of proposals.
- Many of the opportunities will take time to secure, requiring the sustained commitment from many agencies but particularly the District Councils and Oxfordshire Country Council working together.

Guiding and shaping growth

2.9 Bicester is recognised in the current Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East as one of the main locations for development in Oxfordshire between now and 2026, by a minimum of 670 dwellings per annum. This growth is planned to take the form of key sites within the existing town, town centre regeneration and a series of urban extensions on strategic sites of which the NW Bicester site is to 'Eco-Town' standard (PPS 1 supplement – Eco Towns.

2.10 The Masterplan is developing a clear spatial vision for the town and setting a framework for the development of key opportunity sites. It will also enable Cherwell Council and its partners to take a proactive role in guiding future development within a clear town boundary that prevents urban sprawl or encroachment on the surrounding villages. The Masterplan is examining ways of best integrating all new developments such as Graven Hill with the rest of the town.

A stronger town economy

- 2.11 The Masterplan sought to address the availability of employment land to ensure local companies can grow and the economic base of the town be maintained and strengthened.
- 2.12 The Masterplan process has considered how best Bicester might build on its role as a market town.
- 2.13 Employment lead - growth to company expansion and inward investment. Substantial employment growth Addresses need for major employment growth, a key step towards securing the potential for turning around the out-commute. New technology investment. Exploring links to Silverstone, technology corridor. Employment quick wins – gateway. Economic positioning. Securing the economic gain we have identified will require us to change how we take forward economic development.
- 2.14 The Bicester Masterplan is also exploring how best the town should strengthen the retail sector of its economy and promote the town as a shopping, tourism and cultural destination and secure a closer relationship between the potential for future development of the successful Bicester Outlet Village and a larger town centre.
- 2.15 The Masterplan seeks to address a number of other challenges faced by the town, including:
- How to reposition the town in the face of competition from neighbouring towns with consequential retail leakage, leading to it becoming more of a dormitory town than a competitive, dynamic, attractive retail centre.
 - How to reduce the number of vacant shop premises within the town centre.
 - How to strengthen local resident's perceptions of a positive future for the town.
 - Identifying potential new employment sites within and around the town to assist in reducing the current high level of out commuting and responding to the restructuring of employment within the town, with a particular focus that matches the 'Eco-Bicester' concept.
 - How to build on the success of the Bicester Outlet village as a foundation for a more dynamic and diverse town economy.
 - How best to strengthen the economic benefits from Higher Education provision in the town.
 - How best to relate the potential use of Defence Estates land into the town for new residential and employment uses, that help strengthen the economy and demographics of the town.
 - How the town centre might be further developed as a high quality attractive place that meets wider business needs as well as providing an

attractive mix of national and independent retailers.

- How to use its locational advantages and maintain its excellent connectivity.
 - How best to promote the town as a tourism centre, by exploring the potential use of the former RAF Bicester site.
 - How best to announce 'arrival' into the town.
 - Providing coherence and avoiding sprawl
- 2.16 With this starting point, the Masterplan is an important means to consider the development of the town in a coordinated, planned and integrated way.
- 2.17 Bicester is a market town that serves a substantial rural catchment. As a result of the planned growth, the role and functions of the town centre will need to be expanded and enhanced both to maintain and strengthen the role of the town within this catchment. The challenge is how best to shape this town growth so that the town uses its key opportunity sites in a coordinated, integrated and planned way and to expand the retail, employment, leisure, education and social portfolio of the town to cater for the existing and a growing population.

Transport improvements

- 2.18 Central to the Masterplan project is the aim of improving public transport services; both bus connections within the town and to surrounding villages; the gain from the investment in the Chiltern Rail service from Birmingham, to Banbury, Bicester and London; the opportunities to be gained from the East-West Rail project linking Oxford, Bicester, Milton Keynes and Bedford through a new frequent rail service.
- 2.19 Alongside the expansion of the range of commercial and social facilities available, Bicester faces a challenge of how to secure an improved sustainable transport network for walking and cycling together with new bus connections that will collectively help to reduce the level of out-commuting and encourage 'modal shift' and promote the 'well-being' of residents of the town.
- 2.20 Funding to improve Junction 9 of the M40 is being actively sought through SEMLEP and OLEP through the Growing Places Fund and DfT Pinch Point Programme to ensure that this junction does not constrain development at Bicester.
- 2.21 The Masterplan process will include consideration of the need for enhanced Green Infrastructure, such as an expanded network of footpaths, link trails and new cycle paths, together with other investment in the public realm and ensuring that Bicester becomes a greener more attractive town.
- 2.22 Potential land use changes will raise the possibility of altering transport patterns in the town, the opportunity to remove pinch points and how the constraints on economic growth from M40 junctions 9 & 10 might best be resolved.
- 2.23 WYG have also now been commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council to

consider the detail of a new 'movement strategy' for the town and guidance to support their role as the local highway body.

Creating sustainable communities

- 2.24 The Bicester Masterplan will include an assessment of the likely volume of new housing, securing high building standards such as the use of Eco-Town standards. Building regulations, stronger design
- 2.25 The plan is considering how best to integrate areas of potential urban expansion with the existing town to ensure that the town benefits from this growth, with new community facilities and the impact on existing services fully assessed. This will include consideration of the educational needs of the town, the relationship between potential education locations (of all types – primary, secondary and higher) and the appropriate level of health facilities, together with the potential for new and extended cultural, arts, sports and leisure facilities.
- 2.26 The aims are to consider how best to:
- Provide a wide range of high quality, sustainable housing choices and build safe neighbourhoods.
 - Strengthen the cultural life of the town, the public realm, arts and facilities for community use.
 - Secure a high quality leisure, sport and recreation offer.
 - Ensure that the proposed urban extensions to the North West, South West and at Graven Hill might best be integrated with the rest of the town.

Informing the Cherwell Local Plan

- 2.27 The Bicester Masterplan will assist with the completion of the Local Plan for the District having considered the issues facing the development of the town as a whole in depth.
- 2.28 The Local Plan will incorporate the conclusions of the Masterplan onto a statutory footing, placing the future of Bicester into the context of Cherwell District as a whole.
- 2.29 Completion of the Proposed Submission Local Plan is being considered on 28 May 2012, followed by a final 6 weeks consultation and submission planned for the autumn 2012. This will lead to an Examination in Public in the winter and Adoption anticipated in late Spring 2013.

The process of Masterplan preparation

- 2.30 WYG are in the final stages of preparing the Masterplan and have been gathering information and liaising with key stakeholders to inform its production.
- 2.31 Key stakeholders include elected members and officers from the 3 tiers of local government - District, Town and County Councils; Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, Defence Estates and local businesses through Bicester Vision

and the Chamber of Commerce.

- 2.32 Engagement has so far included a series of workshops and one to one interviews.
- 2.33 Following public consultation the Masterplan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to give the document weight in the planning system. The adopted Masterplan can be used to inform pre-application consideration with developers. The Bicester Masterplan will align with the Local Plan and be used for the determination of planning applications.

Consultation on the Masterplan

- 2.34 Cherwell District Council will be consulting more widely on the Masterplan in June and July. This will ensure that the final plan has taken account of all those with an interest in Bicester, in shaping the future of the town.
- 2.35 The final report for CDC will be brought to the Executive. It will include an executive summary of the key findings.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 To receive the presentation of the progress update from WYG.

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

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Option One | To support the continued development of the Bicester Masterplan. |
| Option Two | To support the development of the Bicester Masterplan with amendments. |
| Option Three | To not support the completion of the Bicester Masterplan and to continue with a piecemeal approach to development that fails to ensure integration with the existing town or to ensure that opportunities are realised for the benefit of residents and businesses in Bicester. |

Consultations

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Cllr Michael Gibbard | Informal Briefing |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|

Implications

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Financial: | There are no significant direct financial implications
A rising from this report.
Comments checked by Leanne Lock 01295 227098 |
| Legal: | The Council is not required to produce a Masterplan as a |

component of place shaping. It is intended to consult on the draft prior to its adopted as an SPD.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell Team Leader – Planning and Litigation 01295 221687

Risk Management:

Not having an up-to-date Masterplan for the town forms a sound basis for determination of applications Council’s proposed Development Plan Documents being found ‘unsound’ at Examination with consequent delay implications for resources. It would also produce uncertainty in deploying resources for completion of the LDF.

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Performance Manager 01295 221563

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

- Accessible, Value for Money Council
- District of Opportunity
- Safe and Healthy
- Cleaner Greener

Lead Member

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
Briefing papers on the development of the Bicester Masterplan	
Report Author	Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy
Contact Information	03000030110 Adrian.colwell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Executive

Local Plan 2012

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To submit to members for their consideration the Proposed Submission draft of the Local Plan 2012. Once adopted the Local Plan 2012 will replace the Local Plan 1996 and will form the basis for determining development applications in the Cherwell District.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the Local Plan 2012 for public consultation.
- (2) To delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor changes to the document before publication for consultation.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Proposed Submission draft of the Cherwell Local Plan 2012:
 - Sets out clear ambitions for the District and the 2 towns in particular.
 - Provides certainty for communities and developers as to what will /can be developed and where.
 - Focuses growth at Bicester.
 - Proposes less growth at the villages than was envisaged in the Feb 2010 version of the plan.
 - Shifts focus of the plan to strengthening the local economy, job creation and inward investment and company growth, together with what sort of communities we wish to build.
 - Creates a major platform to help deliver economic development in a recession.
 - Strengthens the Town Centres at the heart of the District.
 - Secures infrastructure such as new rail and road investment.

- Avoids coalescence with villages, by introducing new green buffers at the edge of development.
- Takes permissions and what has been constructed into account.
- Emphasises high environmental standards and design quality.
- Protects the Oxford Canal
- Promotes area renewal and regeneration in Banbury
- Supports innovation such as Community Self build.
- Addresses planning reforms

Proposals

- 2.1 Securing the adoption of a 'sound' up to date Local Plan for the District is a priority for Cherwell District Council as it will guide the growth of the District over the next 19 years.
- 2.2 Without this the District faces an imminent challenge of piecemeal development by appeal, in which Cherwell District Council would lose the ability to ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations and future community needs are properly planned for and maximum community gain (and mitigation) secured.
- 2.3 The District faces a number of current challenges:
- A policy vacuum with a Local Plan dating back to 1996.
 - Recession leading to planned strategic sites being delayed or with slower development profiles.
 - Identifying sites sufficient to meet local demographic needs over the next 19 years for both housing and employment.
 - Ensuring growth takes place at Banbury and Bicester and at more sustainable levels at the villages.
 - The passage of the Localism (2011) Act introducing major changes to the planning system in England.
 - The revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies due in 2012 and the move to a housing growth based on an assessment of local need (Locally derived growth).
 - The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 which continues with the requirement to maintain a 5 year land supply, and brings with it the 'duty to cooperate' and the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
 - Major sites in the two towns beginning to come forward for determination ahead of the strategic planning framework which the Local Plan should set.
- 2.4 Following the creation of the shared management team a review was conducted of the timetable for completing the Local Plan and preparing for submission for examination and the setting of realistic, deliverable deadlines. The review sought to ensure that the plan has taken account of the national changes being introduced and to ensure that the plan is as robust as possible, is 'challenge proof' and a plan which CDC can be confident will pass through its Examination for adoption.
- 2.5 Since November 2011 when Local Plan preparation begun in earnest, gaps in technical evidence has been completed to inform the Submission draft Local Plan for it to be 'sound'. These include:
- Commissioning an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which relates to site

viability and development obligations and will pave the way for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is required by 2014 and which is being prepared alongside the Local Plan.

- A Sustainability Appraisal and Equality Impact Assessment of the final draft plan (required by regulation).
- An update of the SHLAA (Housing Land Assessment) and SHMA (Housing Market Assessment) to ensure a full option appraisal of strategic sites and that they are the most sustainable locations for growth (required by the NPPF).
- A further assessment of housing mix and need for extra care and self-build housing and consideration of procedures for financial contributions for affordable housing part units.
- The completion of an outstanding employment land assessment and ensuring the conclusions of the Council's Economic Development Strategy are fully taken into account
- A study of economic change facing the District and a retail assessment to inform how we position the economy of the District.
- A review of the NPPF for the Plan.
- Addressing the 'Duty to co-operate', showing how the plan takes account of the views of neighbouring Councils (required by the NPPF).
- Ensuring the plan takes account of the Bicester Masterplan and emerging Banbury Masterplan which examine how major sites in each town (SW & NW Bicester, Graven Hill, the two Town Centres) might be properly integrated with the wider town and the town centres strengthened.
- Ensuring the plan is legible and readable to help secure community acceptance.

2.6 The district is in need of an adopted Local Plan as soon as possible. It has an old adopted Local Plan (1996), with only saved polices forming part of the statutory Development Plan. Its intended replacement, the Cherwell Local Plan 2011, was withdrawn from the statutory process and approved by the Council as interim policy in December 2004. The Non-Statutory Plan (Feb 2010) has only limited weight and its plan period has now expired. Since that time the Council has been working on a Local Development Framework.

2.7 Following the passage of the Localism Act (2011) and the creation of the Joint Management Team conclusive steps have been taken to complete the Submission Draft of the Local Plan (formerly the Core Strategy) as quickly as possible.

2.8 A Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (May 2012) has now been prepared which grows out of the Draft Core Strategy (Feb 2010) but which re-prioritises policies based on up-to-date assessments of the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the district. This marks the beginning of the final stages of plan preparation.

Conclusion

3.1 It is proposed that the Local Plan 2012 be approved for public consultation.

Background Information

4.1 See Appendix 1.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 The approval of the Local Plan 2012 for consultation.

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

Option One	To support the contents of the Local Plan 2012.
Option Two	To support the contents in the Local Plan 2012 with amendments
Option Three	To not support the completion of the Local Plan 2012.

Consultations

Cllr Michael Gibbard Regular Briefing

Implications

Financial:	There are no significant direct financial implications A rising from this report. Comments checked by Leanne Lock 01295 227098
Legal:	The Council is required to have an up to date Local Plan and following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework has 12 months to complete the preparation of the Local Plan after which the NPPF would become the primary basis for determining planning applications. Comments checked by Nigel Bell Team Leader – Planning and Litigation 01295 221687
Risk Management:	Not having an up-to-date Local Plan is a major weakness for the consideration of planning applications and weakens the ability of the Council to shape and guide growth to the more sustainable locations. Council's proposed Development Plan Documents being found 'unsound' at Examination with consequent delay implications for resources. Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Performance Manager 01295 221563

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

- Accessible, Value for Money Council
- District of Opportunity
- Safe and Healthy
- Cleaner Greener

Lead Member

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Report on Submission draft Local Plan 2012
Appendix 2	Local Plan 2012 –circulated separately
Background Papers	
See Local Plan 2012 Annex 3 detailing evidence	
Report Author	Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy
Contact Information	03000030110 adrian.colwell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

**Local Plan 2012. Overview
28th May 2012**

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

SUMMARY

The Proposed Submission draft of the Cherwell Local Plan 2012:

- Sets out clear ambitions for the District and the 2 towns in particular.
- Provides certainty for communities and developers as to what will /can be developed and where.
- Focuses growth at Bicester.
- Proposes less growth at the villages than was envisaged in the Feb 2010 version of the plan.
- Shifts focus of the plan to strengthening the local economy, job creation and inward investment and company growth, together with what sort of communities we wish to build.
- Creates a major platform to help deliver economic development in a recession.
- Strengthens the Town Centres at the heart of the District.
- Secures infrastructure such as new rail and road investment.
- Avoids coalescence with villages, by introducing new green buffers at the edge of development.
- Takes permissions and what has been constructed into account.
- Emphasises high environmental standards and design quality.
- Protects the Oxford Canal
- Promotes area renewal and regeneration in Banbury
- Supports innovation such as Community Self build.
- Addresses planning reforms

A. BACKGROUND

- A.1 Securing the adoption of a 'sound' up to date Local Plan for the District is a priority for Cherwell District Council as it will guide the growth of the District over the next 19 years.
- A.2 Without this the District faces an imminent challenge of piecemeal development by appeal, in which Cherwell District Council would lose the ability to ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations and future community needs are properly planned for and maximum community gain (and mitigation) secured.
- A.3 The District faces a number of current challenges:
- A policy vacuum with a Local Plan dating back to 1996.
 - Recession leading to planned strategic sites being delayed or with slower development profiles.
 - Identifying sites sufficient to meet local demographic needs over the next 19 years for both housing and employment.

- Providing a 5 year land supply (an obligation retained through the recent planning reforms) to ensure growth takes place at Banbury and Bicester and at more sustainable levels at the villages.
- The passage of the Localism (2011) Act introducing major changes to the planning system in England.
- The revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies due at some point in 2012 and the move to a housing growth based on an assessment of local need (Locally derived growth).
- The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 which introduces new uncertainties around the need to have 5 year land supply, the 'duty to cooperate' and the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- Major sites in the two towns beginning to come forward for determination ahead of the strategic planning framework which the Local Plan should set.

A.4 Following the creation of the shared management team a review was conducted of the timetable for completing the Local Plan and preparing for submission for examination and the setting of realistic, deliverable deadlines. The review sought to ensure that the plan has taken account of the national changes being introduced and to ensure that the plan is as robust as possible, is 'challenge proof' and a plan which CDC can be confident will pass through its Examination for adoption..

A.5 Since November 2011 when Local Plan preparation begun in earnest, gaps in technical evidence has been completed to inform the Submission draft Local Plan for it to be 'sound'. These include:

- A Sustainability Appraisal and Equality Impact Assessment of the final draft plan (required by regulation).
- An update of the SHLAA (Housing Land Assessment) and SHMA (Housing Market Assessment) to ensure a full option appraisal of strategic sites and that they are the most sustainable locations for growth (required by the NPPF).
- A further assessment of housing mix and need for extra care housing and consideration of procedures for financial contributions for affordable housing part units.
- The completion of an outstanding employment land assessment and ensuring the conclusions of the Council's Economic Development Strategy are fully taken into account
- A study of economic change facing the District and a retail assessment to inform how we position the economy of the District.
- A review of the NPPF for the Plan.
- Addressing the 'Duty to co-operate', showing how the plan takes account of the views of neighbouring Councils (required by the NPPF).
- Ensuring the plan takes account of the Bicester Masterplan and emerging Banbury Masterplan which examine how major sites in each town (SW & NW Bicester, Graven Hill, the two Town Centres) might be properly integrated with the wider town and the town centres strengthened.
- Ensuring the plan is legible and readable to help secure community acceptance.

B. COMPLETING THE LOCAL PLAN - TIMETABLE

B.1 The district is in need of an adopted Local Plan as soon as possible. It has an old adopted Local Plan (1996), with only saved polices forming part of the statutory Development Plan. Its intended replacement, the Cherwell Local Plan 2011, was withdrawn from the statutory process and approved by the Council as interim policy

in December 2004. The Non-Statutory Plan (Feb 2010) has only limited weight and its plan period has now expired. Since that time the Council has been working on a Local Development Framework.

B.2 Following the passage of the Localism Act (2011) and the creation of the Joint Management Team conclusive steps have been taken to complete the Submission Draft of the Local Plan (formerly the Core Strategy) as quickly as possible.

B.3 Key events in the preparation of the Local Plan to-date have been:

- a Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation Paper in February 2006
- subsequent evidence gathering, consultation with key stakeholders, sustainability appraisal workshops, directions of growth workshops, Parish Council workshops, liaison with the Local Strategic Partnership
- Consultation on Options for Growth in September 2008
- extensive consultation on a Draft Core Strategy (February) 2010
- further evidence gathering and accelerated reorientation of priorities since October 2011

B.4 The publication of the South East Plan in May 2009 and the Eco-Towns supplement to (former) Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) in July 2009 have also been key events. The South East Plan is expected to be revoked but presently remains part of the statutory Development Plan. Until such time as the RSS is revoked, the Council is legally obliged (High Court Judgement on CALA homes (2011)) to be in general conformity with it. The Eco-Towns supplement currently remains Government guidance.

B.5 The Council is taking forward the development of the Local Plan in the context of fundamental changes to the planning system, new national planning policy and economic recession.

B.6 A Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (May 2012) has now been prepared which grows out of the Draft Core Strategy (Feb 2010) but which re-prioritises policies based on up-to-date assessments of the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the district. This marks the beginning of the final stages of plan preparation:

B.7 Next stages include:

- Consultation – June/July 2012
- Submission – September 2012
- Examination – Jan 2013
- Adoption – March – May 2013 (anticipated)

B.8 Once the Plan is adopted, work to implement key projects, secure economic investment, create new jobs, build new homes, provide new infrastructure and enhance the natural, built and historic environments will begin in earnest assisted by other planning documents set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

C. PLANNING REFORM

C.1 The Government has now implemented its reform of the planning system. There are three main drivers:

- Localism Act (Nov 2011)
- Local Plan Regulation (the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations) March 2012)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – in place from 27th March 2012

C.2 Localism Act

C.3 The key provisions of the Act as far as Plan-Making is concerned are as follows:

- new powers for the Secretary of State to seek the revocation of regional strategies through Parliament (following strategic environmental assessments)
- a Duty to Cooperate requiring local authorities and other public bodies to work together on planning issues
- the introduction of neighbourhood planning providing a new right for communities to draw up a Neighbourhood Development Plan and to determine for themselves where they most want development (provided it accords with national policy and the Local Plan)
- the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Orders enabling local communities to permit the development they wish to see without the need for planning applications (provided it accords with national policy and the Local Plan)
- the introduction of a Community Right to Build allowing certain community organisations to bring forward smaller-scale development on a specific site, without the need for planning permission (provided it accords with national policy and the Local Plan).
- reform of the Community Infrastructure Levy giving the government the power to require that some of the money raised from the levy go directly to the neighbourhoods where development takes place
- a new limit on the discretion of planning inspectors to insert their own wording into local plans.

C.4 Local Plan Regulations

C.5 The key provisions of the new Regulations are:

- New Language – return to ‘Local Plan’. This Local Plan will ultimately be accompanied by a set of documents that provide the development framework for the District as set out in the accompanying Local Development Scheme.
- Prescription of key bodies to be included in the Duty to Cooperate including the new Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Changes to the procedures for preparing Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents

C.6 The Impact of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

C.7 The NPPF sweeps away the micro control of planning including over 1000 pages of guidance in PPSs and PPGs. Although it provides local flexibilities, there must be objective evidence to support the local policy positions adopted. We are required to produce an evidence based Plan that accords with the NPPF.

C.8 Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, a so called ‘golden thread’ running through plan-making and decision-taking. Pursuing ‘sustainable development’ involves positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural, and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life.

C.9 The NPPF contains 12 core planning principles. In summary these are that planning should:-

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings and providing a positive vision for the future. Plans should be kept up to date, based on joint working and co-operation and provide a practical framework for decision-making;
- be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve places;
- proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, employment, infrastructure and thriving local places. Objectively identifying and meeting needs, responding positively to wider opportunities for growth, taking account of market signals and setting out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient suitable land;
- secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promote the vitality of our main urban areas, protect Green Belts, recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and support thriving rural communities;
- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk, encouraging the re-use of existing resources, the conversion of existing buildings and the use of renewable resources;
- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Preferably allocate land of lesser environmental value where consistent with other policies;
- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;
- promote mixed use developments, encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognise that some open land can perform many functions;
- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance;
- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;
- take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

C.10 The NPPF requires plan making to:

- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- reflect vision and aspirations of local people
- achieve economic, social and environmental gains
- avoid significant adverse impacts and to consider development options
- involve meaningful engagement
- as far as possible develop a collective vision and agreed priorities
- develop strategic policies to cover the homes and jobs needed; retail, leisure and commercial development; the provision of infrastructure; the provision of community and cultural facilities including health and local facilities; climate change mitigation and adaptation; and the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment including landscape.

C.11 Plans are crucially expected to:

- be positive
- have an appropriate timescale
- take account of longer term requirements
- be based on co-operation with neighbouring authorities and key organisations
- identify broad locations for strategic development
- allocate sites to promote development and the flexible use of land providing detail where appropriate
- identify areas where it may be necessary to limit freedom to change and where development would be inappropriate
- have a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment

C.12 Plans must create the context for Development Management decisions to be taken in a positive way, translating plans into high quality development on the ground and enabling applications for sustainable development to be approved where possible.

C.13 Procedurally, Local Plans must:

- have a proportionate evidence base “...based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area”
- be sound, namely, positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy
- take into account the Duty to Cooperate. The new planning system requires CDC to engage with all neighbouring Councils. It does not require the Council to agree with observations from those Councils, but as recent Examinations illustrate (eg York – April 2012), this is a topic that inspectors are concerned with reflecting the objective of Ministers who elevated this principle to the heart of the recent planning reforms.

C.14 The NPPF raises a number of new issues and changes of emphasis for the Local Plan:

- a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development
- a more pro-development policy context requiring local development to be support local development where possible
- a clear direction to promote sustainable economic growth
- a requirement to plan strategically across local boundaries
- retention of the requirements for at least 15 years of housing provision and a continuous 5 year land supply of deliverable housing sites, but an additional buffer of 5% against 5 year requirements or 20% if there has been persistent under-delivery
- the potential to include an allowance for windfall sites in the 5 year supply where there is compelling evidence
- Green Belt around new development is possible
- no ‘brownfield’ first policy but encouragement for the effective use of previously developed land and the possibility of a locally set appropriate target
- in rural areas, consideration of whether allowing some market housing would facilitate provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs
- avoiding the long-term protection of employment land where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose

- a clear direction not to refuse planning permission for sustainable buildings (or infrastructure) due to concerns relating to incompatibility with an existing townscape if those concerns have been mitigated by good design
- ensuring plans are viable and deliverable
- establishing the foundation for Neighbourhood Planning and community led development

C.15 The pressure to complete the Local Plan

- C.16 The NPPF allows existing policies (the saved policies of the adopted Local Plan) to be given full weight for the next 12 months (to 27 March 2013). After that period, the weight that can be afforded to those policies depends on their degree of consistency with the NPPF. As the saved policies are derived from a 1996 Local Plan, consistency may prove difficult to demonstrate (policies for housing supply are already considered to be out-of-date). There is therefore real pressure and a very tight timetable to complete this lengthy plan-making process of which this document is only one step.

D. A RE-FOCUSED LOCAL PLAN

- D.1 The Proposed Submission Local Plan addresses this planning reform and builds upon an updated and more fully developed understanding of the needs and challenges facing Cherwell's places and their environs. It provides a proactive, positive suite of policies to help these places thrive, to deliver essential and longer term infrastructure requirements and achieve viable, sustainable development that will improve the quality of life in the district.
- D.2 The draft plan has been refocused to give a sharper focus, to address the difficulties of economic recession and to demonstrate how the towns can be strengthened to achieve positive outcomes for both urban and rural areas.
- D.3 In particular, the Local Plan is one that is centred on the achievement sustainable economic growth, drawing-in investment tailored to the current and future needs of the district and to Cherwell's socio-economic position in Oxfordshire and the south-east Midlands, and the creation of jobs. Its seeks to significantly boost housing supply to sustainable levels which are appropriate for the level of economic growth taking into account a strategy of re-balancing jobs and homes at Bicester and the need for investment at Banbury. It also seeks to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to secure sustainable design and achieve net gains in biodiversity.
- D.4 The Plan recognises that delivering housing in a recession will be challenging but that a 5 year land supply (plus 5%) must be provided. The Executive approved a Housing Land Supply Position Statement on 6 February 2012 which seeks to address issues of under- supply ahead of completion of the Local Plan and in the context of concerns about the over-development of rural areas. The Position Statement seeks a sustainable, urban led approach to managing housing supply. This approach is clearly supported by Local Plan evidence and is fundamental to the proposed development strategy. The Position Statement is superseded by the Proposed Submission Local Plan and a further report on housing supply will be presented to a future meeting of the Executive.
- D.5 The South East Plan presently remains part of the statutory Development Plan and requires 670 homes per annum to be developed in Cherwell from 2006-2026. The

Local Plan seeks to provide new housing at this rate but extends the plan period from 2006/2026 to 2006/2031 to provide flexibility in phasing the delivery of strategic sites and to provide a longer period for infrastructure planning. This will enable 18 years of housing delivery from adoption of the Plan in 2013.

- D.6 The additional five years produces an additional requirement of 3,350 homes for the five years from 2026 to 2031 and a total of 16,750 homes from 2006 to 2031. This is in keeping with the national (2008) household projections showing an additional 16,022 households over the same period. Between 1996 and 2011 the district delivered an average of 577 homes each year. The Council's Housing Strategy 2012-2017 seeks to increase the supply of homes and to improve access to housing. A requirement of 670 per year will help the Council meet this objective.
- D.7 Our policies on affordable housing and housing mix seek to provide the right type and size of housing and to ensure that additions to the housing stock contribute to meeting the needs of the anticipated future household profile. The Plan also promotes the Council's innovative housing policy of self- build and self-finish.
- D.9 Without these steps the gains of growth for the two towns will not be secured, but also the Council will lose more appeals, growth will move to less sustainable locations and in due course as a result of the NPPF the Council will lose control of the planning system at the local level.
- D.10 Lower growth is proposed in the villages than in the Feb 2010 plan, as a result of higher growth in Bicester. But this is not a matter of the arbitrary allocation of population figures, but a detailed assessment of what additional growth at Bicester can achieve for the town and consideration of the pressure on rural areas. The proposed development level for villages has been reduced from 1130 in the February 2010 draft Core Strategy, to 948 in the May 2012 Local Plan. This figure includes houses already completed and in determining whether to approve additional housing in the villages recent levels of approval will be taken into account.
- D.11 Site options have been tested and reviewed at various points. For example, the forthcoming SHLAA study has reviewed all previous decisions about how strategic sites have been selected. The final iteration of the SHLAA will be available prior to commencement of public consultation.
- D.12 Ensuring continuous housing delivery at required levels needs active management of the land supply and taking active steps to ensure the strategic sites are deliverable. Active engagement with the developers and agents of strategic sites is on-going and in some cases promoters are preparing for formal applications in the context of recent land supply difficulties. The pre-app process will be stepped up and positive planning at the preferred locations pursued to ensure that the objectives of this plan are delivered for the benefit of the District.
- D.13 The Plan's monitoring framework seeks to ensure that the projected housing delivery is achieved, allowing for the possibility of the early release of sites if required
- D.14 On a number of identified strategic sites an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach needs to be taken. This is to ensure that where development areas comprise different land holders a single development vision will be secured. Masterplans for the whole site areas will be required.
- D.15 The key test for the plan is its ability to deliver: -

- Active management of the land supply
- Sufficient new housing and employment sites with in-built contingency
- Employment growth as the major driver
- Joint working with developers so we have certainty on what can be delivered
- our social and environmental goals drawing on our key studies

D.16 The Plan also continues with the South East Plan's focus of growth at Bicester, more steady growth at Banbury and the development of sustainable rural areas. It seeks effective use of previously developed land, including major 'brownfield' opportunities at Banbury and Bicester, but recognises the reality that major greenfield releases are necessary to bring about the required jobs and homes at the right time. It aims to provide certainty for developers and communities by establishing a clear, positive, justified framework for development into the future supported by sound evidence.

E. A SOUND EVIDENCE BASED LOCAL PLAN

E.1 Key Evidence

E.2 We are not looking for perfection, but a plan compliant with the NPPF and which is 'sound'. A plan that ensures the District has a level of certainty about how it will grow over the next two decades. Annex A is a guide to the key issues that should be addressed to ensure that the plan can be judged to be 'sound' at the Examination stage.

E.3 The current version of the Plan is built on extensive evidence and studies not undertaken when the Feb 2010 Plan was presented for consideration by the CDC Executive. A number of studies have reached draft stage or are still emerging and have been used to inform the completion of the attached draft Plan. A number of key parts of evidence will be consulted upon alongside the Plan itself including the Sustainability Appraisal, while the other studies will all be posted on the Local Plan website as they are completed and signed off.

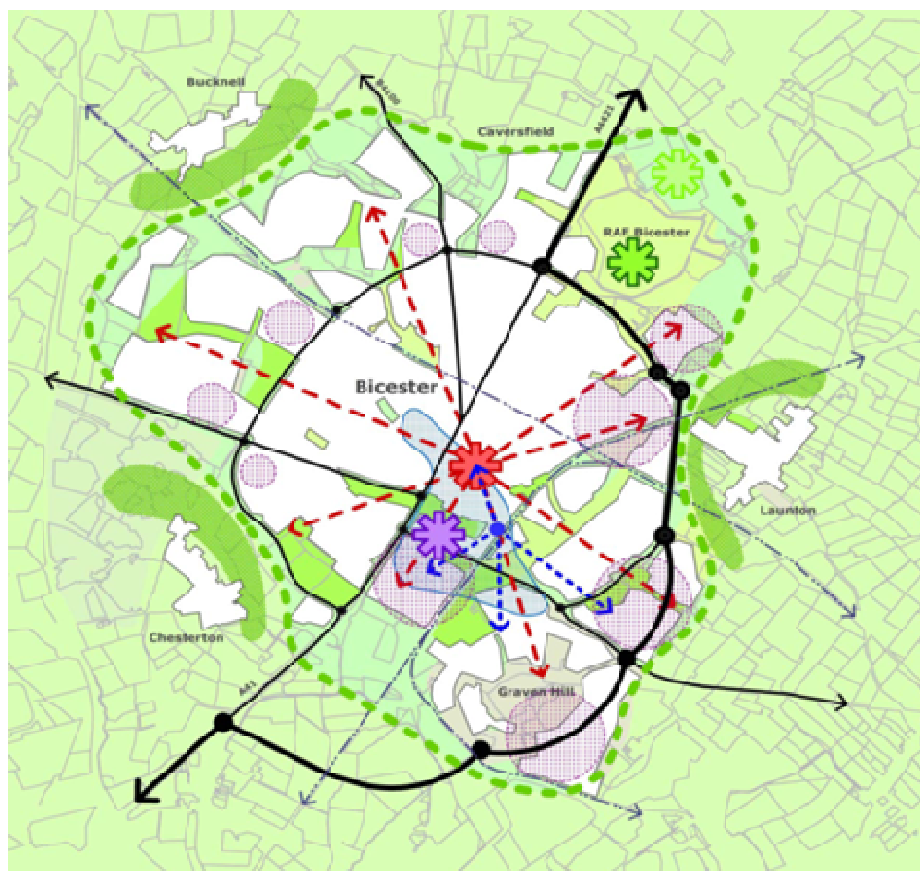
E.4 Annex 3 of the Local Plan sets out the evidence used in its preparation and shows the substantial amount of background documentation that underpins this plan. The development of this draft plan is also informed by considerable consultation at various points in its gestation and formulation. Sites originally proposed and identified were consulted upon in site allocation Issues and Options Papers dating from 2006-2008. We also commenced work on the Sustainability Appraisal to support the plan, and held a number of sustainability workshops. An 'Options for Growth' consultation paper on directions of growth and strategic sites was published in September 2008 and supported by stakeholder workshops and exhibitions across the District and Sustainability Appraisal workshops. Draft allocations for strategic sites were consulted on through the Draft Core Strategy (February 2010). Subsequent difficulties with housing delivery in a recession and the more pressing need to identify opportunities for economic growth have necessitated a revisiting of sites previously discounted. The process used for compiling the Bicester Masterplan has led to a detailed site assessment of additional sites in Bicester.

E.5 All evidence will have been completed by Examination.

E.6 The development of this draft Plan is also informed by considerable consultation at various points in its gestation and formulation. It also takes full account of the emerging detail of the Masterplans for Bicester and Banbury, together with the

extensive stakeholder involvement in shaping the development of the documents, though formal community consultation is still due to take place in June/July 2012.

- E.7 A Bicester Masterplan accompanies this report. The Masterplan has been prepared to guide the future development of the town, to consider future employment needs and how the town centre might be further strengthened; the potential for major transport improvements and the opportunity from East-West rail; the integration of new communities into the town including eco-development at North West Bicester; and, to explore potential site uses and land releases. It contains a set of strategic proposals for the future development of the town to ensure the development of the town proceeds in a holistic, planned, coordinated way:
- E.8 The Bicester Masterplan has been prepared in depth through extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders, developers and land owners which has helped in framing the plan and as to identify the best locations for growth. The Masterplan builds upon the work already undertaken by the Council in developing the Eco-Town project, linking into and extending the aspirations for the town. It identifies the town's wider economic potential and as a whole. This will be subject to wider public consultation alongside the consultation on the Local Plan in June/July 2012.
- E.9 The Bicester Masterplan has examined the opportunities of all available, significant sites for housing and employment in depth. It highlights the opportunities for an extended town.
- E.10 The CDC Executive endorsed the concept Masterplan in February 2012, illustrated below.



- E.12 Bicester also needs to attract the high skilled technical industry that will provide good opportunities for employment and encourage people to both live and work in the town. The Eco Town initiative provides an opportunity to attract new employment that helps position the town economy for the future, with low carbon green companies drawn to the cutting edge development in NW Bicester.
- E.13 A Banbury Masterplan is also now underway. The Banbury Masterplan is exploring the potential within the town for sustainable employment and housing growth. It is also identifying specific opportunities for new public open space and movement options in the interest of developing the most appropriate transport strategy for the town. It is considering the interrelationship between housing and employment needs; potential land uses, the future of the town centre including how its regional status can be strengthened; accessibility and the potential for transport improvements; the integration of new communities; and, the town's constraints at its urban fringe including the need to protect the identity of nearby villages. Again, the aim is to ensure that the Local Plan's strategic proposals can be delivered and that the future development of the town proceeds in a holistic, planned, coordinated way.
- E.14 Its preparation is helping inform the preparation of the Local Plan and work will continue in parallel with consultation and be brought to conclusion ahead of Submission. In particular, the Masterplan is exploring:
- Delivering sustainable growth for Banbury through new job opportunities and a growing population
 - Securing a desirable employment location that supports local distinctiveness and economic growth, based on its retail, heritage and tourism potential
 - Strengthening the attraction of the town centre as a destination with a full range of retail, community and leisure facilities
 - Maintaining a sustainable community with a comprehensive range of social, health, sports and community functions
 - Ensuring all development secures safe communities set within attractive landscaped spaces.
 - Strengthening the employment base of the town.
 - key physical and social infrastructure to meet the requirements of the current and future population
 - a movement strategy for the car and sustainable transport.
- E.15 The Masterplan needs to ensure that Banbury responds to:
- Its physical constraints and the constraints on growth of the town.
 - Its transport challenges.
 - Market forces and positions to survive the recession.
 - The challenge from neighbouring towns
 - Retain the character of the town as it grows
 - Establish the shape of the future town
- E.16 Other key evidence documents for the Local Plan are listed below:
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (complete, update in progress)
 - Banbury Integrated Transport and Land Use Study (complete)
 - Banbury Movement Strategy (in progress)
 - Bicester Integrated Transport and Land use Study
 - Bicester Movement Strategy (in progress)
 - Cherwell Rural Areas Integrated Transport and Land Use Study

- Town Centre and Retail Studies update (in progress)
- Employment Land Review (complete)
- Economic Analysis Study (in progress)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (complete, update in progress)
- Cherwell Housing Needs Estimates (being updated through SHMA work)
- Assessing the type and size of housing stock required in Cherwell (being updated through SHMA work)
- Affordable Housing Viability Study (complete, being updated)
- Analysis of the viability of Extra Care Housing (complete)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (in progress)
- Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Study (complete)
- Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Study (new study in progress)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1 complete, Level 2 in progress)
- Canalside Flood Risk Assessment (Level 2 in progress)
- Green Space Strategy
- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Indoor sports and recreation facilities assessment
- Indoor Sports and Village Halls Study (in progress)
- Tourism Study
- Renewable energy and sustainable construction study
- Viability Study (in progress)
- Consultation Responses

E.17 Lessons from the evidence base

E.18 The evidence base identifies the issues that the Plan must address and informs its vision and objectives. For example, it tells us:

- the 'knowledge economy' needs to grow
- new employment sites are needed to meet modern business needs
- we need to improve our urban centres and existing employment areas to retain and attract business
- there is a need to adapt to the changing rural economy
- we need to respond to a growing and ageing population
- we need to increase the supply of affordable housing and make market housing more accessible
- more housing is needed for newly forming households in rural areas
- there is a need to improve educational attainment
- access to natural greenspace needs to be improved
- we need to reduce the dependence on travel by car, manage traffic congestion and cut carbon emissions
- we need to improve the geographical accessibility of services
- there needs to be a leap forward in sustainable design and construction
- there is a need to protect and enhance the district's biodiversity and adapt to climate change
- the identity of our towns and villages and our valued landscapes need to be protected
- we need to maintain or create a sense of belonging and improve social cohesion
- the built up environments of our urban areas need to be improved, to ensure that new development maintains or increases distinctiveness and improves the functioning of our town and villages.

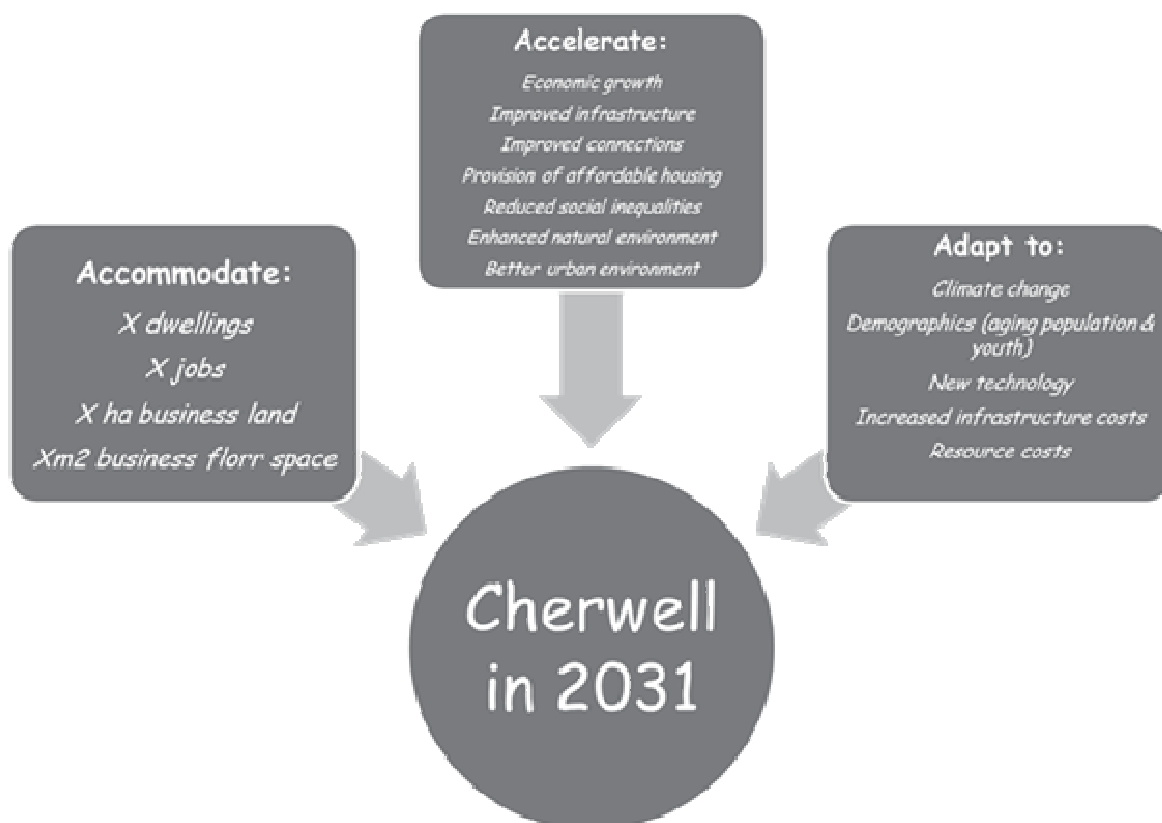
E.19 Sustainability Appraisal

E.20 The single most important piece of evidence is the Sustainability Appraisal, of which the latest stage is currently being prepared in parallel with the Local Plan. Earlier stages of the plan were supported by sustainability appraisal workshops and the Draft Core Strategy (2010) was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal report. A summary of the findings for the Local Plan 2012 will be provided to the meeting of the Executive.

E.21 This assessment is concerned with the impact that the plan might have, whether all relevant factors have been addressed and what sort of alternatives or mitigation have been considered or are proposed. The Council is required to consult on the full report and will do this alongside the consultation on the Local Plan as a whole over the same period.

E.22 External Influences

E.23 The Local Plan seeks to address a number of external influences on the District:



E.24 Taking account of other policy relationships

E.25 The Local Plan does not stand separate from other strategies and policies. It considers the long term nature of development in the District and seeks to align with existing policies and analysis.



E.26 Relationship to Council Studies

E.27 The following studies have been particularly important:

- Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 – Our District, Our Future
- Conservation and Urban Design Strategy 2012 - 2015 (Draft published April 2012)
- Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016
- Housing Strategy 2012-2017
- Recreation Strategy 2007-2012
- Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan

E.28 Other stakeholder plans are also taken into account, including:

- Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan
- Oxfordshire 2030 Sustainable Community Strategy
- Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 3
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Emerging Core Strategy

F. STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL PLAN

F.1 The structure of the Local Plan reflects the district's challenges and priorities. It defines:

- What we want to achieve
- Where we want to achieve it
- How it will be delivered

F.2 Our priorities include:

- Grow the economy,
- Protect the villages,
- Strengthen the town centres,
- Secure infrastructure investment (eg Bicester relief road)

F.3 The Plan contains:

- Policies for the District – the policies which apply to planning and development
- Policies for Places – our policies for Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and the rural areas

F.4 The Plan has five distinct sections:

- Section A: Strategy for Development in Cherwell including our vision, overall spatial strategy and our objectives.
- Section B: Policies for Development in Cherwell with three themes:
 - Theme One: Policies for Developing a Sustainable Local Economy including policies on:
 - employment development, town centre and tourism
 - transport and connections, High Speed Rail 2
 - Theme Two: Policies for Building Sustainable Communities including policies on:
 - housing distribution, the efficient use of Land
 - affordable housing, housing mix, area renewal, travelling communities
 - education needs, health and well-being
 - public services and utilities
 - open space, sport, recreation facilities
 - Theme Three: Policies for Ensuring Sustainable Development including policies on:
 - climate change, energy, sustainable construction
 - flood risk and management, water resources
 - biodiversity and the natural environment
 - landscape, Green Belt and boundaries to growth
 - the built environment, the Oxford Canal and green infrastructure
- Section C. Policies for Cherwell's Places including policies for Bicester, Banbury, Kidlington and our villages and rural areas.

Our policies prioritise growth at the two towns in the District, the most sustainable locations for growth, the places most able to absorb development and where new infrastructure is required. They also seek to support

Banbury's town centre, extend Bicester's, deliver employment growth and bring forward the eco-town at Bicester.

- Section D. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan containing policies on infrastructure and specific requirements for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington
- Section E. Monitoring Delivery of the Local Plan providing a framework for policy monitoring and housing and employment trajectories

G. WHAT THE PLAN SEEKS TO DELIVER

G.1 Objectives and Vision

G.2 The Plan takes forward the Feb 2010 Core Strategy Objectives, but the policy proposals have substantially evolved to take account of new circumstances – with new national policies, recession and the community response to the Feb 2010 plan consultation.

G.3 The Local Plan aims to secure:

- A productive, high value, growing economy.
- An excellent transport system.
- Housing growth focused on Bicester & Banbury, limited in villages – most of the District will not change.
- A clear urban/rural boundary for both Banbury and Bicester to limit future growth.
- Inclusive communities.
- One community, not separate ones.
- Quality urban, rural and natural environments.
- Good quality urban design for new business and residential developments.

G.4 MANAGING GROWTH, DELIVERING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

G.5 An Economic Lead

G.6 In line with the NPPF and local priorities, the Plan leads on the economy. This is critically important at a time of recession when growth and jobs are needed, but also to ensure that we lay the foundations for the future economic success of the District. Consideration of the issues facing Cherwell, its locational advantages and its relationship with key economic drivers such as Oxford, has meant we are aiming to broaden the skill base; grow the knowledge economy; develop higher technology and eco-industries; develop more office based employment opportunities; and enable more rural diversification. We are seeking to create a broader, more diverse and innovative economy and a business friendly environment, that will provide in-built resilience and more self-sufficiency for the future.

G.7 The Local Plan presents locations for growth for a purpose – to ensure we provide sufficient land for employment led economic growth now and in the longer-term (with active marketing of the towns for inward investment to follow). The delivery of an Eco Town development at NW Bicester, the further development of two strong and larger town centres, and the potential of the East – West Rail project will, in addition to highly accessible employment sites and accompanying housing growth, be highly

significant economic attractors. See Annex D for the full list of proposed development sites.

- G.8 New employment land will provide for company growth and inward investment, correcting an existing in-balance in the economy and turning around the current high levels of out-commuting, particularly at Bicester.
- G.9 The Plan aims to strengthen the town centre of Banbury in particular as a Regional centre (recognised by the South East Plan), by ensuring that the developments at Canalside, the Spiceball Development Area and Bolton Road complement one another and extend the Town Centre for new retail, leisure, cultural and commercial uses. The aim is to ensure that town centre will not only be able to withstand the competition from retail parks, but to help diversify the range of uses in face of the challenge from internet shopping. At both Banbury and Bicester the opportunity for further leisure and cultural activities in the town centres will become more important over-time. With the continued growth of on-line shopping, it will also be important to respond the needs of independent retailers.
- G.10 A much larger town centre is proposed for Bicester, reflecting the needs of a rapidly growing town and ensuring that the benefits of town centre improvements, the continuing success of Bicester Village, and a redeveloped Bicester Town Railway Station are mutually beneficial. As Bicester grows, an extended town centre will provide new opportunities for further services and facilities, an improved public realm and better links to existing and residential areas.
- G.11 The Plan aims to attract new investment to the right locations so that the town centres are reinvigorated. Improved and extended town centres will help encourage wider economic growth, new development and renewal.
- G.12 Following adoption of the Plan CDC will need to step up its delivery of the economic growth require to fulfil the potential of the Plan. This will require activism, e.g. marketing of the towns as retail destinations, promotion of the key employment sites being released for inward investment and a different approach to promoting the area for tourism.

G.13 Delivering Homes in the Right Places

- G.14 The plan addresses the significant fall in the 5 year land supply for the District which runs the risk of inappropriate development being agreed in inappropriate locations that are not consistent with an urban, town led growth approach. The housing trajectory shows a cautious level of development on all sites during a recession, when site delivery is much slower. It aims to take the District back to a 5 year land supply and maintain it. In addition, the plan period has been extended to 2031 (from 2026) to enable development to be brought forward that is readily deliverable (subject to planning approval). The plan focuses on building communities' not just houses and housing numbers. The housing trajectory takes permissions not yet discharged into account (e.g. Banbury Bankside Phase 1) as well as completions, i.e. what has already been built.
- G.15 The numbers of houses proposed in the villages is lower in 2012 (948) than in 2010 (1130). This is a conscious decision to grow Bicester to secure a set of positive gains for the town (including a relief road and town centre expansion) as well as reducing the impact on villages which by definition have greater challenges in

absorbing major new housing and are less sustainable with a narrower range of necessary infrastructure than the two towns.

- G.16 The Plan seeks to ensure that the District has sufficient housing land allocated to ensure that the District does not lose appeals and employment land is not lost to housing.
- G.17 The Plan also uses a single housing figure for the District (in anticipation of the revocation of the RSS), which will assist the management of the housing supply.
- G.18 Close engagement with promoters of individual development sites as to what is required to be delivered on each site on each site, which has informed the development of the site policies, which are themselves much more detailed than in the February 2010 plan. This aims to demonstrate the deliverability of the plan, but also the deliberation and detailed site examination which has gone into the plan.
- G.19 The housing trajectory shows when sites are expected to be delivered and the expectations for the approved sites at Bankside, Banbury; South West Bicester (Phase 1), Gavray Drive, Bicester; and former RAF Upper Heyford. Where housing development has already taken place in a village it will be taken into account in determining whether additional building should be approved.
- G.20 The housing trajectory seeks to be clear about the distinction between planning permission and rate of build and address the recent land supply position by being realistic about the rate of delivery of challenging sites.
- G.21 The housing trajectory for the plan does not affect the planning approval for the total quantum of development at Bankside, Canalside or NW Bicester - it is commentary on likely delivery as a worst case baseline.
- G.22 In showing a flatter rate of delivery, we have the reassurance those levels of house building change according to market fluctuations and the strength of economy. As economic growth returns delivery will quicken and the conservative trajectory will change. The trajectory is not a static document, but represents a point in time and circumstances that we know will change.
- G.23 Growth is government by typography, ie where it is possible. Bicester is less constrained than Banbury and has opportunities for growth in most directions. Its landscape is less varied, almost flat (other than Graven Hill to the south) and more expansive. The town is bounded by a perimeter roads with outlying villages quite spaced out beyond. Banbury, however, almost sits in a topographical bowl created by valley slopes and ridgelines. The Cherwell Valley with north-south ridges lies to the east. There are ridge lines and slopes to the north and west, a gently sloping plateau bisected by the Sor Brook Valley to the south. Immediately to the east is the M40 and to the south the significant constraint of Salt Way - the historic trackway with the open aspect to Bloxham and Bodicote that is such an important feature of this area of the town. Banbury also has a more compact network of out-lying villages and more specific constraints beyond the built-up limits with nearby conservation areas, a registered park and landmarks such as Crouch Hill. Wherever growth is proposed there is a need for proportionality, for integration with existing communities and avoiding coalescence with villages nearby.
- G.24 Most of the housing sites included within this Local plan were previously contained in the February 2010 Draft Core Strategy document. However, in order to push up the delivery of housing as required by the NPPF, 3 new sites for housing growth are

proposed. These sites are Graven Hill, Bicester; Southam Road, Banbury and at the end of the Plan period, South East Bicester.

- G.25 See Annex D for the full list of proposed development sites. The principle of reserve sites has now been dropped with the full incorporation of North of Hanwell Fields at Banbury and South West Bicester Phase 2.
- G.26 The Plan identifies a number of strategic developments that will continue to take place after 2031 – South East Bicester and North West Bicester.

G.27 Providing Infrastructure, Protecting the Environment

- G.28 Delivering growth also means securing the infrastructure necessary to make the plan work and ensuring new communities integrate with existing ones, with the full range of services, leisure and green space. The Plan makes provision for a proposed Bicester south east relief road, which is critical to delivery of Bicester's growth. This includes on site infrastructure such as new schools, local centres and play space but also town-wide infrastructure such as green corridors and highway improvements.
- G.29 Town led growth enables us to promote the vitality of our urban areas, to actively manage growth to make full use of public transport, walking and cycling, to support the transition to a low carbon future and making effective use of previously developed land. In doing so it helps us protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and to ensure that our villages have more appropriate levels of growth.
- G.30 The Plan seeks to manage growth in a way that protects the environment and our most important natural resources. It also seeks to achieve net gains in biodiversity and a leap forward in sustainable design.

G.31 Securing Positive Outcomes

- G.32 The positive outcomes for delivering growth are:

Community

- more jobs, more varied employment and training opportunities
- more homes, a wider choice of homes, affordable housing and housing that meets the need of an ageing population, community self-build over and above the set percentage for securing affordable housing
- more schools, local centres and community facilities
- improved town centres with more leisure and cultural facilities
- more public open space
- improved access to the countryside

Movement

- A Bicester South East Relief road is in development as a result of the adoption by CDC of the concept version of the Bicester Masterplan in February 2012.
- Enhanced role for the Bicester Town and Banbury Railway Station and potential new rail links, together with opportunities, created by the East-West rail link.

- Examination of potential routes for a new inner relief road within Banbury to relieve Windsor Street and Banbury Cross Area. Improved connection to the rail station from Canal.
- Opportunities for highway improvements in accommodating growth.
- Opportunities for extended / improved bus services in accommodating growth and for extending cyclepaths.

Area Renewal

- The plan proposes to build thriving communities through support for targeted area renewal to assist improving the community fabric of the area and to help reduce social disadvantage, improve health and well-being, educational attainment and employment outcomes. This is aligned with the 'Brighter Future for Banbury' initiative and will focus on wards where there are significant levels of deprivation, commencing with the areas of western Banbury and Grimsbury to the east.

The Environment

- The plan covers development over a long period of time. It does not present jobs at the expense of the environment and the quality of what we build, hence policies ESD 1-5 being applied to all development sites.
- Green lung into Banbury and new Country Park in Banbury on part of the upper Cherwell floodplain, with managed habitat to the south of the town. Plan provides extensive support for new public open space.
- Extensive environmental policies to enhance biodiversity achieve sustainable design.
- Protecting the most cherished landscapes.

Conservation and coalescence

- To avoid coalescence with villages, green buffers will ensure the continued distinctiveness and separateness of villages and set a limit to urban growth during this plan period.
- Protection of the green belt against housing development.
- Ensuring conservation and heritage assets are protected and, where possible enhanced.
- Promoting good design to improve the built and historic environments of our towns and villages.

G.33 The full list of development policies which will apply to all development in Cherwell District are listed at Annex C. see Annex D for the full list of proposed development sites.

H. DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES

H.1 Neighbourhoods

H.2 All villages are entitled to prepare their own Neighbourhood Development Plan if they wish. Where villages pursue Neighbourhood Development Plans to adoption they will become part of the statutory Development Plan Document for the village. They will sit alongside the Local Plan in guiding planning applications. However all Neighbourhood Plans must be in conformity with the adopted Local Plan. Neighbourhood planning cannot stop development from taking place within a

community, as the Local Plan will still guide the distribution of housing and employment but it gives guidance to where, what type and the design.

H.3 Neighbourhood Plans will have an important role in tailoring the growth to the individual needs of our local communities.

H.4 Policy Lead and Active Delivery

H.5 A positive, proactive approach to delivery is required:

- A) to realise this Plan, a new focus will be required to how the Council delivers these critical developments. The new approach to site delivery and securing the wider economic and community gains from new development in the areas identified in the Local Plan requires a cross team, multidisciplinary, joined up approach to implementing the site proposals to ensure the economic and community gains are fully realised. For example, Canalside is a complex site that has major site assembly issues that will be taken forward by the Regeneration, Housing and Economic Development teams working in active collaboration with a developer.
- B) being active in our approach to working with developers to shape the development we want as a Council to secure. Moving towards taking a 'whole town approach' within the strategy for balanced development in the District as a whole. We will continue to work with Oxfordshire County Council, Town Councils and key stakeholders such as the MoD for Graven Hill and RAF Bicester.
- C) Securing this level of land release for economic development over two decades will require active promotion and support for companies to grow and inward investment. The forthcoming Action Plan for the Economic Development Strategy will set out proposals for active inward investment promotion of the two town and the District as a whole to show Cherwell is an 'investment ready District'.
- D) The aim is to secure a shift from a developer led approach to a Plan led approach where CDC secures the growth the District needs on terms acceptable to the local community.

I. DELIVERING INFRASTRUCTURE

I.1 Infrastructure requires growth to fund it. The proposed phasing of development seeks to ensure that key physical and social infrastructure is put in at the right time in such a way that it can unlock development in the right places.

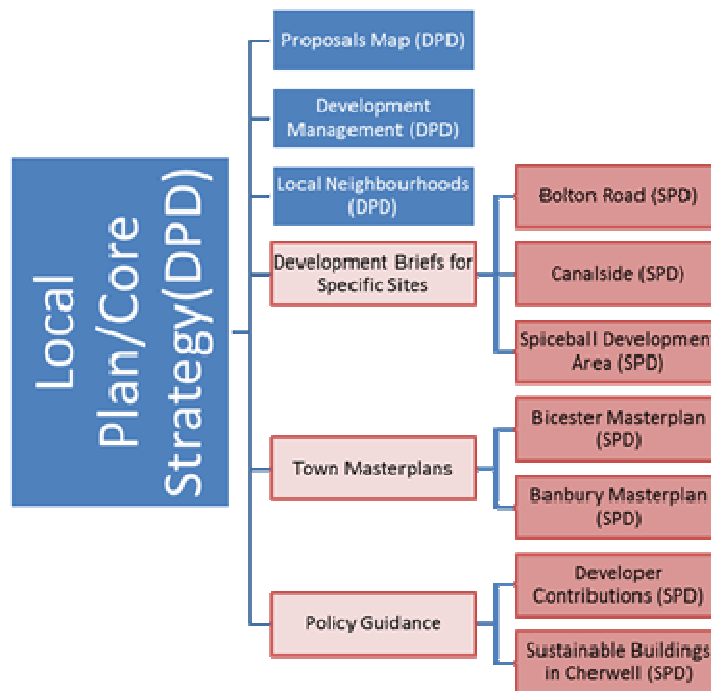
I.2 The completion of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will enable us to have confidence that critical infrastructure can be delivered and demonstrate that the Plan's development strategy is deliverable and that the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure can be provided to support the planned development. The Local Plan includes provision for a range of key infrastructure such as education, health and new strategic roads such as the SE Bicester relief road.

I.3 The IDP will identify costs attributable to the proposed levels of growth, requirements of each type of growth, and considers the viability of new infrastructure having regard to the phasing of development and possible funding opportunities.

- I.4 In addition to identifying specific requirements for the delivery of strategic sites, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan establishes a framework for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will become effective from 2014. It identifies priorities for a charging schedule for CIL such as for the proposed relief road at Bicester and contributions to the provision of community facilities and green infrastructure.
- I.5 A summary of known infrastructure requirements is provided at Section D of the Plan. This will be revised as the IDP is finalised

J. THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- J.1 The Local Development Scheme sets out the programme and resources for completion of the Local Plan process and the preparation of supporting documents that develop the detail of the Plan (see separate CDC Executive agenda item). It has been reviewed to provide certainty to the public and the development industry. The preparation of a Local Neighbourhoods document will be particularly important in identifying suitable village sites for development and in ensuring those areas of the district that do not produce Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to be involved in place shaping.
- J.2 The documents referred to in the LDS are all required to sit within the policy framework set by Government Policy and the Local Plan. This is what is called the 'Chain of Conformity'. Each is required to help support and deliver the Local Plan's objectives.



- J.3 The full list of documents is as follows:
 - A Development Management DPD – to cover Development Control matters
 - A Local Neighbourhoods DPD – to cover the limited village growth & small urban sites (linking to those Neighbourhood Plans which emerge).
 - Bicester Masterplan SPD

- Banbury Masterplan SPD
- Bolton Road SPD
- Canalside SPD
- Spiceball Development Area SPD
- Developer Contributions SPD
- Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD - to cover design and regulatory guidance matters

K. NEXT STEPS

- K.1 Despite the recent reforms of the planning system, this remains a lengthy process. This Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft is just a necessary and important first step.
- K.2 Following Executive consideration of the Proposed Submission Draft Plan there will be a period of public consultation. Unlike earlier stages of consultation this is a formal stage of the process and responses have to be set out in a particular way which will be set out in the consultation material.
- K.3 The consultation version of this draft Local Plan will be published in 'Limehouse' and include a number of additional maps and diagrams, though the substance of the text will not alter from that considered by the CDC Executive on 28 May 2012.
- K.4 Following the conclusion of the consultation, the plan will be refined and re-presented to Members for formal endorsement for submission to the Secretary of State.
- K.5 A date is yet to be set for the Examination, though preparations have begun and will continue.

Annex A - Guide to Soundness

Annex B - Proposed consultation arrangements

Annex C - List of development policies which will apply to all development in Cherwell District.

Annex D - List of proposed development sites.

Annex - A Guide To The Test of a 'Sound' Core Strategy (Based on Former PPS12, which while the PPS has been replaced by the NPPF illustrates the sort of tests to be met)

Does the Strategy address the following questions –

1. General

Does the Core Strategy set out:

- I. A vision which sets out how the area and the places within it should develop?
- II. Strategic objectives for the area focussing on the key issues to be addressed?
- III. A delivery strategy for achieving these objectives. Does the plan set out how much development is intended - where, when, and how it will be delivered?
- IV. Clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy?
Is the vision informed by an analysis of the area's characteristics and its constituent parts and the key issues and challenges facing them?
Does the vision conform with the RSS and related Sustainable Community Strategies?

Do the strategic objectives show a link between the high level vision and the detailed strategy?

Is the vision expanded into the key specific issues for the area which need to be addressed, and how that will be achieved within its timescale?

As a delivery strategy is central, does the strategy set out when, where and by whom these actions will take place?

Does the plan demonstrate that the agencies/partners necessary for its delivery have been involved in its preparation and the resources required have been considered and have a realistic prospect of being provided over its life?

2. Strategic Sites

Does the strategy allocate strategic sites for development? If so are they considered central to achievement of the strategy and is a submission proposals map included?

Does the core strategy avoid site specific detail which can date quickly?

3. Infrastructure

Is the strategy supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution?

Does the evidence cover who will provide the infrastructure and when?

Does the infrastructure planning for the core strategy include the specific infrastructure requirements of any strategic sites which are allocated in it?

4. Period of operation

Is the time horizon of the core strategy at least 15 years from date of adoption?

5. Consistency

Does the strategy repeat or reformulate national or regional policy which it should not?

Is the strategy consistent with national policy and in conformity with the RSS?

Does the plan use scarce resources to concentrate on tasks which only the core strategy can achieve, especially coordination of the development delivery and essential infrastructure?

6. Sustainable Community Strategy

Is the plan aligned and coordinated with Sustainable Community Strategies?

7. Justification of Core Strategies

Does the plan show it is justified by demonstrating it is

- I. founded on a robust and credible evidence base?
- II. the most appropriate strategy considered against reasonable alternatives?

8. The Evidence base

- I. Participation. Is there evidence of the views of the local community and others who have a stake in the future of the area being considered?
- II. Research/ fact finding. Is there evidence that the choices made by the plan are backed up by the background facts?

Is the evidence gathered proportionate to the job being undertaken by the plan, relevant to the place in question and as up-to-date as practical having regard to what may have changed since the evidence was collected?

9. Alternatives

Does the plan demonstrate it is the most appropriate option when considered against reasonable alternatives? Have reasonable alternatives been evaluated?

10. Sustainability Appraisal

Has a "sustainability appraisal" required by S19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the plan...(incorporating)...the requirements of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment been undertaken?

Has the Sustainability Appraisal been used to provide a sound evidence base for the plan, formed an integrated part of the plan preparation process, and informed the evaluation of alternatives?

11. Effectiveness

Does the plan show it is effective by being

- I. Deliverable?
- II. Flexible? and
- III. Being able to be monitored?

12. Deliverability

Does the strategy show how the vision, objectives and strategy for the area will be delivered and by whom, and when?

Does it make it clear how the infrastructure needed will be provided and show how the plan is consistent with plans and strategies for adjoining areas?

Is the evidence based on sound infrastructure delivery planning?

Does the plan ensure there are not regulatory or national policy barriers to its delivery, such as threats to protected wildlife sites, landscapes or sites of historic or cultural importance?
Does the plan ensure that partners essential to its delivery such as landowners and developers are signed up to it? Who will implement different elements of the strategy and when will this happen?
Is the plan coherent with core strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities, where cross boundary issues are relevant?

13. Flexibility

Does the plan demonstrate effectiveness by showing it can deal with changing circumstances? The plan considers a long time frame (15 years) in which issues in its context will evolve, does it show how it will handle contingencies?

14. Monitoring

Does the plan have clear arrangements for monitoring and reporting results to the public and civic leaders in the area? As monitoring is essential for an effective strategy and is the basis on which the contingency plans in the strategy would be triggered, does the strategy contain targets and outcomes to assist this process?

Annex B: Proposed Submission Consultation

We will ensure that the consultation on the Local Plan is in accordance with legislation and with the Councils adopted Statement of Community Involvement

Consultation Period:

- Statutory 6 week period (end June – August)

Consultation Material

- Draft Local Plan
- Representations Form
- A Guide to Making Representations – Statutory period

Methods of Engagement

Notifications

All of the following will be notified at the start of the consultation:.

- All Town and Parish Councils within the District
- All Neighbouring authorities
- All those that are registered on our database (Specific and General consultation bodies)
- Advert in Banbury Guardian/Oxford Times/Banbury Advertiser

Availability

All documents will be available to view:

- Online at www.cherwell.gov.uk
- All Council Offices and LinkPoints
- All Libraries across the District

We will also undertake additional methods to ensure we effectively engage with our communities to those set out above. We will advertise our consultation activities on our website as and when we have them confirmed.

Representations will fall under two main areas, legal compliance or soundness

- If making representations on how we prepared the Local Plan then the issue will be one of legal compliance.
- If it is about the actual content of the strategy, then this relates to 'soundness'.

Representations must

- Be submitted via our consultation system or on the proper form; and,
- Be submitted before the closing date.

Annex C - List of development policies for Cherwell District.

Theme One: Policies for Developing a Sustainable Local Economy

- Policy SLE1: Employment Development
- Policy SLE2: Securing Dynamic Town Centres
- Policy SLE3: Supporting Tourism Growth
- Policy SLE4: Improved Transport and Connections
- Policy SLE5: High Speed Rail 2 - London to Birmingham

Theme Two: Policies for Building Sustainable Communities

- Policy BSC1: District Wide Housing Distribution
- Policy BSC2: The Effective and Efficient Use of Land – Brownfield land and Housing Density
- Policy BSC3: Affordable Housing
- Policy BSC4: Housing Mix
- Policy BSC 5: Area Renewal
- Policy BSC6: Travelling Communities
- Policy BSC7: Meeting Education Needs
- Policy BSC 8: Securing Health and Well-Being
- Policy BSC 9: Public Services and Utilities
- Policy BSC10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision
- Policy BSC11: Local Standards of Provision- Outdoor Recreation
- Policy BSC12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

Theme Three: Policies for Ensuring Sustainable Development

Climate Change

- Policy ESD1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change
- Policy ESD2: Energy Hierarchy
- Policy ESD3: Sustainable Construction
- Policy ESD4: Decentralised Energy Systems
- Policy ESD5: Renewable Energy
- Policy ESD6: Sustainable Flood Risk Management
- Policy ESD7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Our Core Assets

- Policy ESD8: Water Resources
- Policy ESD9: Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC
- Policy ESD10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment
- Policy ESD11: Conservation Target Areas
- Policy ESD12: Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Policy ESD13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement
- Policy ESD14: Oxford Green Belt
- Policy ESD15: Green Boundaries to Growth
- Policy ESD16: The Character of the Built Environment
- Policy ESD17: The Oxford Canal
- Policy ESD18: Green Infrastructure

Annex D – List of proposed development sites.

Bicester

- Bicester 1 - North West Bicester Eco-Town
- Bicester 2 - Graven Hill
- Bicester 3 - South West Bicester Phase 2
- Bicester 4 - Bicester Business Park
- Bicester 5 - Strengthening Bicester Town Centre
- Bicester 6 - Bure Place Town Centre Redevelopment Phase 2
- Bicester 7 - Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Bicester 8 – RAF Bicester
- Bicester 9 – Burial Site in Bicester
- Bicester 10 - Bicester Gateway
- Bicester 11 – North East Bicester Business Park
- Bicester 12 - East Bicester

Banbury

- Banbury 1 - Banbury Canalside
- Banbury 2 - Hardwick Farm, Southam Road (East and West)
- Banbury 3 - West of Bretch Hill
- Banbury 4 - Bankside Phase 2 (Links to Banbury 12)
- Banbury 5 - North of Hanwell Fields
- Banbury 6 – Employment Land West of M40
- Banbury 7 - Strengthening Banbury Town Centre
- Banbury 8 - Land at Bolton Road
- Banbury 9 - Spiceball Development Area
- Banbury 10 - Bretch Hill Regeneration Area
- Banbury 11 - Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Banbury 12 - Land for the Relocation of Banbury United FC
- Banbury 13 – Burial Site Provision in Banbury
- Banbury 14 – Banbury Country Park

Kidlington

- Kidlington 1 – Langford Lane Technology Park
- Kidlington 2 - Supporting Kidlington Village Centre

Our Villages and Rural Areas

- Policy for Villages 1 – Village Categorisation
- Policy for Villages 2 - Distributing Growth across the Rural Areas
- Policy for Villages 3 - Rural Exception Sites
- Policy for Villages 4 - Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Policy for Villages 5 – Upper Heyford

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive

Local Development Scheme

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval of the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS is used to project manage the production of the Local Plan and provides a programme for completion of Local Development Documents

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To agree and approve the revised Local Development Scheme
- (2) To delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any minor changes to the document before publication

Executive Summary

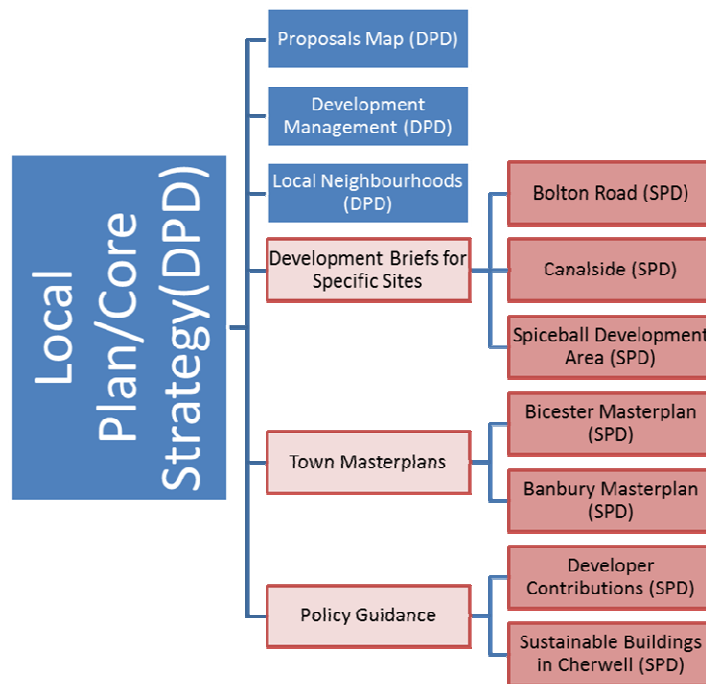
Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Localism Act 2011-Part 6 Planning, Section 111 Local development schemes requires the Authority to prepare and maintain a scheme to be known as our Local Development Scheme
- 1.2 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out Cherwell District Council's programme for the preparation of documents under the new planning system. The LDS for Cherwell was last updated in 2009 and is now out of date.
- 1.3 Unlike previous LDS's, following the Localism Act 2011 we have more local discretion over what is included and no longer require the approval of the Secretary of State for its completion and amendment.

- 1.4 The purpose of the Local Development Scheme is to:
- Set out the documents to be prepared and to provide a short description of the content and status and show how they relate to each other
 - Set out how the existing policies and guidance will relate to the new system
 - Set out a timetable for the preparation of the documents
 - Explain how the documents will be monitored and reviewed.
- 1.5 The LDS is a public statement of what we are proposing to do and when, and at what stage individuals and groups can be involved in the plan-making process.
- 1.6 The attached revised LDS takes account of the recent reforms of the Planning system:-
- Localism Act
 - Regulation
 - NPPF

Proposals

- 1.7 The LDS provides details of the forward plan, the allocation of resources and the sequence of completion. It also identifies start and completion dates for each document, including the points where local community and stakeholder consultation will take place.
- 1.8 The LDS provides details of the steps and time it will take to have all the documents associated with the full Local Plan. The former 'Core Strategy' is merely the first step, which provides the policy overview, the subsequent DPDs and SPDs provide more detail on specific policies for development management and proposed site uses.
- 1.9 All documents that form part of the LDS are required to sit within the policy framework set by Government Policy and the Local Plan. This is what is called the 'Chain of Conformity'.
- 1.10 **Chain of Conformity**
- 1.11 The 'Chain of Conformity' shows how each document relates to each other.



1.12 The Local Plan

1.13 The suite of Local Plan documents proposed for Cherwell District include:

- The Local Plan – formerly called the Core Strategy
- A Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) – to cover Development Control matters
- A Local Neighbourhood DPD – to cover the limited village growth & small urban sites (linking to those Neighbourhood Plans which emerge).
- Bicester Masterplan SPD
- Banbury Masterplan SPD
- Bolton Road SPD
- Canalside SPD
- Spiceball Development Area SPD
- Developer Contributions SPD
- Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD

1.14 Timescales

1.15 We have now extended the period of the Local Plan to 2031, allowing for an 18 year period post-adoption to provide flexibility in phasing the delivery of strategic development sites and to provide a longer period for infrastructure planning

1.16 The LDS sets out the detailed timescales for the production of the Local Plan and can be seen as follows:

1.17 The Local Plan Strategy

1.18 A new timetable has been prepared which would see the Local Plan/Core Strategy adopted by March 2013. This document sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for the spatial development of Cherwell District in the period up to 2031. It provides a range of strategic policies covering the overall type, level and broad location of

development, with policies guiding economic development and retail, community and housing development, sustainable development for the natural and built environment and planning obligations. It includes a vision to guide development in each of the principal settlements of Bicester and Banbury and strategic development sites are included. The Local Plan/Core Strategy includes an implementation framework for the area, proposals for monitoring and key proposals map. The detailed programme is as follows:

Local Plan/Core Strategy Timetable	
Proposed Submission consultation	June – August 2012
Submission to Secretary of State	October 2012
Independent Examination	December 2012/January 2013
Adoption	March 2013

1.19 **The Local Neighbourhood DPD**

- 1.20 This document will identify the locations for limited village & urban growth on small sites not detailed in the Local Plan/Core Strategy. This will link to the development of Neighbourhood Plans and village plans. The detailed programme is as follows:

Local Neighbourhood Timetable	
Commencement	May 2012
Proposed Submission consultation	March 2013
Submission to Secretary of State	June 2013
Independent Examination	August 2013
Adoption	October 2013

1.21 **A Development Management DPD**

- 1.22 This document will provide detailed guidance for development control and the practical implementation of planning guidance set out in the NPPF in Cherwell District.

Development Management Timetable	
Commencement	May 2012
Proposed Submission consultation	March 2013
Submission to Secretary of State	June 2013
Independent Examination	August 2013
Adoption	October 2013

1.23 The Authority is no longer required to include SPDs within their LDS, though for transparency and to assist the communities within Cherwell we have included these with the LDS

1.24 **Bicester Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

1.25 The Bicester Masterplan will consider options for town growth, the integration of new development, how best to meet future employment and housing needs, strengthen the town centre and provide a movement strategy.

Bicester Masterplan SPD Timetable	
6 week public consultation	June to August 2012
Adoption	September 2012

1.26 **Banbury Masterplan SPD**

1.27 The Banbury Masterplan will consider how best to meet future employment and housing needs, strengthen the town centre and provide a movement strategy. It also considers how best to integrate areas of new development with the existing town.

Banbury Masterplan SPD Timetable	
Commencement of Masterplan	April 2012
6 week public consultation	July to August 2012
Adoption	August 2012

1.28 **Bolton Road SPD**

1.29 This document will provide a detailed development overview of the Bolton Road Development Area within Banbury. This will build on the work that has already been undertaken on this SPD

Bolton Road SPD Timetable	
6 week public consultation	October to November 2012
Adoption	March 2013

1.30 **Canalside SPD**

1.31 This document will provide a detailed development overview of the Canalside Development Area within Banbury. We have previously undertaken consultation on this document and are anticipating adopting in November 2012

1.32 **Spiceball Development Area SPD**

1.33 Formerly known as the Cultural Quarter, this document will provide a detailed

development overview of the Spiceball Development Area within Banbury

Spiceball Development Area SPD Timetable	
Commencement of SPD preparation	June 2012
6 week public consultation	October to November 2012
Adoption	March 2013

1.34 Developer Contributions SPD

1.35 This document will provide guidance on developer contributions for both on and off site infrastructure to mitigate the impact of new development.

Developer Contributions SPD Timetable	
6 week public consultation	May – June 2012
Adoption	November 2012

1.36 Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD

1.37 This document will provide detailed guidance on building design in Cherwell District, including sustainable construction methods. It aligns with the CDC Conservation and Design Strategy

Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD Timetable	
Commencement of SPD Preparation	July 2012
6 week public consultation	March/April 2013
Adoption	October 2013

Conclusion

1.38 It is proposed that the Local Development Scheme be approved. The revised LDS sets out important milestones for completing the Council's Local Plan which will set the long-term vision, objectives and policies for securing development and associated infrastructure across Cherwell including the identification of strategic development sites.

Background Information

1.39 The LDS that is before the Executive today has been formulated to meet requirements set down by legislation (Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)) as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and regulations. The LDS is essentially a project plan that outlines what planning policy documents the Council intends to prepare. The Scheme must specify:-

- the local development documents which are to be development plan documents
- the subject matter and geographical area to which each development plan document is to relate
- which development plan documents(if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
- any matter or area in respect of which the authority have agreed (or propose to agree) to the constitution of a joint committee;
- the timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents;
- such other matters as are prescribed

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 The approval of the LDS to meet statutory requirements.

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

Option One To support the timetable and contents in the LDS and agree that it should be submitted to the Secretary of State and subsequently bought into effect

Option Two To support the timetable and contents in the LSD with amendments and agree that it should be submitted to the Secretary of State and subsequently bought into effect

Option Three To not support the timetable and contents of the LDS

Consultations

CIlr Michael Gibbard Informal Briefing

Implications

Financial: There are no significant direct financial implications arising from this report. The work of reviewing the LDS, is met within existing budgets. The LDS does, however, set out a timetable for the preparation of planning documents which, themselves, will

require significant resources. These include use of consultants and (in the case of the Local Plan and other DPD's) funding public examinations. Provision has been made within budgets for these matters, which will continue to be kept under review through the service and budget planning process.

Comments checked by Leanne Lock 01295 227098

Legal:

The Council is required to keep its Local Development Scheme under review and update this as required. Since the previous LDS is now significantly out-of-date, it needs to be reviewed now.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell Team Leader – Planning and Litigation 01295 221687

Risk Management:

Not having an up-to-date LDS increases the risk of the Council's proposed Development Plan Documents being found 'unsound' at Examination with consequent delay implications for resources. It would also produce uncertainty in deploying resources for completion of the LDF.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell Team Leader – Planning and Litigation 01295 221687

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

- Accessible, Value for Money Council
- District of Opportunity
- Safe and Healthy
- Cleaner Greener

Lead Member

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Local Development Scheme
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy
Contact Information	01295 227970 Charlotte.morbey@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

The Cherwell District Local Plan – Local Development Scheme

Index

- 1.1 Introduction
 - 1.2 The Cherwell District Local Plan
 - 1.3 The Development Plan for Cherwell District
 - 2. Project Plan and Resources
 - 2.1 Development Plan Document Programme
 - 2.2 Community Participation
 - 2.3 Project Management & Resources
 - 2.4 Monitoring & Review
 - Appendices
 - A. Local Development Document Profiles
 - B. Schedule of Local Plan Documents
 - C. Consultation Groups
 - D. Local Development Scheme Revisions
 - E. Saved Policies
 - F. Glossary
- 16 May2012**

The Cherwell District Local Plan

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The planning system regulates the development and use of land in the public interest. The planning system as a whole and the preparation of development plans in particular, is the most effective way of reconciling the demand for development and the protection of the environment. In the early 1990s the Government introduced the concept of the 'plan-led' planning system, and it became compulsory for District Councils to prepare statutory area-wide local plans. It also introduced the requirement that planning applications shall be determined in accordance with the 'development plan' unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.1.2 A comprehensive overhaul of the development plan system was introduced via the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The new system was based on a two-tier set of plans – the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East of England (RSS) and the documents contained in the Local Plan for Cherwell District. The Government has recently published new guidance on the preparation of Local Plan documents and this revised Local Development Scheme has been prepared on the basis of this revised Guidance.
- 1.1.3 The passage of the Localism Act in 2011 has introduced further reforms to the Planning system. The Government is taking steps to revoke (cancel) the RSSs and move to more local determination of planning priorities within a more general policy framework called the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012. The Cherwell Local Plan seeks to respond to these changes.
- 1.1.4 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Fourth Revision) sets out Cherwell District Council's programme for the preparation of documents under the new plan-making system. The LDS tells the public which documents the local planning authority is proposing to prepare and when, and indicates at what stage they can be involved in the plan-making process. Its purpose is to set out:
- The documents to be prepared and to provide a short description of the content and status and show how they relate to each other;
 - A timetable for the preparation of the documents;
 - Progress in preparing the various documents; and,
 - How the documents will be monitored and reviewed.

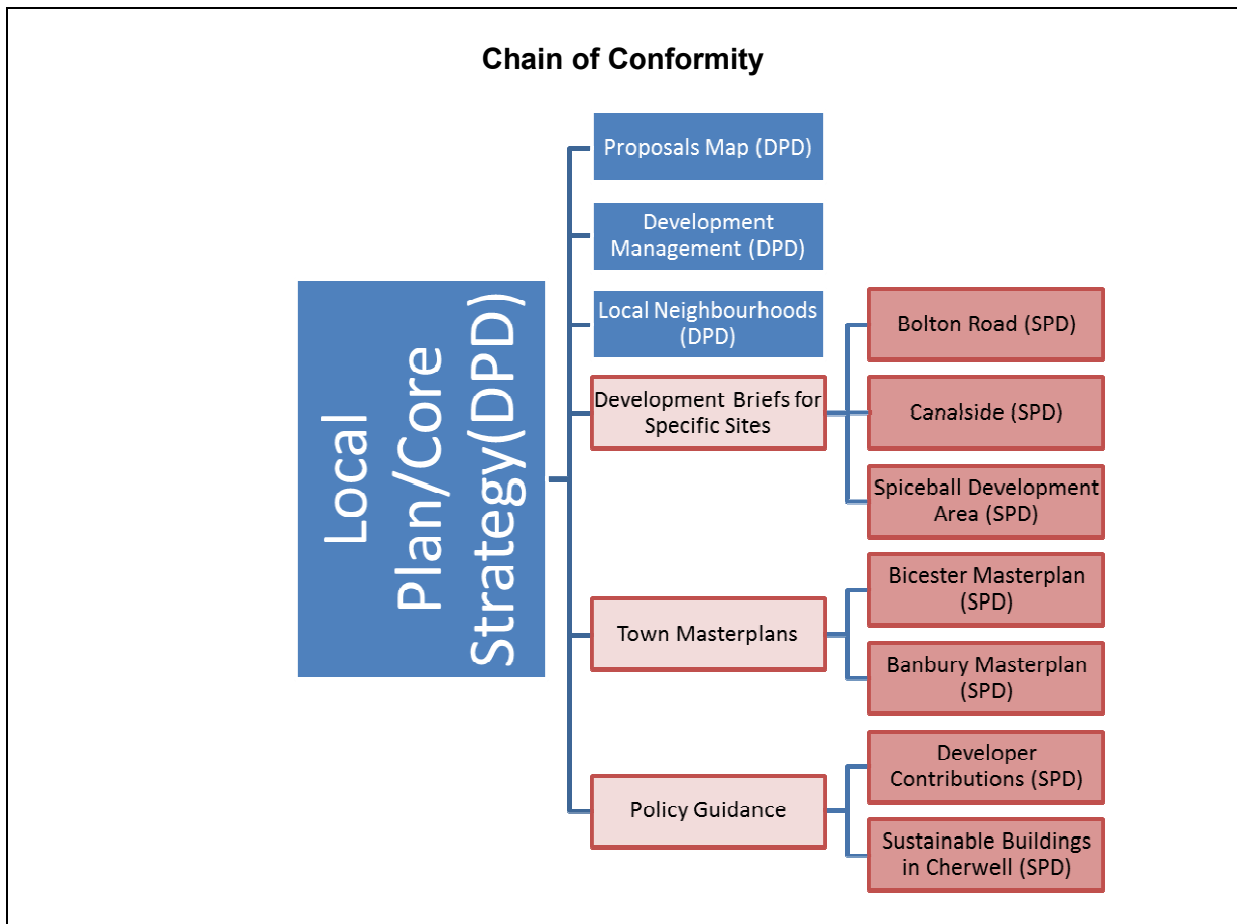
1.2 The Cherwell District Local Plan

- 1.2.1 The Local Plan is a suite of documents including:
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs), such as the Local Plan/Core Strategy, Policies for Development Management and the small site proposals in the Local Neighbourhoods DPD. These are policy documents and are subject to independent examination.
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which expand on policies and provide more detailed guidance on policy issues. They are not subject to independent examination but as with Development Plan Documents they are subject to community involvement and sustainability appraisal.
 - Other Local Plan documents such as this Local Development Scheme, the Statement of Community Involvement (which outlines how the community can be involved in the planning process), and the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR provides progress on national and local indicators and progress against the milestones set out in this Local Development Scheme.

These terms are all explained further in Appendix E ‘Glossary’.

1.3 The Development Plan for Cherwell District

1.3.1 All Development Plan Documents (DPDs) must be consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (the East of England Plan) until it is revoked. Once the Local Plan/Core Strategy is adopted, all other DPDs and SPDs must conform to it.



1.3.2 The Cherwell District Local Plan will contain the following planning documents:

- The main strategy document called the Local Plan/Core Strategy (previously called the ‘Core Strategy’) incorporating the Proposals Map.
- Development Plan Documents for ‘Local Neighbourhoods’ (containing site specific proposals for small sites) and one for Development Management.
- Supplementary Planning Documents on the Town Masterplans for Bicester & Banbury.
- Supplementary Planning Documents for specific development areas such as Bolton Road, Canalside and Spiceball (formerly the Cultural Quarter) in Banbury.
- Supplementary Planning Documents for particular policy guidance including ‘Developer Contributions’ and ‘Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell’ (a guide to design in the Cherwell District).
- In addition there will be Annual Monitoring Reports.

- 1.3.3 Further information on these documents is provided in the Local Development Document profiles (Appendix A) which gives a profile of each of the proposed local development documents, their subject matter, status, review arrangements and the periods of public participation and consultation.
- 1.3.4 The Proposals Map illustrates the policies and proposals on an Ordnance Survey map. The Proposals Map is a separate document that is updated as new Development Plan Documents are adopted, and includes the following:
- designations of constraint across the District, such as environmental protection areas, flood risk, as well as settlement boundaries and policy areas such as town centre designations;
 - details of development allocations for employment, retail, housing etc, when the site specific proposals document 'Local Neighbourhoods' DPD is adopted; and
 - sites designated in Minerals and Waste DPDs prepared by Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.3.5 A number of documents will be prepared to support the Local Plan documents, including statements of how the community have been involved in the process and how comments received have been taken into account, including a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisals and appropriate assessment. More detail on these is contained in the individual Development Plan Documents.
- 1.3.6 The Development Plan for Cherwell District, against which planning applications will be considered, comprises:
- the Regional Spatial Strategy (South East Plan), published 2009 (until revocation)
 - the saved policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (until replaced)
 - the Cherwell District Local Plan/Core Strategy which will set out the overall spatial strategy for the area as well as a suite of development control policies that guide day-to-day planning decisions.
 - Other Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) as set out within this scheme
 - the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (adopted 1996) in which the County Council sets out detailed policies and proposals for those areas where provision is made for mineral working and the disposal of mineral wastes and those areas where mineral resources are to be safeguarded for future working. It also includes detailed policies and proposals for the treatment and disposal of refuse and waste materials. This, upon adoption, will be replaced by the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Planning Strategy (Currently in production) Any adopted Neighbourhood Plan prepared by a Parish Council within the District.

2 Project Plan and Resources

2.1 Development Plan Document Programme

- 2.1.1 The government published revised regulations in 2012, amending the plan preparation process. The table on the following page shows the different stages required in developing Development Plan Documents and when public involvement takes place.
- 2.1.2 The priority for the District Council is to bring forward employment sites to enable local firms to grow and housing sites to address housing need, particularly for affordable housing. The Council's approach focuses on Local Plan delivery, coupled with town Masterplans and supplementary planning documents to deliver a number of the major development site allocations and Local Plan policies.

2.1.3 Public consultation on the draft Core Strategy (the forerunner to the Local Plan) last took place between February and April 2010. This will be followed by public consultation on a pre-submission Local Plan/Core Strategy between June and July 2012, followed by submission to Government in autumn 2012 and examination in spring 2013.

Local Plan Document Production Timetable

Running Order

Document	Milestone	Regulation	Date
Local Plan/Core Strategy	Plan Preparation		2004 - 2012
DPD	Proposed Submission Consultation	Reg 20	June – July 2012
	Submission to Secretary of State	Reg 22	October 2012
	Consideration of Representations	Reg 23	November 2012
	Independent Examination	Reg 24	December 2012/January 2013
	Publication of Recommendation	Reg 25	February 2013
	Adoption	Reg 26	March 2013
Development Management			
	Plan Preparation		May 2012
DPD	Initial Engagement	Reg 18	June/July 2012
	Proposed Submission Consultation	Reg 20	March/April 2013
	Submission to Secretary of State	Reg 22	June 2013
	Consideration of Representations	Reg 23	July 2013
	Independent Examination	Reg 24	August 2013
	Publication of Recommendation	Reg 25	September 2013
	Adoption	Reg 26	October 2013
Local Neighbourhoods			
	Plan Preparation		May 2012
DPD	Initial Engagement	Reg 18	June/July 2012
	Proposed Submission Consultation	Reg 20	March/April 2013

	Submission to Secretary of State	Reg 22	June 2013
	Consideration of Representations	Reg 23	July 2013
	Independent Examination	Reg 24	August 2013
	Publication of Recommendation	Reg 25	September 2013
	Adoption	Reg 26	October 2013
Bicester Masterplan			
	Commencement		November 2011
SPD	Executive		Monday 28 th May 2012
	Consultation	Reg 12	June –July 2012
	Adoption	Reg 14	September 2012
Banbury Masterplan			
	Commencement		April 2012
SPD	Consultation	Reg 12	July/August 2012
	Adoption	Reg 14	October 2012
Bolton Road			
	Commencement		July 2010
SPD	Consultation	Reg 12	October/November 2012
	Adoption	Reg 14	March 2013
Canalside			
	Commencement		March 2009
SPD	Consultation		November-December 2009
	Adoption	Reg 14	November 2012
Spiceball Development Area			
	Commencement		June 2012
SPD	Consultation	Reg 12	October/November 2012
	Adoption	Reg 14	March 2013
Developer Contributions			
	Commencement		April 2008
SPD	Consultation	Reg 12	May/June 2012
	Adoption	Reg 14	November 2012
Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell			
	Commencement		July 2012

SPD	Consultation	Reg 12	March/April 2013
	Adoption	Reg 14	October 2013

2.2 Community Participation

2.2.1 The revised Local Plan regulations change the way in which local planning authorities are required to consult the community on the preparation of development plans and introduce more flexibility in relation to public participation prior to the preparation of a draft plan.

The key stages in the plan preparation include:

- Early engagement and consultation (Regulation 18). Specific and general consultation bodies and any other persons carrying on business in the Authority area which we feel appropriate, will be invited to make representations as to what the local plan should include, as well as the associated documents referred to in this LDS.
- Public Consultation on the Proposed-submission Draft Development Plan Document (Regulation 20). Prior to submission to the Secretary of State for examination, the Council will consult for at least six weeks on a draft plan. Representations made at this stage will be forwarded to the Inspector who will examine the plan.

2.2.2 The document (with minor revisions, if required) is then submitted to the Secretary of State, and notice will be given to the local community by local advertisement and the document will be available for inspection and sent to the statutory consultation bodies.

2.2.3 An independent examination will then take place, during which an Inspector will assess the 'soundness' of the Plan.

2.3 Project Management & Resources

2.3.1 The Local Plan process is lead by the Strategic Planning and the Economy Division. Officers in this Division prepare and coordinate the preparation of Local Plan documents and agree consultation documents. Recommendations are made to the Executive for decisions by the Lead Member for Planning. There is also liaison within the Council, with partner authorities and other stakeholders through regular meetings.

2.3.2 Resources to undertake the Local Plan work programme come forms part of the base budget for the Strategic Planning and the Economy Division. The Planning Policy team comprises a Planning Policy Team Leader, two Senior Planners, three planning officers and a Community Engagement Officer, plus an administration officer. Other expertise within the Division is involved in detailed aspects of plan preparation, especially the Economic Development Team, the Design and Conservation Team and other teams from across the Council. In addition to staff resources, other key costs include studies and specialist consultancy advice the Examination and public consultation costs and are funded through an earmarked reserve.

2.4 Monitoring & Review

2.4.1 Monitoring is an important part within the cyclical process of policy making and provides feedback on the performance of policies and whether aims are being achieved, as shown below..

2.4.2 Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) are prepared each year to assess the extent to which policy aims are being achieved. AMRs will be based on the period 1 April to 31 March. AMRs have been prepared annually from December 2005 to 2011. They must be made available online and can be viewed at:- www.cherwell.gov.uk/localdevelopmentframework.

2.4.3 The AMR requires local planning authorities to:

- Review actual progress in terms of local development document preparation against the timetable in the LDS.
- Assess the extent to which policies in local development documents are being implemented.
- Where policies are not being implemented, explain why and set out what steps are to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented, or whether the policy is to be amended or replaced.
- Identify the significant effects of implementing policies in local development documents and whether they are as intended; and set out whether policies are to be amended or replaced.

Appendix A. Local Development Document Profiles

Title	Local Plan/Core Strategy
Document Details	
Role and Content	The document sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for the spatial development of Cherwell District in the period up to 2031. It provides a range of strategic policies covering the overall type, level and broad location of development, with policies guiding economic development & retail, community & housing development, sustainable development for the natural and built environment and planning obligations. There is a vision to guide development in each of the principal settlements of Bicester & Banbury and strategic development sites are included. The Local Plan/Core Strategy includes an implementation framework for the area, proposals for monitoring and key proposals map. Inset maps of the towns and service villages are included on the proposals map showing designations used in the application of development control policies.
Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This conforms to Government Planning Policy.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Pre-production evidence gathering and document preparation	Includes – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Economic Analysis, Retail Study, Landscape Character, Open Space Audit, Tourism Study, Rural Economy Study, Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Affordable Housing Study, Gypsy & Travellers, Sustainability Appraisal Report and Strategic Flood Risk Study.
Production milestones	Commencement of preparation process of DPD – December 2004
	Preparation of issues and alternative options. Public/Stakeholder engagement – Various consultations between 2006 -2010
	Proposed submission report – May 2012
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 20) –June – July 2012
	Submission to Secretary of State (Reg 22) – October 2012
	Examination – December 2011/January 2013
	Inspector's Report – February 2013
	Adoption (Reg 26) – March 2013
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Economic Development, Design and Conservation, Development Control, Strategic Housing and Leisure Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Title	Local Neighbourhood DPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	To identify the locations for limited village & urban growth on small

	sites not detailed in the Local Plan/Core Strategy. This will link to the development of Neighbourhood Plans and village plans.
Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of DPD preparation – May 2012.
	Early Engagement (Reg 18) – June/July 2012
	Proposed submission draft – March 2013.
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 20) – March/April 2013
	Submission to Secretary of State (Reg 22) – June 2013
	Examination – August 2013
	Inspector's Report – September 2013
	Adoption (Reg 26) – October 2013
Arrangements for Production	
Management Arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources Required	Staff from Planning Policy, Development Control, Strategic Housing, Economic Development, Leisure and Conservation Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	A Development Management DPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	To provide detailed guidance for development control and the practical implementation of planning guidance set out in the NPPF in Cherwell District.
Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of DPD preparation – June 2012.
	Early Engagement (Reg 18) – June-July 2012
	Proposed submission draft – March 2013
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 20) – March/April 2013
	Submission of Secretary of State (Reg 22) – June 2013
	Examination – August 2013
	Inspector's Report – September 2013
	Adoption (Reg 26) – October 2013

Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and Head of Service for Public Protection and Development Management. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Design & Conservation and Development Control Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Bicester Masterplan SPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	The plan will consider options for town growth, the integration of new development, how best to meet future employment and housing needs, strengthen the town centre and provide a movement strategy.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of Masterplan preparation – November 2011
	Consideration of conceptual Masterplan – February 2012
	Consideration of detailed Masterplan – May 2012
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 12) – June to July 2012
	Adoption – September 2012
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Economic Development, Design and Conservation, Development Control, Strategic Housing and Leisure Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Banbury Masterplan SPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	The plan considers how best to meet future employment and housing needs, strengthen the town centre and provide a movement strategy. It also considers how best to integrate areas of new development with the existing town.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	

Production milestones	Commencement of Masterplan preparation – April 2012
	Consideration of conceptual Masterplan – May 2012
	Consideration of detailed Masterplan – July 2012
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 12) – July to August 2012
	Adoption – October 2012
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Economic Development, Design and Conservation, Development Control, Strategic Housing and Leisure Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Bolton Road SPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	This document provides a detailed development overview of the Bolton Road Development Area within Banbury.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of SPD preparation and initial consultation – July 2010 (October – December 2011)
	Publication of draft SPD – October 2012
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 12) –October/November 2012
	Adoption – March 2013
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Economic Development, Design and Conservation, Development Control, Strategic Housing Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Canalside SPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	This document provides a detailed development overview of the Canalside Development Area within Banbury.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	

Production milestones	Commencement of SPD preparation – March 2009
	Preparation of draft SPD – November 2009
	6-week public consultation period – November – December 2009
	Adoption – November 2012
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Economic Development, Design and Conservation, Development Control and Strategic Housing Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Spiceball Development Area SPD (formerly Cultural Quarter)
Document Details	
Role and Content	This document provides a detailed development overview of the Spiceball Development Area within Banbury.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of SPD preparation – June 2012
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 12) – October/November 2012
	Adoption – March 2013
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Economic Development, Design and Conservation, Development Control, Strategic Housing and Leisure Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Developer Contributions SPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	To provide guidance on developer contributions for both on and off site infrastructure to mitigate the impact of new development.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of SPD preparation – April 2008

	Preparation of draft SPD – May 2011
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 12) – May – June 2012
	Adoption – November 2012
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy and Development Control Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Title	Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD
Document Details	
Role and Content	To provide detailed guidance on building design in Cherwell District, including sustainable construction methods. It aligns with the CDC Conservation and Design Strategy.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Position in chain of conformity	This will conform to Government Planning Policy and the Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District.
Geographical coverage	Cherwell District Council Local Planning Authority Area
Timetable	
Production milestones	Commencement of SPD preparation – July 2012
	Preparation of draft SPD – March 2013
	6-week public consultation period (Reg 12) – March/April 2013
	Adoption – October 2013
Arrangements for Production	
Management arrangements	Overseen by Head of Service for Strategic Planning and the Economy. Regular reports to CDC Executive.
Resources required	Staff from Planning Policy, Design and Conservation and Development Control Teams
Post Production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	AMR

Appendix B. Schedule of Local Plan Documents

Schedule of Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Document Title	Type	Brief Description	Chain of Conformity	Early Engagement Consultation Reg 18	Publication of a DPD and Public Participation Reg 20)	Submission to Secretary of State (Reg 22)	Proposed Date for Adoption (Reg 26)
Local Plan/Core Strategy	DPD	Sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for the spatial development of Cherwell in the period up to 2031.	Conforms to Government Planning Policy	Consultations between Feb 2006 – Feb 2010	June – July 2012	October 2012	March 2013
Proposals Map (including inset maps)	DPD	Identifies areas of protection (e.g. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas); and illustrates locations and defines sites for particular land use and development proposals included in any DPD, and identifies the areas to which specific policies apply			N/A – Included within Local Plan/Core Strategy		March 2013
Local Neighbourhoods	DPD	Sets out the village and urban growth on small sites not detailed in the Local Plan/Core Strategy	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	June/July 2012	March/April 2013	June 2013	October 2013
Development Management	DPD	Provides detailed guidance for development control and the practical implementation of planning guidance set out in the NPPF in Cherwell District.	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	June/July 2012	March/April 2013	June 2013	October 2013

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Document Title	Type	Brief Description	Chain of Conformity	Engagement	Publication of a DPD and Public Participation	Submission to Secretary of State	Proposed Date for Adoption
Statement of Community Involvement	N/A	Sets out standards and approach to involving stakeholders and the community in the production of the Local Plan	All DPDs must publish a 'statement of compliance' with the SCI	August – September 2005	N/A	October 2005	June 2006

Schedule of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Document Title	Type	Brief Description	Chain of conformity	Document Preparation Commencement	Reg 12 Public Participation	Proposed Date for Adoption
Bicester Masterplan	SPD	Sets out detailed guidance for the development of land in Bicester for residential and employment purposes	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	November 2011	June/July 2012	Sept 2012
Banbury Masterplan	SPD	Sets out detailed guidance for the development of land in Banbury for residential and employment purposes	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	April 2012	July/August 2012	October 2012
Bolton Road	SPD	Sets out guidance for the development of land at Bolton Road, Banbury for employment and other purposes	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	July 2010	October/November 2012	March 2013
Canalside	SPD	Sets out guidance for the development of Canalside in Banbury for residential and employment purposes	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	March 2009	November/December 2009	November 2012
Spiceball Development Area (formerly Cultural Quarter)	SPD	Sets out guidance for the development of Spiceball in Banbury for employment purposes	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	June 2012	October/November 2012	March 2013
Developer Contributions	SPD	Sets out guidance on securing	Conforms with Local Plan/Core	April 2008	May – June 2012	November 2012

Document Title	Type	Brief Description	Chain of conformity	Document Preparation Commencement	Reg 12 Public Participation	Proposed Date for Adoption
		affordable housing and other planning gains to mitigate effects of development	Strategy for Cherwell District			
Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell	SPD	Sets out guidelines and standards for the design and layout of new development across Cherwell District	Conforms with Local Plan/Core Strategy for Cherwell District	July 2012	March/April 2013	October 2013

Appendix C. Consultation Groups

Consultation Groups as listed in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Specific Consultation Bodies:

1. The Coal Authority
2. The Environment Agency
3. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)
4. The Marine Management Organisation
5. Natural England
6. Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
7. The Highways Agency
8. A relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area
9. Any person
 - to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under Section 106 (3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003;
 - who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority
10. If it exercises functions in any part of the local planning authority's area –
 - a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(10) or continued in existence by virtue of that section;
 - a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989 (11)
 - a person to whom a license has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(12);
 - a sewage undertaker; and
 - a water undertaker
11. the Homes and Communities Agency

General Consultation Bodies:

- a. Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the authority's area;
- b. Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the authority's area;
- c. Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the authority's area;
- d. Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the authority's area; and
- e. Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the authority's area

Relevant Authority

1. Local Planning Authority
2. County Council referred to in section 16(1) of the Act,
3. Parish Council
4. a local policing body.

Appendix D. Local Development Scheme Revisions

The Cherwell District Local Development Scheme has gone through a series of revisions as set out in the table below.

Revisions to the Local Development Scheme		
Version	Adoption Date	Reason for revision
Local Development Scheme	November 2005	To update timescales
Local Development Scheme (First Revision)	December 2007	To update timescales
Local Development Scheme (Second Revision)	November 2009	To update timescales

Appendix E. Saved Policies

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides for the saving of policies in adopted or approved local plans for a period of 3 years from the commencement of Section 38 of the Act (which was on 28th September 2004). Policies in plans approved or adopted at that date expired on 27 September 2007 unless the Secretary of State extended them beyond that date, by direction.

The list of saved policies as endorsed by the Secretary of State on 25th September 2007 is set out in the table below. The review and updating of the saved policies will be undertaken through the Local Plan and Development Management DPDs.

SCHEDULE - POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996

Policy Number	Policy Title/Purpose
*GB1	Development in the Green Belt
GB2	Outdoor Recreation in the Green Belt
GB3	Major Development Sites in the Green Belt
H1	Allocation of sites for housing
H4	Housing schemes for the elderly and disabled
H5	Affordable Housing
H6	Rural Exception Sites
H12	Housing in the rural areas
H13	Residential development in category 1 settlements
H14	Residential development in category 2 settlements
H15	Residential development in category 3 settlements
H16	White land at Yarnton
H17	Replacement dwellings
H18	New dwellings in the countryside
H19	Conversion of buildings in the countryside
H20	Conversion of farmstead buildings
H21	Conversion of buildings in settlements
H23	Residential Caravans
H25	Sites for travelling showpeople
H26	Residential canal moorings
EMP1	Allocation of sites for employment generating development
EMP3	Employment generating development at Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke (East)
EMP4	Employment generating development in the rural areas
S2	Proposals for retail development in the shopping centre and town centre, Banbury
S3	Primary shopping frontages, Banbury
S8	Redevelopment of land north of Bridge Street and east of the inner relief road, Banbury for recreational or cultural use
S9	Change of use of residential buildings in Banbury town centre
S10	Development in Banbury commercial areas
S12	Development proposals in Bicester town centre
S13	Primary shopping frontages, Bicester
S15	Redevelopment of land at Franklin's Yard, Bicester
S21	Development in Kidlington shopping centre
S22	Provision of rear servicing, Kidlington
S25	Retail development in the rural areas

S26	Small scale ancillary retail outlets in the rural areas
S27	Garden centres in the rural areas
S28	Proposals for small shops and extensions to existing shops outside Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington shopping centres
S29	Loss of existing village services
TR1	Transportation funding
TR7	Development attracting traffic on minor roads
TR8	Commercial facilities for the motorist
TR10	Heavy Goods vehicles
TR11	Oxford Canal
TR14	Formation of new accesses to the inner relief road and Hennef Way, Banbury
TR16	Access Improvements in the vicinity of Banbury Railway Station
TR20	Reservation of land for road schemes at Bicester
TR22	Reservation of land for road schemes in the countryside
R1	Allocation of land for recreation use
R5	Use of redundant railway lines and disused quarries for recreation purposes
R7	Protection and enhancement of the recreational roles of the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell
R9	Facilities for canal users
R12	Provision of public open space in association with new residential development
R14	Reservation of land for community buildings in association with housing developments at Hanwell Fields, Banbury and Slade Farm, Bicester
T2	Proposals for hotels, motels, guest houses and restaurants within settlements
T3	Land reserved for hotel and associated tourist or leisure based development, in vicinity of junction 11 of the M40, Banbury
T5	Proposals for new hotels, motels, guesthouses and restaurants in the countryside
T7	Conversion of buildings beyond settlements to self-catering holiday accommodation
AG2	Construction of farm buildings
AG3	Siting of new or extension to existing intensive livestock and poultry units
AG4	Waste disposal from intensive livestock and poultry units
AG5	Development involving horses
C1	Protection of sites of nature conservation value
C2	Development affecting protected species
C4	Creation of new habitats
C5	Protection of ecological value and rural character of specified features of value in the district
C6	Development proposals adjacent to the River Thames
C7	Landscape conservation
C8	Sporadic development in the open countryside
C9	Scale of development compatible with a rural location
C10	Historic landscapes, parks and gardens and historic battlefields
C11	Protection of the vista and setting of Rousham Park
C12	Development in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
C13	Areas of High Landscape Value
C14	Countryside Management Projects
C15	Prevention of coalescence of settlements
C17	Enhancement of the urban fringe through tree and woodland planting

C18	Development proposals affecting a listed building
C21	Proposals for re-use of a listed building
C23	Retention of features contributing to character or appearance of a conservation area
C25	Development affecting the site or setting of a schedule ancient monument
C27	Development in villages to respect historic settlement pattern
C28	Layout, design and external appearance of new development
C29	Appearance of development adjacent to the Oxford Canal
C30	Design of new residential development
C31	Compatibility of proposals in residential areas
C32	Provision of facilities for disabled people
C33	Protection of important gaps of undeveloped land
C34	Protection of views of St Mary's Church, Banbury
C38	Satellite dishes in conservation areas and on listed buildings
C39	Telecommunication masts and structures
ENV1	Development likely to cause detrimental levels of pollution
ENV2	Redevelopment of sites causing serious detriment to local amenity
ENV6	Development at Oxford Airport, Kidlington likely to increase noise nuisance
ENV7	Development affecting water quality
ENV10	Development proposals likely to damage or be at risk from hazardous installations
ENV11	Proposals for installations handling hazardous substances
ENV12	Development on contaminated land
OA2	Protection of land at Yarnton Road Recreation ground, Kidlington for a new primary school

SCHEDULE - POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE CENTRAL OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 1992

Policy Number	Policy Title/Purpose
*GB1	Development in the Green Belt

* Note: Legal challenge to the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan

Following a legal challenge to the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan the High Court ordered that the first line of paragraph 1.15 of the reasoned justification to Policy GB3 and Policy R6 and paragraph 6.45 of its reasoned justification in its entirety and the Proposals Map insofar as it affected the objection site of Shipton on Cherwell Quarry be quashed. As a result it is the green belt policy of the Central Oxfordshire Local Plan 1992 that retains Development Plan Status for this particular site.

Appendix F. Glossary

- **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** - a report produced at the end of each year assessing progress of the LDS and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being successfully implemented.
- **Local Plan/(formerly the Core Strategy)** – sets out the long-term spatial vision and spatial objectives for the district and strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision..
- **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)** - prepared by the relevant plan-making authority. They are spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination. There is a right for those making representations seeking change to be heard at an independent examination. Together with the Regional Spatial Strategy they will form the ‘development plan’ for an area.
- **Local Development Document (LDD)** - the collective term for DPDs, SPDs and the Statement of Community Involvement.
- **Local Development Framework (LDF)** – This terms has been replaced by the term ‘Local Plan’. It was used to describe a portfolio of Local Development Documents that provide a framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area. It also contains a number of other documents, including the Annual Monitoring Report, and any 'saved' plans that affect the area. This term is now replaced by ‘Local Plan’.
- **Local Plan** – The new term for the suite of Development Plan documents.
- **Local Development Scheme (LDS)** - sets out the programme for the preparation of local development documents.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – sets out the Governments planning policies. Replaces all previous Planning Policy Statements and associated Guidance.
- **Proposals Map** - the proposals map illustrates all policies contained in DPDs, together with any saved policies.
- **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** - the regional plan prepared by the South East of England Regional Assembly which set out policies for the future of the region to 2021. This is being revoked by the Government.
- **Site Specific Proposals (SSP)** - allocations of sites for specific or mixed uses or development. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals.
- **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** - sets out the standards which the plan-making authority intends to achieve in relation to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all LDDs and in development control decisions. It is subject to independent examination. In respect of every LDD the local planning authority is required to publish a statement showing how it complied with the SCI.
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment(SEA)** - an assessment of the environmental effects of policies, plans and programmes, required by European legislation, which will be part of the public consultation on the policies.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** - these cover a wide range of issues on which the plan making authority wishes to provide guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in development plan documents. They do not form part of the development plan and are not subject to independent examination.
- **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors). Required to be undertaken for all LDDs.

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive

Consultation and Engagement Strategy Update 2012 - 2015

28 May 2012

Report of the Head of Transformation

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report outlines the Council's updated Consultation and Engagement Strategy performance for the period 2012 -2015.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note past achievements in this area as a foundation for the updated strategy and action plan.
- (2) To agree the proposed consultation and engagement strategy and action plan and request that performance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the background to Cherwell District Council's approach to consultation and public engagement and proposes an updated strategy for 2012-15.
- 1.2 The Council has a good deal of local determination about how it undertakes public consultation. However, there are some specific requirements. These include the requirement to consult with local businesses with regards to the Council's budget, the updated Best Value Guidance (2011) which sets out certain requirements to consult, particularly with regards to the voluntary sector and service specific requirement, for example around planning.

Proposals

- 1.3 We ask the Executive to note the Council's past achievements in this area.

These have been noted in the introduction to the strategy and include:

- National recognition for best practice budget consultation (at the LARIA conference 2010)
- Setting up a local faith forum and disability forum, with local partners, to improve our engagement with harder to reach groups.
- Integrating service and financial planning with consultation to ensure local priorities directly inform the council's budget and business plan.
- Establishing and coordinating 'Connecting Communities' another activity undertaken in partnership which aims to take local services out to local communities and use innovative techniques such as video and graffiti walls to get on the ground feedback.
- Establishing a consultation portal which all services can use to collect feedback from local residents and to publicise consultation.

- 1.4 The strategy for 2012/15 has been reviewed and updated. Given the Council's strong focus over the last three years the strategy does not propose radical change. It aims to build on current good practice, increase the use of electronic consultation and ensure consultation is cost effective and robust.

The objectives of the strategy are:

1. Demonstrate clear commitment to consultation and community engagement
2. Develop flexible ways of engagement to effectively support formal processes, other council departments and partners
3. Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation and engagement
4. Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice
5. Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive
6. Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcomes

Conclusion

- 1.5 The Council has a strong track record with regards to public consultation. It includes collecting information on customer satisfaction, budget and spending priorities as well as many activities to improve customer service and accessibility.
- 1.6 The strategy aims to continue with this approach, to maximise the use of electronic consultation and ensure that local residents and stakeholders continue to be able to feed their views into the council to help shape services and improve performance.

Background Information

- 2.1 The Council's current consultation strategy expired at the end of 2011/12. The actions outlined in the supporting plan have been implemented and over the past three years the Council has effectively undertaken a number of successful consultation initiatives.
- 2.2 Over the last 18 months the Council has also developed a wider approach that includes public engagement. This has led to the creation of a number of local forums that meet to discuss issues and help improve public services. Many of the events are held in partnership which reduces costs and helps improve locally 'joined-up' consultation.
- 2.3 The new strategy takes into account national policy changes such as the updated Best Value guidance (2011) and also policy agenda such as localism and the big society.
- 2.4 Consultation and engagement remain important to the Council in terms of the local information that is collected that can then be used to plan services and allocate budgets. A key part of this approach is the annual round of corporate consultation looking at customer satisfaction, areas for improvement and local spending priorities. This programme will remain at the core of the Council's approach to consultation and over the next three years the Council will seek to further reduce consultation costs whilst retaining and improving high quality and accessible consultation activities.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 This report presents the Council's updated consultation and engagement strategy and action plan for the period 2012/15.

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

- Option One**
- (1) To note past achievements in this area as a foundation for the updated strategy and action plan.
 - (2) To agree the proposed consultation and engagement strategy and action plan and request that performance is reviewed on a regular basis.
- Option Two**
- To reject the strategy as it currently stands and request amendments.

Consultations

The strategy has been reviewed by the Joint management Team and will be subject to an equalities assessment.

Implications

- Financial:** Financial Effects – The resource required to deliver the strategy is contained within existing budgets.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance, 0300 0030106

Legal: There are no direct legal issues arising from this report but having a sound approach to consultation bolsters the robustness of the Council's decision taking and reduces the overall likelihood of legal challenge.

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107

Risk Management: The consultation and engagement strategy ensures the Council undertakes public consultation in an effective and coordinated way. This minimises the risk of decisions being taken on the basis of poor information and other issues such as consultation fatigue or consultation that is neither robust nor offers value for money.

The author of this report is responsible for risk management.

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

The strategy covers all strategic priorities.

Executive Lead Member

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Corporate Strategy

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012 – 15
Appendix 2	Consultation and Engagement Action Plan
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Claire Taylor, Corporate Performance Manager
Contact Information	Tel: 0300 0030113 claire.taylor@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Cherwell District Council

Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012-2015



Contents

Introduction and purpose of the strategy	3
Scope of strategy	3
Timeframe for strategy	4
Performance and review	4
Strategic Aim	4
Strategy Objectives	4
What is consultation?	5
Why does the council consult?	6
How does the council consult?	6
Who does the council consult?	6
Quality and standards	7
Cherwell Consultation Principles	7
Contact details	8

Introduction and purpose of the strategy

The Council's first Consultation and Engagement Strategy was approved in 2009 and provided an effective framework to complete consultation activities that enabled the ongoing development and improvement of services for the community.

Since 2009 there has been a greater prominence across the Council for consultation and specifically community engagement as a key principle of service delivery.

Development in the processes used to undertake consultation and engagement has resulted in achievements such as the introduction of targeted activities with specific communities and groups. including: the Disability Forum, the Faith Forum and the Equality Panel. These events allowed us to ensure our services are available, accessible and appropriate for people with diverse needs, helped identify gaps within the service provision and ensured adherence to good practice in terms of engaging with harder to reach groups.

Other successes include the introduction of Connecting Communities, a series of community engagement events aimed at supporting Cherwell residents, the launch of a public Consultation Portal and the development of our 'knowing our communities' events which aim to give Councillors, council employees and members of local voluntary and public sector organisations a better understanding of issues affecting local people.

The aim of this updated strategy is to continuously strengthen and develop consultation and engagement activities within Cherwell to enable wider participation and involvement.

As part of the review of the previous Consultation Strategy we have identified specific areas for development and these are included in this revised version:

- Improving partnership working and joint initiatives / approaches to consultation
- Reviewing opportunities for shared working between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire council on appropriate joint consultation opportunities
- Increasing co-ordination of and improving access to consultation and engagement events
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of engagement activities

This strategy has been refreshed to address these issues and sets out a broad framework for how Cherwell District Council proposes to consult and engage with local people and communities, including residents, people who work in the district, local businesses and the voluntary and public sectors. This framework will be used as the basis for a medium term action plan to guide the work of the Council in this area during the period 2012-2015.

Looking forward: developing our approach to consultation and engagement

The strategy outlines our developing approach and commitment to consultation with Cherwell residents and communities. It does not replace any statutory or formal consultation processes that we currently undertake, for example in relation to planning, licensing or any appeals processes. The Council's Local Plan is covered by the Statement of Community Involvement which provides the consultation strategy for the preparation of the Local Plan.

The Consultation and Engagement strategy and action plan covers Cherwell District Council services, decisions and processes and does not commit partner agencies to its objectives. However, it is recognised that working in partnership is an important part of this approach and one

of the aims of the strategy is to develop joint strategies to improve consultation and engagement with partners.

Timeframe

This is a medium-term strategy covering the period 2012/13 (April 2012) to 2014/15 (March 2015).

Performance and review

An annual performance report will be published that reviews our performance against the strategic aim, objectives and actions outlined in this document. The content of the strategy and action plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis taking into account new policy developments and changes in local requirements, areas identified for improvement and national policy initiatives and ensure these are reflected in new actions as required.

Performance, in terms of implementing the action plan, will be reviewed by officers on a quarterly basis as part of the Performance Team's service plan.

Strategic aim

Cherwell District Council is committed to consulting the people and communities of Cherwell and developing strategies and services that take into account local priorities. Consultation and community engagement helps us to ensure that we are responsive to local needs and aspirations.

This consultation and engagement strategy will provide the Council with a consistent, corporate and agreed approach to how we consult the people and communities of Cherwell and use the results to inform our policy, strategy and service delivery.

The aim of the consultation and engagement strategy is to ensure the delivery of high quality consultation and effective engagement across the Council. The people and communities of Cherwell will have confidence in our activities and consultation and engagement will produce robust results that can inform service development and council policy.

This aim supports the delivery of the Council's strategic priority "Cherwell – An accessible, value for money council".

Strategy objectives

Our objectives are to:

1. Demonstrate clear commitment to consultation and community engagement
2. Develop flexible ways of engagement to effectively support formal processes, other council departments and partners
3. Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation and engagement
4. Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice

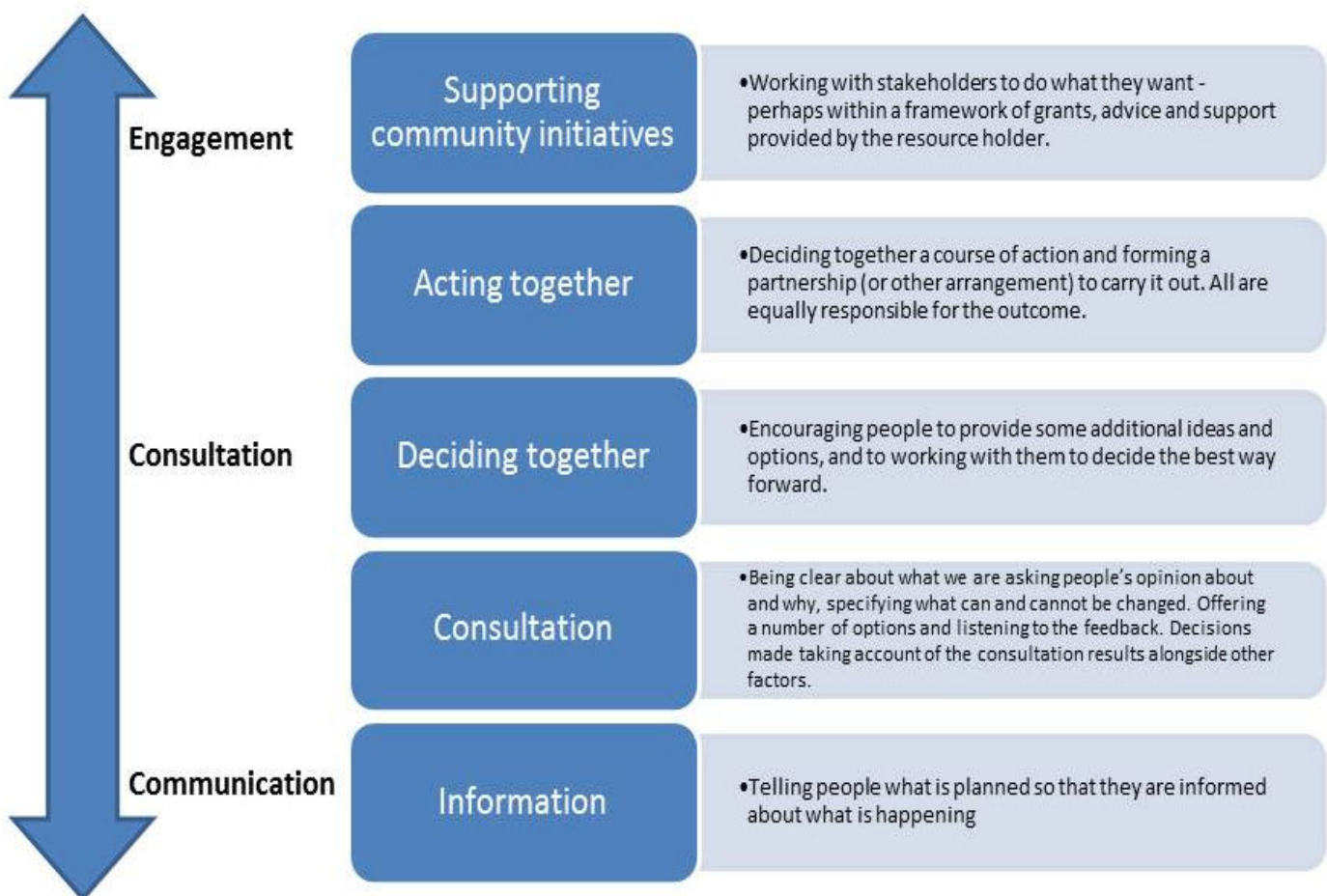
5. Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive
6. Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcomes

What is consultation?

The concept of a ladder of consultation or participation is well known (e.g. Arnstein's model in 1969). This approach sees consultation as a continuum moving from the most basic information giving to more complex and interactive modes of engagement. David Wilcox (1994) <http://www.partnerships.org.uk> identifies a number of stages that is useful for local authorities and those working in community consultation activities. (See figure 1)

This strategy aims to support consultation and engagement activity in each of these stages, using techniques that are appropriate for the kind of consultation or engagement required.

Figure 1: From Communication to Engagement



(See David Wilcox, 1994, <http://www.partnerships.org.uk>)

Why does the council consult?

The main purpose of consultation and engagement is to ensure that our services reflect the needs of the local community. This requires us to actively undertake consultation to inform strategy, policy, service development and the allocation of the council budget. Key requirements include:

- To support the role of Councillors in understanding the needs and aspirations of the Cherwell community
- The need to inform the service planning and provide a solid knowledge base for developing services and service strategies
- To measure customer satisfaction and opinion in relation to service delivery and be able to track changes over time and in relation to service changes
- To measure issues around quality of life, such as the fear of crime
- To measure performance of the council services
- To improve the delivery and take up of our services
- To support bids for resources or the allocation of resources

How does the council consult?

The council has a good record of using different ways to consult people and communities, including surveys online and by post, workshops, focus groups, formal methods such as the publication of draft policies and strategies and consultative forums.

We are committed to using consultation and engagement methods that are inclusive and appropriate for the target audience. The council is also keen to consult in partnership with others and works with partners to jointly commission consultation. This strategy will help to improve our techniques and methods (with the aim of improving response and participation rates) and also increase the amount of joint projects we undertake with partners.

The council will publish planned consultations and the results on online consultation portal (<http://consult.cherwell.gov.uk/portal>)

Who does the council consult?

Before embarking upon consultation it should be clear who the target audience is. For example service users, potential services users, the families/carers of service users, council tax payers, partners, local businesses, other public agencies and the voluntary and community sector. The target audience and purpose of the consultation may have an impact on the consultation methods and techniques chosen.

Within these broad categories we recognise that there may be people or groups that are less likely to take part in consultations for a number of reasons for example they may have language or other accessibility requirements, they may not use many council services, they may be busy or spend a lot of time outside the district. These groups are often called 'harder to reach' and different approaches are usually required to establish and maintain contact with them, so that their views are not overlooked. This strategy will help improve the council's approach to consulting and engaging with groups that have sometimes been seen as hard to reach.

Quality and standards

There are a number of standards that we will be working to. These include standards for consultations involving voluntary and community sector organisations, government set standards for consultations and good practice standards such as those laid out by the Market Research Society or the Consultation Institute.

Cherwell consultation and engagement principles

1. Purposeful

Consultation is the cornerstone of the Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy, the medium term strategies flowing out of it and the Council's Business Plan. Consultation should be undertaken when we have a good reason, informing or developing service delivery, council policy or strategy. Consultation must be targeted and well-focussed, with clear objectives.

2. Robust

Consultation should be of good quality, meeting our required standards. We should be clear about the purpose and scope of the consultation and how its outcomes will be used. We must consult at a formative stage rather than later on in the process and provide people with information to allow informed response. The council will employ external expertise as necessary and support staff to undertake effective consultation.

Efforts will be made to ensure that information collected is in a standard format in order that it can be easily retrieved using a standard set of demographic categories and put to use by all council departments and partners. This contributes to reducing the need for new consultations and research.

3. Accessible

Consultations should use methods that appropriate to the people who need to participate. Consultations should allow all interested parties to have their say and give them adequate time to do so. Consideration should be given and steps taken to engage with groups we find hard to reach or those who may be unlikely to participate in traditional consultation methods. Consideration should be given to people who find it harder to participate in consultation and engagement activities for any reason, factors may be social, economic, cultural, geographical, health related, age related or time availability.

4. Communicated and Coordinated

Consultation activities should be appropriately communicated and integrated into the service and financial planning framework. Co-ordination of consultation activity should take place both across the council and with partner organisations to avoid duplication of effort, to share knowledge and provide better value for money.

5. Used

Proposals to carry out consultation and engagement must include a clear explanation of the information needed in order to ensure that all consultation activity is of value and relevance. Consultation findings should be reported clearly and outcomes of consultation must be clearly fed back to consultees and stakeholders; this includes the results of consultation and action taken on the basis of consultation findings.

6. Proportionate

Consultation expenditure will be proportionate to the scale of the service or theme being researched and the significance of the issue. Consultation should demonstrate value for money and be conducted in a coordinated way to avoid duplication of effort (both within the council and across partnerships) and consultation fatigue.

7. Flexible

Consultation and engagement activities will be organised in flexible way to meet needs of local communities and people. Formal processes are not always the most appropriate ways of engaging with certain audiences e.g. young people while could be convenient for others e.g. members of official groups or bodies. Flexible approach will be adopted to ensure most effective ways of engagement and to ensure wide participation and involvement

Contact details:

For more information about this strategy, the supporting action plan or the guidance and toolkits contact the performance team.

For information about planned consultation and engagement events have a look at the consultation calendar on our web pages.



01295 221575



consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk



www.cherwell.gov.uk



Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House,
Bodicote, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4AA

Have your say:

Our online consultations are available at <http://consult.cherwell.gov.uk/portal/>

This page is intentionally left blank

Objective 1: Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement

Objective 1: Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Refresh Consultation and Engagement Strategy and three year action plan to be signed off by Executive	Strategy to Executive	May 2012	Corporate Performance Manager
	Annual Update Reports (Performance review of the strategy and consultation/engagement activity)	Annually, year end April/May	
	Review the strategy, opportunities, legislation and bring forward revised or new version of strategy	Annual	
2. Promote new strategy and action plan within Cherwell District Council and partners	Raise awareness of consultation and engagement strategy and requirements by publishing the results and findings of the consultations.	Ongoing	Corporate Performance Manager, Consultation Assistant
	Promote results and findings of the consultations among partners	Ongoing	
	Item in staff magazine "In Brief" about consultation and engagement, review success and achievements of engagement activities.	November 2012	
	Regular articles on CDC Intranet about consultation and engagement	Ongoing	
	Regular managers update and reminder for the consultation calendar	Ongoing, ad hoc briefing notes when policy change requires	

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2012-2015

Objective 1: Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
3. Develop consultation arrangements and opportunities to support Members in their roles	Regularly brief Members on planned consultation and opportunities for involvement	Quarterly	Corporate Performance Manager, Consultation Assistant,
	Setup Member led consultation activities, road shows and public consultation days (Connecting communities events)	4 every year	
	Work with elected Members to ensure their involvement within consultation and engagement activities.	Ongoing	

Objective 2: Develop flexible ways of engagement to effectively support formal processes, other council departments and partners.

Objective 2: Develop flexible ways of engagement to effectively support formal processes, other council departments and partners.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Work with internal network of consultation practitioners to help develop and implement the consultation strategy	Ensure regular exchange of information by the group to share best practice, develop skills and discuss consultation issues.	Regular updates and information exchange	Consultation Assistant
	Promote Consultation Group as a central resource for consultation and engagement advice	Ongoing	
2. Use internal Consultation Group to coordinate consultation activity	All major consultation activity to be discussed and coordinated by this group. All consultation events to be published on the online consultation calendar	As required	Corporate Performance Manager
	3. Ensure staff and managers have sufficient tools to undertake effective consultation.	Promote options provided by Cherwell consultation portal: online surveys, consultation calendar, polls.	Corporate Performance Manager
4. Review support and guidance arrangements for employees undertaking consultation work	Promote information on existing activities and learning opportunities to enhance officers skills and knowledge	Quarterly	Consultation Assistant
	Refresh and update toolkit to support consultation (Consultation Toolkit)	June 2012	
5. Establish Consultation database (list of contacts to	Identify the consultation groups (addresses and contact details to local organisations and groups)	Ongoing	Consultation Assistant

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2012-2015

Objective 2: Develop flexible ways of engagement to effectively support formal processes, other council departments and partners.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
communities, groups - who might help/support/ take part in consultation processes)	Update on regular basis	Quarterly	
6. Establish a three year programme of corporate consultation to underpin corporate, service and financial planning.	Commission a new approach to Corporate Customer Satisfaction and Budget Consultation with a 3 Year framework contract to deliver improved value for money and better information to support service and financial planning.	April 2012	Corporate Performance Manager Consultation Assistant
7. Deliver annual round of corporate consultation	Annual surveys – residents priorities, customer satisfaction and budget/investment/savings priorities (budget consultation) Explore setting up a citizens panel to reduce consultation costs over the three year period	August 2012 August 2013 August 2014	Corporate Performance Manager Consultation Assistant
8. Provide support and assistance to Strategic Planning and Economy with the preparation of the Local Plan, including the Bicester and Banbury Masterplans.	Ensure Planning policies are consulted with members of Equality Panel	As required	Consultation Assistant
9. Work with Economic Development to ensure local businesses and Job Clubs attendees are included with consultation and engagement processes	Ensure opportunities to promote Planning policies during consultation and engagement events (Connecting Communities, Faith Forum, Disability Forum). Ensure feedback opportunities for local businesses and Job Club attendees Develop arrangements to ensure consultation opportunities for local businesses	As required Quarterly June 2012	Consultation Assistant
10. Ensure effective consultation and	Ensure high community participation to housing consultations	As required	Strategic Housing Manager

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2012-2015

Objective 2: Develop flexible ways of engagement to effectively support formal processes, other council departments and partners.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
engagement with residents on housing policies, plans and strategies, including new Housing Strategy.	Ensure Housing services presence at the community engagement events		Consultation Assistant
	Work with local communities on new developments to learn from their experiences		

Objective 3: Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation.

Objective 3: Work in partnership with others to ensure joined up consultation and engagement.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Maintain local partnership networks to help ensure that consultation and engagement activities are well planned, publicised and do not lead to consultation fatigue.	Participate in county wide consultation group, including joint procurement where appropriate.	Ongoing quarterly	Corporate Performance Manager Consultation Assistant
	Where appropriate and relevant publish countywide consultations on Cherwell District Council consultation portal (including relevant NHS and Oxfordshire County Council's surveys).	May 2012, ongoing	
	Promote a partnership approach to consultation and engagement via the county wide consultation officers group (possibly expand to include partners).	Ongoing quarterly	
2. Develop joint arrangements and opportunities for the consultation	Ensure information about planned consultations and engagement events is available to CDC partners and local organisations with aim to reduce consultation fatigue and provide opportunities for joined consultations.	Ongoing	Corporate Performance Manager Consultation Assistant
	Ensure partners are involved in regular consultation and engagement events (Disability Forum, Faith Forum, Knowing communities, Connecting Communities)	Quarterly events	
	Promote joined up initiatives and consultation opportunities with partners (local authorities, police, health authorities, community and voluntary sector etc) where appropriate.	Ongoing	

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2012-2015

4. Organise consultation activities with local residents and communities to support Brighter Futures in Banbury agenda	Establish a programme of Connecting communities events with local partners and local organisations (e.g. the Police, NHS, OCC).	May 2012, 4 a year	Consultation Assistant
	Ensure reports and feedback will be available to lead members of the Brighter Futures in Banbury	Ongoing updates	
5. Research possible options for joint consultation with South Northamptonshire District Council	Review options for extending Cherwell District Council consultation portal to South Northamptonshire District Council.	September 2012	Consultation Assistant
	Review possibility of joined up consultations and surveys with South Northamptonshire District Council.	September 2012	
10. Ensure consultation and engagement opportunities are available for representatives of rural areas	To maintain regular meetings of Parish Liaison	Twice a year	Rural Development and Countryside Manager, Consultation Assistant
	Ensure Parish Liaison members are informed about current and planned consultation activities	As required	
11. Ensure voluntary and charity organisations are fully included within consultation activities	To maintain regular events of Voluntary Organisations Forum	Twice a year	Community Development Officer, Consultation Assistant
	Regularly brief members of Voluntary Organisations Forum on existing consultation opportunities to ensure their involvement	As required	

Objective 4: Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice.

Objective 4: Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Review a set of quality standards and apply them to all consultation and engagement exercises	Identification of officers from each service area to be responsible for consultation and engagement and participate in the internal officers group.	Ongoing	Consultation Assistant and the internal officer consultation group
	All consultations to be registered with the Community Planning team to enable them to be publicised on the online consultation calendar. All consultations to follow the consultation process outlined in Consultation Toolkit and Consultation Checklist.	Ongoing	
2. Provide comprehensive advice and guidance to other departments and in the area of consultation.	Publicise requirements and changes of the consultation duties.	As required	Consultation Assistant
3. Quality assure our approach to consultation and engagement.	Review approach to consultation and engagement strategy comparison with other similar organisations.	Annual as part of the strategy's performance report	Corporate Performance Manager; Consultation Assistant

Objective 5: Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive.

Objective 5: Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
1. Carry out an equality impact assessment for the proposed strategy	Take item to Equalities and Access Advisory Panel for public discussion.	June/July 2012	Corporate Performance Manager
	Provide support and advice officers undertaking consultation activities	Ongoing	Consultation Assistant
2. Develop clear support arrangements for service managers to address the requirements of equality impact assessments.	Maintain the Equality and Access to Services Advisory Panel	Quarterly	Consultation Assistant
	Maintain specific consultation fora including disabled groups, faith groups where required.	Regular events	
	Compile and publish council-wide consultation plan including timetable (Consultation Calendar)	Ongoing as consultations arise	
	Feature regular consultation articles in Cherwell Link magazine.	Quarterly	
3. Promote engaging with hard-to-reach groups	Provide support to officers in terms of consultation and engagement with hard-to-reach groups	Ongoing	Consultation Assistant
	Deliver a programme of 'knowing your community' events for staff to highlight issues around engagement with hard to reach groups	Quarterly event.	
	Update good practice guidance for consulting with hard-to-reach groups	Ongoing	

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2012-2015

Objective 5: Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
	Provide support to local hard to reach groups, BME and ethnic minorities through the Connecting communities events and to ensure events will continuously provide opportunity to engage with these communities.	Ongoing	
4. Develop arrangements to improve consultation response among hard-to-reach groups	Work with local groups and communities to establish their needs and options to improve consultation response	September 2012	Consultation Assistant
	Provide support and training to members of hard-to-reach groups to ensure their ability to act as a consultation champions within their communities	December 2012	
5. Help members of the public and stakeholders to access our consultation and engagement events	Ensure all consultation and engagement activities have a clear officer lead who can provide advice and support for those stakeholders who would like to get involved.	Ongoing as per activity	Consultation Assistant
	Ensure that the council's plain English policy is applied to consultation.	Ongoing	
6. Support staff consultation and engagement	Provide relevant support and advice to council departments to ensure staff consultations are undertaken purposeful and with clear objectives	Ongoing	Consultation Assistant
	Provide online consultation opportunities where relevant for all staff consultations	Ongoing	
	Provide support and advice to council departments undertaking external consultations and engagement activities		
7. Provide support to partners organisations undertaking consultations and engagement with local residents and people	Enable local groups, communities and charities to use online consultations and surveys available via CDC consultation portal where appropriate	As required	Consultation Assistant
	Support consultation and engagement events organised by local groups and communities if relevant and appropriate	As required	

Page 106

Objective 6: Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.

Objective 6: Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.		
Goal	Action	Completion Date
1. Ensure there are effective arrangements in place for feeding back the results of consultation to those who have taken part.	Ensure consultation findings will be feed back to those who took part in consultation activity and those affected.	Ongoing
	Publish actions taken as a result of consultation on the council's web pages.	Ongoing as results available
	Work with the services and teams to develop an ongoing feedback mechanism for their customers to enable collecting customer comments, compliments and complaints.	August 2012
2. Undertake the corporate consultation programme to inform service and financial planning	Host workshops for staff and managers to feedback the outcomes of the corporate consultation programme	Annually September
	Undertake customer satisfaction and budget consultation as part of an annual programme. Highlight how results are informing the budget and council priorities throughout budget setting process.	Annual programme to be completed by end August each year.
3. Use the results of the Annual Satisfaction Survey to inform council and activity.	Disseminate results to CDC managers and partners; identify actions to take as a result of the survey.	October each year
4. Ensure services use consultation and engagement evidence as part of service planning.	Ensure customer feedback and evidence from consultation and engagement work drives service plans and bids for service development or growth.	Annual, to be undertaken as part of service planning.
5. Ensure services use consultation and engagement evidence as	Refer to consultation and engagement evidence in key medium term strategies and publications.	As new strategies are developed

Cherwell District Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Action Plan 2012-2015

Objective 6: Demonstrate how the results of our consultation influences outcome.			
Goal	Action	Completion Date	Lead Officer
part of developing new strategies.			

Executive

Participation in a Community Interest Company to deliver the Green Deal

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Regeneration and Housing

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the Council to become a shareholder member of a Community Interest Company established to act as a Green Deal Provider.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To authorise the Council's participation as a founding, shareholder member of the proposed Community Interest Company (CIC), subject to confirmation by the Head of Finance and Procurement and the Head of Law and Governance that the terms of membership and participation are acceptable and place the Council at no financial, legal or reputational risk.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Green Deal is the government's flagship scheme for improving energy-efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. The principle legislation is in place and Green Deal will commence in October 2012. It will replace current national energy-efficiency schemes (such as Warm Front) and will also bring an end to the external funding on which our local discount-insulation schemes primarily depend. The Green Deal will effectively be the only route through which Cherwell residents can get financial assistance to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- 1.2 Green Deal is essentially a mechanism which will allow householders to get a range of energy-efficiency measures installed without having to pay for them up-front. Green Deal will operate on a commercial basis and a number of organisations are expected to set up to deliver it as Green Deal Providers.
- 1.3 The Council has an opportunity to join a number of other authorities in setting up a Community Interest Company (CIC) with the express purpose of becoming a Green Deal Provider. This proposal is being led by the United

Sustainable Energy Agency (USEA)¹ and has been developed with the active participation of a number of local authorities including Cherwell², each of which will shortly have to decide on the extent of their further participation.

- 1.4 Community Interest Companies (CIC's) are limited liability companies designed for social enterprises and established by the *Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004*. They are now quite well established and understood and present no fundamental issues or difficulties. The greater-part of any profits they generate are restricted and may only be used for community purposes.
- 1.5 There are two options available; either to become a shareholder member at a maximum expected cost of £35k³ or to become an annual member at a proposed annual cost of £5k.
- 1.6 There are some significant benefits to participation:
 - 1.6.1 It would allow the Council to ensure that residents are given a reliable, effective and local Green Deal service, rather than have to rely upon external providers over whom it has no control or influence. (*This would apply to both forms of membership.*)
 - 1.6.2 It would give the Council shared decision making (as one of the shareholders) over the best means of promoting and encouraging uptake of the Green Deal so as to assist the Council in meeting its strategic targets. (*Shareholder members will exercise primary control.*)
 - 1.6.3 It would allow the Council shared decision making over the procurement of contractors who would work with the CIC to undertake Green Deal works for our residents⁴, and therefore give influence over both expected quality of work and practices. We would also be in a position to exercise influence over the participation and recruitment of local contractors (particularly Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SME's)) and, potentially, therefore over the employment and training of local people. (*Shareholder members will exercise primary control.*)
 - 1.6.4 It would allow the Council to receive dividends (capped at 20% of its investment per annum by CIC rules). The draft business plan (which has been reviewed and judged realistic by the Head of Finance & Procurement) anticipates payment of this full amount and would therefore repay the Council's investment after 5 years. (*Annual members will not receive a dividend.*)
 - 1.6.5 It would allow the Council to exercise shared control over the uses to which the profits generated by the CIC might be put and to benefit residents as a result. (If the Council were not to be involved, any commercial Green Deal Provider operating in our district would be free to take and use profits as they chose. They are most unlikely to be used to the benefit of Cherwell residents.) (*Shareholder members will exercise sole control.*)

¹ The Council has had a successful long term relationship with USEA which is a not-for-profit company and which currently provides the Cocoon scheme and manages the Council's discount schemes.

² Also including: West Oxon & Cotswold, South Oxon & Vale, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes, Southampton Watford and OCC, amongst others.

³ Start-up capital of £350k is required from 10 founder members. Any additional number of founder members would reduce this figure pro-rata. USEA has indicated its preparedness to buy shares to the value of £100k if required, so a minimum of 7 other members is required.

⁴ The intention is to approach relevant trade bodies to invite their members to participate. Those expressing interest will have to meet national accreditation requirements specified for Green Deal and also pass a series of basic checks such as public liability insurance.

- 1.7 The proposed CIC will operate as a Green Deal Provider and deliver a comprehensive Green Deal Provider service, bringing together customers, assessors, installers and the necessary finance so that householders can take best advantage of the Green Deal.

Proposals

- 1.8 That the Council should participate as a shareholder member of the intended CIC which will operate as a Green Deal Provider.

Conclusion

- 1.9 Membership of a CIC established with the express intention of delivering the Green Deal (as a Green Deal Provider) will give the Council the best opportunity of ensuring that residents are provided with an effective and reliable Green Deal service. It will also ensure that there is a local Green Deal service that the Council can actively promote and recommend. This will not only benefit residents directly, but will assist the Council in meeting its strategic objective in relation to housing standards, fuel poverty and the reduction of carbon-emissions.
- 1.10 Membership of the CIC will also allow the Council to influence selection of its Green Deal contractors (through appropriate procurement processes), which will ensure better opportunities for local businesses, employment and training than is likely to be the case if provision of Green Deal is left to other Green Deal Providers with a commercial rather than a specific local-interest focus.
- 1.11 In financial terms, membership of the proposed CIC should provide the Council with a dividend income (whereas annual membership would require annual expenditure) and, more significantly, will ensure that profits generated by the Green Deal Provider are put to community uses (such as assisting those in fuel poverty) and are not lost to the district (as they inevitably would be if the Green Deal were to be delivered by other providers).
- 1.12 If the Council were to choose not to participate in the CIC, the Green Deal will be provided by organisations over whom the Council has no influence and in whom residents are likely to have less confidence. Potential benefits to residents achieved by use of Green Deal profits for community-purposes would be lost, as would opportunities to secure local employment and the involvement of local businesses.

Background Information

- 2.1 The Council's Private Sector Housing Strategy (since incorporated in the new Housing Strategy 2012-17) included a stated aim "*to ensure that homes in the district are of good quality*" and that "*no one has to live in unsatisfactory accommodation.*" This aim is reflected in two specific key actions: Increasing the number of owner-occupiers and landlords installing insulation and implementing other energy-efficiency measures, and secondly, reducing the number of households in fuel poverty.
- 2.2 The principle means the Council has employed to achieve these aims over several years has been the promotion and subsequent part-funding of

discount insulation schemes, including the Cherwell £99 and Bicester £49 schemes and our CHEEP landlords' insulation grant. All of these are on-going, but are underpinned by Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) funding provided by the large energy companies. CERT funding will cease to be available later this year, so all of the schemes and initiatives based on it will also have to finish. It will be replaced by the government's Green Deal.

- 2.3 The Green Deal was created by the Energy Act 2011. Secondary legislation fixing some outstanding detail has still to be finalised but it is at an advanced stage and will not alter the fundamentals of the scheme. It is essentially a mechanism which will allow householders to get a range of energy-efficiency measures installed without having to pay for them up-front.
- 2.4 The process will start with the householder contacting the Green Deal Provider. They may do so directly (in response to advertising) or by means of a referral to the Provider by the Council or by a contractor they have approached (and the expectation is that a majority of referrals will come from this latter source). The next step will be for an accredited and qualified Green Deal Assessor to inspect the property to determine which range of possible measures could be provided by the Green Deal. The options may include insulation, replacement boiler, double-glazing, solar panels etc. The householder will decide which options they want to take advantage of and the Green Deal Provider will enter that information onto its database-platform for its various installers to price against. This will be a competitive process and the customer will decide which of the bidding installer(s) they wish to use⁵. The Green Deal Provider will arrange for the work to be undertaken on the client's behalf and for the contractor(s) to be paid.
- 2.5 Funding is likely to come from a number of sources including private finance (through the Green Deal Finance Company headed up by Price Waterhouse Cooper), Social Investors and Energy Companies (in the form of their Energy Company Obligation (ECO) which will help subsidise the cost of measures for low income and hard to treat dwellings). Local authorities will also have the option of providing funding on a commercial basis. (That would require separate consideration and approval. The proposed participation in the CIC, which is the subject of this report, is not dependent on it.)
- 2.6 The cost of works (including interest, which the CIC intends to that set by the Green Deal Finance Company without any mark-up⁶) will be recovered by means of an additional charge on the household electricity bill which the energy supplier has to pass back to the Provider. The 'golden rule' underpinning the Green Deal is that the repayment element added to the energy bill will not exceed the value of the energy savings made as a result of the improvement work. As a consequence the work effectively pays for itself.
- 2.7 Green Deal Providers will act as the customer interface and service provider; essentially bringing all of the elements together so that the customer does not have to deal independently with a Green Deal Assessor, installer(s) or funder. The principle source of income for Green Deal Providers will be referral fees from installers.
- 2.8 The government has made clear that its role is to get the legislative and funding framework in place, but that it wants Green Deal to operate in a

⁵ This will ensure that prices remain competitive but will also means that the Council is not specifying particular contractors and does not therefore face any of the problems over whether or not they are the cheapest. The customer retains choice and makes the decisions.

⁶ Since the function of the Green Deal Finance Company is to make finance available at the lowest possible rate, this should mean that the interest rate used by the CIC will be the minimum possible.

commercial fashion. A number of organisations and consortia are expected to set up as Green Deal Providers and some may choose to operate on a large scale geographically. They will be doing so to make profit.

- 2.9 Green Deal will be a national scheme operating on a commercial basis. That means it will not be reliant on the Council's participation. However, Members know how important warm, well insulated homes are to good health and to fighting fuel-poverty. Improving energy-efficiency is also vital in reducing carbon emissions. Actions to address these key issues are included as priorities in the Council's Housing Strategy and its Environmental Strategy. As a result, the success of Green Deal is extremely important. Because schemes such as Cocoon and Warm Front will no longer be available, the Council needs Green Deal to succeed in delivering energy-efficient homes to help achieve its (the Council's) objectives.
- 2.10 The Council is actually well placed to encourage uptake of the Green Deal having already been actively involved in promoting and part-funding insulation through Cocoon (which has been delivering the £99 scheme and the Bicester £49 scheme). We also have the advantage of being a credible and broadly trusted organisation.
- 2.11 Although the Council will not have a prescribed legal role in delivering Green Deal, it is unlikely to be able to take an entirely passive approach (even if it wanted to) because the Government has indicated that it expects local authorities to encourage uptake of Green Deal and is prepared to use the Home Energy Conservation Act 1985 (HECA)⁷ to ensure that happens. However, in practice, it would be difficult for the Council to simply encourage residents to use the Green Deal without associating itself with one or more Providers whom it could properly recommend; but allying itself to particular commercial Green Deal Providers is also likely to present difficulties for the Council.
- 2.12 The alternative approach is for the Council itself to become actively involved in the delivery of the Green Deal, rather than just its promotion, and there are some significant benefits to doing so which are explained in section 1.6 above.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 Although there is still some work to be done to establish the proposed CIC and the Green Deal Provider service, the principles are essentially straightforward. Participation should present no significant risk to the Council and the benefits of taking part as a shareholder member appear compelling. As a result, this report recommends that the Executive gives approval in principle for the Council's participation, subject to the Head of Finance and Procurement and the Head of Law and Governance being satisfied that the final terms are acceptable in both legal and financial terms.
- 3.2 If the Council wishes to be a shareholder in the CIC it needs to make that decision at this point so that development of the CIC can continue with the required level of certainty and so that the necessary arrangements can be finalised in preparation for launch of the service in October.

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

⁷ HECA 1985 was previously used to require local authorities to provide annual report on energy savings and, although that specific duty ceased several years ago, the legislation remains in-place.

Option One	To agree the recommendation to participate as a shareholder member of the CIC.
Option Two	To agree the recommendation with variations
Option Three	To reject the recommendation.

Consultations

None None

Implications

Financial: The proposals and recommendations present no financial risk to the Council. Investment in the CIC can be covered from existing budgets.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance and Procurement 01295 221634

Legal: The Council, as a local authority, is not precluded from participating in a community interest company ('CIC'), the primary purpose of which is to benefit the community the CIC has been created to serve and not the CIC's shareholders, directors or employees.

The Articles and Memorandum of the proposed CIC will need to be consistent with the Act under which the CIC will be created, and will also need to be calibrated with the aims of the scheme and the commercial objectives the participating authorities wish the CIC to pursue.

The desire expressed in this report for *local preference* will need also to be considered in the context of the wider rules on public procurement which, amongst other things, requires local authorities, or the bodies created and controlled by them, to choose their commercial partners fairly and without discrimination.

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

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell: A district of opportunity
Cherwell: A cleaner, greener district
Cherwell: An accessible, value for money Council

Lead Member

Councillor Debbie Pickford
Lead Member for Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Green Deal: A Proposal for Local Authorities (produced by USEA November 2011)2. What is a Community Interest Company advisory note (legal reference material sourced through the Council's legal service)3. Green Deal Providers Guide, DECC, April 2012	
Report Author	Tim Mills, Private Sector Housing Manager
Contact Information	01295 221655 Tim.mills@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive

Eco Bicester a Garden City of the Future?

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Public Protection and Development Management

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable Members to consider the potential to explore garden city designation for Bicester.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To agree that DCLG are contacted to explore the identification of Eco Bicester as a next generation garden city.

Executive Summary

Eco Bicester stemmed from the identification of NW Bicester as a location for sustainable development in accordance with the Eco Town PPS standards. Eco Bicester has been used as a banner covering the diverse range of projects taking place within the existing town and as part of the expansion of the town. However the latest government guidance on planning (the National Planning Policy Framework) no longer refers explicitly to Eco Towns (although the Eco Towns supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 is still in existence) but does encourage development that meets garden city principles.

This report considers the implications of this change in the governments approach in relation to Eco Bicester

Introduction

- 1.1 The government, particularly through speeches and publications by the Prime Minister and the Minister of State for Housing, have supported new development to garden city principles. Garden Cities were planned new settlements that sought to 'provide a balance between town and country'. Recently the Town & Country Planning Association has published 're-imagining Garden Cities for the 21st Century' which identifies benefits and

lessons in bringing forward comprehensively planned communities.

- 1.2 Eco Towns were similarly envisaged as planned and sustainable settlements, raising standards and being exemplars. The Eco Towns guidance in the supplement to PPS1 also sets clear standards for such places, above those generally achieved in new developments. There are many synergies between the proposals for new settlements envisaged through the garden city movement and the more recent aspirations for eco towns.

Proposals

- 1.3 The government has indicated that there will be consultation later this year about how to apply garden city principles to new developments. The proposal is therefore that the opportunity to identify Eco Bicester with garden cities is explored with government now.

Conclusion

- 1.4 Whilst Eco Bicester is now recognised widely but there may be opportunities arising from also recognising the garden city principles that do not conflict with the ambitions for the town.

Background Information

Government Position on Growth

- 2.1 In a speech on 19 March 2012, the Prime Minister David Cameron announced;

So, yes, we need more housing, but sprawling over the countryside isn't the answer. We must absolutely protect our green belts and national parks, but we also urgently need to find places where we're prepared to allow significant new growth to happen. That is why we'll begin consultation later this year on how to apply the principles of garden cities to areas with high potential growth in places people want to live. And we must get our planning system fit for purpose; it needs to be quick, it needs to be easier to use and it needs to better support growth, jobs and homes.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2 The NPPF published in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policy and replaces the majority of previous planning guidance, although the supplement to PPS1 on Eco Towns remains in place at the present time. The NPPF promotes sustainable development identifying three dimensions; an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. The NPPF advises these should not be sought in isolation and that they are mutually dependent.
- 2.3 With regard to delivering large scale housing development the NPPF advises at para 52 that;

The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning

for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities. Working with the support of their communities, Local planning authorities should consider whether such opportunities provide the best way of achieving sustainable development. In doing so, they should consider whether it is appropriate to establish Green Belt around or adjoining any such development.

- 2.4 Much new development is planned to be accommodated in Cherwell by the way of large scale extensions to the existing towns of Banbury and Bicester.

Garden Cities

- 2.5 Garden Cities were a concept developed by Ebenezer Howard through his publication *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, published in 1898.
- 2.6 The Garden City vision was developed by Ebenezer Howard to combine the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes for working people in vibrant communities. The heart of the garden city ideals are holistically planned new settlements which enhance the natural environment, provide high quality affordable housing and locally accessible jobs.
- 2.7 The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) grew from the work of Ebenezer Howard and the garden cities movement and continues to promote the principles of sustainable new development.
- 2.8 The TCPA define the garden city principles as
- *Community ownership of land and long term stewardship of assets*
 - *High quality imaginative design including homes with gardens*
 - *Mixed tenure homes which are affordable for ordinary people*
 - *A strong local jobs offer with a variety of employment opportunities within the garden city and easy commuting distance of homes*
 - *Generous green space linked to the wider countryside. Over 60% of Hampstead Garden Suburb is green space, including a mix of public and private networks of well managed, high quality gardens and open spaces.*
 - *Access to strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities*
 - *Integrated and accessible transport systems*
 - *Local food sourcing, including allotments.*
- 2.9 Two garden cities were originally developed, Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City, which remain successful places today. The garden cities also inspired other new settlements in the UK and abroad including the post war New Towns developed in the UK.

Eco Towns

- 3.1 The Eco Towns programme launched in 2007 sought to address many of the same issues as the garden cities and new towns. Eco towns are to be exemplar developments *'that encourage and enable residents to live within managed environmental limits and in communities that are resilient to climate change'* (Eco Towns Supplement to PPS1 para 5).
- 3.2 The Eco Towns PPS sets minimum standards for eco towns, these are;
- Zero carbon development
 - Climate change adaptation
 - At least 30% affordable housing, building for life silver, lifetime homes, minimum of code 4 and 5 for water, real time energy monitoring, energy efficiency and carbon reductions
 - At least 1 job per dwelling
 - Priority for walking, cycling and use of public transport to achieve at least 50% of trips originating in an eco town by non car means
 - Promotion of healthy lifestyles through the design of the place
 - Local services
 - 40% green space
 - Protection of the historic environment
 - Biodiversity net gain
 - Reduced water use and water quality
 - Flood risk management
 - Reduction in waste
 - Master plan
 - Detailed delivery and monitoring
 - Community governance
- 3.3 The vision for eco towns was therefore that they would be highly sustainable, planned developments delivering both jobs and housing, sustainable long term governance and community facilities, significant green space and ambitious targets for modal shift, as well as the economies of scale that can come from large scale new development. In addition the Eco Towns are to provide demonstrators of best practice, achieving standards beyond those provided through other developments.
- 3.4 The Town & Country Planning Association also has supported the development of eco towns providing detailed worksheets on delivering the standards. Eco Towns could in many ways be seen as the 21 century interpretation of new settlements, much in the way garden cities informed earlier thinking on sustainable developments.

Bicester

- 3.5 NW Bicester was identified as an Eco Town location with the publication of the Eco Town supplement to PPS 1 in 2009. In addition to seeking higher standards for new development at NW Bicester the Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board identified a need to ensure the existing town was not left behind and to use the new development as a catalyst to bring about change in the existing town. To that end a vision setting out the ambitions for the town was produced and adopted. The vision is entitled 'Eco Bicester One Shared Vision'.

- 3.6 The Eco Towns PPS aims were used to inform the One Shared Vision for Bicester which is based around three themes of Community First, Employment, Transport and Environmental Sustainability and sets out the long term aims for the town as a whole, including existing and proposed development. The Shared Vision has been adopted by Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Bicester Town Council, Homes and Communities Agency, Environment Agency and Bicester Vision. Eco Bicester has been used as the banner under which a diverse range of projects promoting sustainable low carbon living in the town have taken place.
- 3.7 Since 2009 work has been underway to deliver highly sustainable new development at NW Bicester and improvements within the town such as energy efficiency schemes, work on travel behaviour and exemplar buildings. Some of the work has been funded through Eco Town grant received from the Dept. of Communities and Local Government. However, it is evident that the government is no longer directly promoting 'eco towns' and hence the reference in the NPPF to garden cities.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

1. Through the Bicester Master Plan and Local Plan, Bicester will be identified to grow, accommodate new homes as well as substantial land for employment by 2031. With the very significant levels of growth proposed at Bicester it is important to think not just in terms of new buildings but how the town and its existing population can grow in a holistic way to accommodate the change, retaining the strengths of the existing town and addressing its current weaknesses. The Shared Vision has sought to provide this over arching vision for the town.
2. The Eco Town standards are helpful in identifying clear requirements for delivering sustainable new developments. However the Eco Town PPS supplement is clear that it also relied on advice that at the time of publication was provided in other planning policy statements which have now been replaced by the NPPF. In seeking opportunities for further funding for the growing town it is helpful to ensure that the local approach is consistent with government's current thinking on new development. This supports consideration of a garden cities approach in which sustainability is central, as remains the case with the NPPF.
3. In many ways Bicester meets many of the garden city aims. As a market town it has housing, employment and local facilities. Much development of the town has taken place in the second half of the 20th century at relatively low densities with individual gardens and significant areas of open space. Proposals to expand the town similarly seek a sustainable balance between employment, housing and open space. The NPPF provides the opportunity to consider green belts to provide long term limits for growth in connection with large scale development designed to garden city principles.
4. Given the governments approach to promoting garden cities and the clear synergies with the Eco Bicester approach, that seeks to transform the town into a sustainable community of the future, it is recommended that additional branding of Eco Bicester as a next generation garden city is explored with DCLG.

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

Option One Explore the requirements for garden cities and explore the opportunities of identifying Eco Bicester as a next generation Garden City

Option Two Do not explore Garden City identification

Consultations

None, but extensive engagement with stakeholders will be required if future designation is to be pursued.

Implications

Financial: None arising directly from the report. If there were to be a significant re branding then costs would be incurred and funding for this would need to be further considered.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance and Procurement Telephone 0300 0030106

Legal: None arising directly from the report

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance 0300 003 0107

Risk Management: Eco Bicester is recognised as the umbrella under which projects in Bicester, contributing to making the town a more sustainable place, are being carried out. There is a risk that a change to the name would confuse the identity.

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Performance Manager 01295 221563

Wards Affected

Bicester Town, East, South, West & North Wards

Corporate Plan Themes

District of Opportunity

Lead Member

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader of the Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
Eco Bicester One Shared Vision	
Eco Town Supplement to PPS 1	
National Planning Policy Framework	
Re-imagining Garden Cities for the 21 st Century – TCPA	
Report Author	Jenny Barker , Eco Bicester Project Manager
Contact Information	01295 221828 Jenny.Barker@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive

Member Champions

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Law and Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to allow members to consider proposals to adopt a scheme for the appointment of Member Champions

This report is public

Recommendations

Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Consider the proposed Terms of Reference, Role Description, and proposals for new Member Champions.
- (2) Subject to agreement of recommendation (1), to appoint Member Champions.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution allows for the creation of member champions where there is a perceived need to promote, maintain and/or increase the profile of a given issue, area or area of work.
- 1.2 The benefits associated with appointing Member Champions include:
 - Helping share the burden of workload incumbent on members of Executive and Committee Chairmen
 - Involving a greater number of Councillors in the work of the Council
 - Providing a focus on specific issues
 - Keeping issues within the Council's field of vision

Proposals

1.3 In order to appoint Member Champions, proposed Terms of Reference, a Role Description, and the relevant subject areas need to be agreed by Executive.

1.4 Member Champions - Terms of Reference

- 1) Member Champions will only be appointed in support of agreed Council policies and objectives and shall be elected members of Cherwell District Council.
- 2) Member Champions may be created by Council, the Executive or the Leader of the Council. Member Champions will remain in their role until the expiration of their term of office as a Councillor, when the relevance of the appointment will be reviewed. The appointing body or office holder may decide at any point to review and terminate the appointment of a member Champion for good reason.
- 3) Member Champions shall have no Executive or decision making powers and may not instruct officers. Champions shall not duplicate the work of Committee Chairmen and Executive members and shall ensure they liaise and advise them appropriately. Member Champions may not commit the Council to any course of action or any Council resources.
- 4) A register of Member Champions shall be maintained by the Head of Law and Governance and incorporated within the appropriate section of the constitution.
- 5) Member Champions shall not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance, but shall be able to re-claim travelling and subsistence expenses in line with the agreed scheme and may attend appropriate events, seminars, training and conferences, subject to budget availability.
- 6) All such applications to attend events and for training and subsistence shall be determined by the Head of Law and Governance in consultation with the Leader of the Council, based on whether in consultation with the relevant lead officer it is felt to constitute value for money.
- 7) With regard to access to information Member Champions will be regarded as having 'a need to know' in terms of accessing information held by the authority in relation to the remit covered by their role.
- 8) Each Champion will have a link officer assigned from within the relevant or most appropriate service area. Officers will bring issues, initiatives and areas of work to the attention of Champions.
- 9) Champions may from time to time request to add agenda items or request to speak at a relevant meeting of the Council on an issue within the area to they have been appointed.

1.5 Role Description

Member Champions may carry out the following functions with the regard to the issue for which they have been appointed Champion, within the Terms of

Reference as set out above:

- Ambassador - to raise the profile of an issue, provide a visible focus and raise the profile of an issue both internally and externally to the Council.
- Adviser to the Council in relation to the issue to provide a source expertise
- Bringing issues to the Council's attention
- Liaising with and providing a bridge between the Council and external groups, bodies and communities.
- May be appointed by Council to outside bodies by virtue of office

1.6 Proposals for New Member Champions

- Young People's Champion
- Older Person's Champion
- Data Quality Champion
- Climate Change Champion
- Community Cohesion Champion
- Heritage Champion
- Design Champion
- Rural Champion
- Youth employment & Apprenticeships Champion
- Businesses Champion

1.7 Should Executive be minded to approve the proposed Terms of Reference, Role Description and proposals for new Member Champions, the Leader of the Council will present nominations for Member Champions for Executive appointment.

Conclusion

1.8 The role of Member Champions complements the responsibilities of Lead Members and Committee Chairmen and enables a greater number of Councillors to be involved in the work of the Council.

1.9 Member Champions will act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business and encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent.

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 Accept the recommendations as drafted

Option Two Amend the recommendations

Option Three Reject the recommendations

Implications

Financial: It is not proposed for Member Champions to receive a special responsibility allowance. Any ensuing modest cost, e.g. mileage, could be met from existing budgets and would not be such as to merit an objection to the introduction of the scheme.

Comments checked by Sarah Best, Service Accountant, 01295 221982

Legal: The Council's Constitution allows for the creation of member champions where there is a perceived need to promote, maintain and/or increase the profile of a given issue, area or area of work.

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107

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

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All

Lead Member

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader of the Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	

Report Author	James Doble, Democratic and Elections Manager
Contact Information	01295 221587 James.doble@Cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive

Update on Major Programmes

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Transformation

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on progress toward implementing robust governance of major change projects, following the approval by Members in January of resources to support major projects.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended, subject to South Northamptonshire Cabinet resolving in similar terms, to:

- (1) Approve the amended governance structure for the Council's major projects detailed at Appendix 1
- (2) Note the requirement for member nominations for each of the major projects, and additional project board members where required
- (3) Agree that the Programme Board responsibilities in respect of the Transformation Programme be absorbed into the remit of the Joint Arrangements Steering Group (JASG) and that the JASG terms of reference be varied accordingly as shown in Appendix 2

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 In January, Executive considered the findings of the Resources Review. These included some specific proposals in respect of project and programme management, intended to ensure our limited management resources are tightly focused on the top priorities of both Councils.
- 1.2 This report sets out how those proposals will be implemented, the requirement for Member involvement in project and programme board roles, and the remit of each of the governance bodies.
- 1.3 A key objective of these arrangements is to ensure all Members have clear visibility of major projects and have a voice in their delivery.

Proposals

- 1.4 Illustrations of the governance structure are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Members have already approved the general approach to maximising the effective use of scarce resource through the organisation of projects into programmes. This report seeks simply to clarify the actual arrangements
- 1.6 Formal reports will be produced on a quarterly basis as part of the on-going performance management process. Performance reports will be received by both Executive at CDC and Cabinet at SNC and by Scrutiny (CDC) / Review and Development Committees (SNC). Project and programme boards will review progress and performance on a monthly basis.
- 1.7 In addition, project boards will receive detailed status reports from their project managers, a summary of which will be presented to the programme board. During the first part of 2012/13 the introduction of an online project office system will make these status reports available to all and will allow Members to have a simple view of the current position of any individual project or the programme as a whole.
- 1.8 Information from the project boards will be communicated to members through publications such as 'Forward Together' which currently communicates the activity of the Joint Arrangements Steering Group. Lead members and portfolio holders will have a role in communicating with their Executive and Cabinet colleagues and officer sponsors will be required to report regularly to Joint Management Team meetings.

Background Information

- 1.9 In January it was agreed that eight major projects were to be organised into two programmes:

Place Programme:
 - Two Sustainable Urban Extensions (Brackley and Towcester)
 - Silverstone
 - Bicester Eco-town
 - Bicester town centre
 - Brighter Futures in Banbury
 - Moat Lane Towcester regeneration
Transformation Programme:
 - ICT standardisation and harmonisation,
 - Services transformation
- 2.1 Since then a further major project has evolved and it is proposed that this is incorporated into the overall programme management arrangements. The additional project relates to developments in Banbury.
- 2.2 Each project or major application will be governed by a project board accountable to Executive (CDC) and Cabinet (SNC) through a programme

board. Significant decisions that cannot be taken under officers' delegated powers will continue to be taken by Members in formal decision making roles in Executive (CDC) or Council, Cabinet (SNC). Project boards will focus on the delivery of agreed projects against the timescale and budget as defined in the original decision to proceed and will be communicated to all members and the Joint Management Team (JMT).

2.3 Where appropriate, existing project board structures will continue.

2.4 Each project board has a minimum required membership as follows:

- a Member sponsor
- a lead officer
- officers responsible for project finance, legal issues, and communication
- project manager or case officer.

2.5 However, all projects are not the same and additional Members and officers may be included where appropriate. The Member sponsor represents his or her project on the programme board, along with the lead officer.

Place Programme

2.6 The place programme board is primarily concerned with co-ordinating resources across the designated major regeneration projects. The shared management resources will be in demand by projects which are priorities for each Council, and where contention arises, the programme board will have a role in co-ordinating and resolving issues. Where resourcing issues cannot be resolved, escalation is to the Executive or Cabinet to review the original resourcing decision.

2.7 The place programme board also has a significant role in monitoring delivery against objectives, and maximising the benefits delivered by the resources allocated by each Council. It also provides an opportunity to ensure community development and engagement is undertaken in a consistent and efficient way as part of regeneration projects, and that community benefits are planned for and realised. The board is also responsible for communication with all members and JMT.

Transformation Programme

2.8 The Joint Arrangements Steering Group is proposed as fulfilling the role of programme board for the transformation programme. This is a change from the governance structure put forward as part of the resources review in January and is a further streamlining of scarce resources, without loss of visibility and accountability to Members. This will require an amendment to the terms of reference of JASG as set out in Appendix 2.

2.9 The transformation programme has a very strong theme of organisational change. The objective is to deliver new ways of doing things in accordance with the business case for joint working, without impacting upon the frontline service experience of our customers but still delivering more resilient services at lower cost. The rationale for organising this work into a programme is to ensure a coordinated effort and that opportunities to secure efficiencies from shared service design and delivery, including ICT infrastructure, are not

missed.

- 2.10 All services will be reviewed during the course of the next twelve months to establish the potential for joint working. Those reviews will lead to the development of business cases for projects to get under way as part of the Transformation programme.
- 2.11 The second stage of the ICT project is also part of this programme, covering the standardisation of infrastructure, and opportunities to harmonise systems developed in tandem with service reviews.

The Programme Boards

- 2.12 The Terms of Reference for the two programme boards are attached as Appendix 3. The proposed makeup of the Place Programme Board is as follows:

CDC Councillor	SNC Councillor	Officer	Role/Project
Leader	Leader	Sue Smith	Programme Owners
-	Portfolio holder	Andy Preston	Urban Extensions
-	Portfolio holder	Andy Preston	Silverstone
-	Portfolio holder	Chris Stratford	Moat Lane Regeneration
Lead member	-	Calvin Bell	Bicester EcoTown
Lead member	-	Chris Stratford	Bicester Town Centre
Lead member	-	Ian Davies	Brighter Futures in Banbury
Lead member	-	Chris Stratford	Banbury Developments

- 2.13 The proposed makeup of the Transformation Programme Board is as follows:

Councillor	Officer	Role/Project	Councillor
TBC	Jo Pitman	ICT Standardisation and Harmonisation	TBC
TBC	Jo Pitman	Service Transformation	TBC

- 2.14 All projects within programmes will report progress through the Corporate Performance Management Framework (PMF), giving clear visibility of progress against standard milestones.
- 2.15 It is expected that all project boards will have had their first meeting by the end of May.
- 2.16 Formal reports will be produced on a quarterly basis as part of the on-going performance management process. Performance reports will be received by both Executive at CDC and Cabinet at SNC and Scrutiny (CDC) / Review and Development Committees (SNC). Project and programme boards will review progress and performance on a monthly basis.
- 2.17 In addition, project boards will receive detailed status reports from their project managers, a summary of which will be presented to the programme board. During the first part of 2012/13 the introduction of an online project office system will make these status reports available to all and will allow Members to

have a simple view of the current position of any individual project or the programme as a whole.

- 2.18 Information from the project boards will be communicated to members through publications such as 'Forward Together' which currently communicates the activity of the Joint Arrangements Steering Group. Lead members and portfolio holders will have a role in communicating with their Executive and Cabinet colleagues and officer sponsors will be required to report regularly to Joint Management Team meetings.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 This governance arrangement is intended to implement a common approach and standard based on project management methodology, to ensure that we are able to effectively plan the use of resources against corporate objectives, manage risk and drive improvement.
- 3.2 The establishment of the shared Programme Manager post, combined with a shared common approach to performance management and risk presents an opportunity to bring consistency to project management, which is currently lacking in both Councils

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

- Option One** Members have already approved the general approach to maximising the effective use of scarce resource through the organisation of projects into programmes. This report seeks simply to clarify the actual arrangements
- Option Two** Options which do not require the involvement of Members have been discounted.
- Option Three** Options which do not provide transparency of delivery of major projects have been discounted

Consultations

JMT The Programme Management arrangements have been discussed and endorsed by JMT.

Leader of the Council

Implications

Financial: The resource review in January secured funding from both CDC and SNC in support of project management capacity building and for the major projects as follows:

Project management £50,000

Major project support £200,000

Project managers and case officers will be supported in the administration of their projects, including reporting into the Performance Management Framework, and status reporting to project and programme boards, by the Programme Manager and the Chief Executive and Directors' administrative support team.

Projects at both Councils outside of the two major programmes will have access to the online project office system and will be supported to use it by the Programme Manager

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance and Procurement 01295 221634

Legal:

There are no legal implications of the proposals set out in this report.

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance 01295 222127

Risk Management:

This proposed governance arrangement will help to facilitate a robust approach to the management of organisational risk.

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Performance Manager 01295 221563

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

An accessible, value for money council

Lead Member

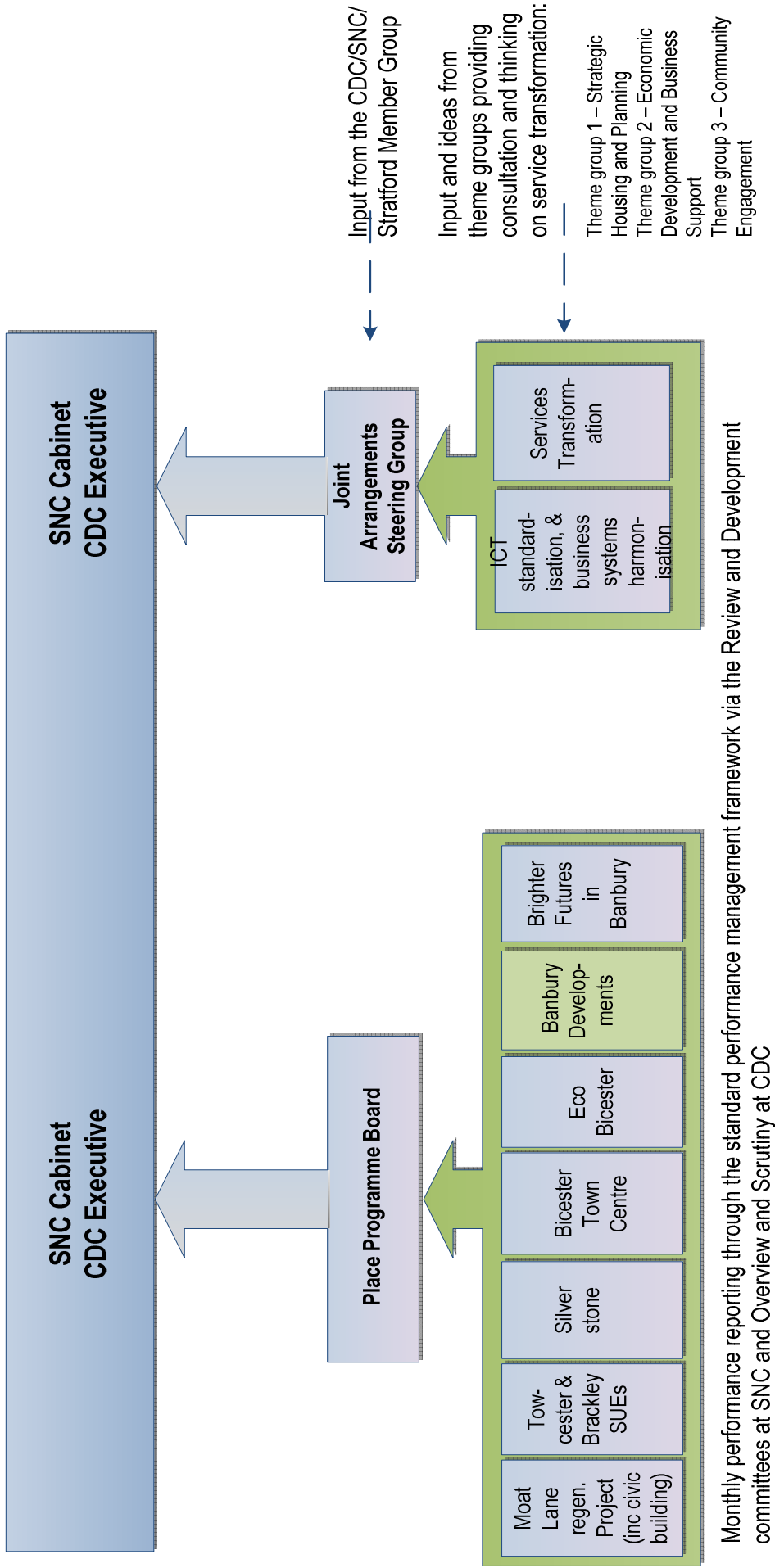
**Councillor Barry Wood,
Leader of the Council**

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	The governance structure
Appendix 2	Amended terms of reference for JASG
Appendix 3	The Programme Boards' Terms of Reference
Background Papers	
Resources Review January 2012	
Report Author	Jo Pitman, Head of Transformation
Contact	0300 0030108

This page is intentionally left blank

South Northants and Cherwell District Council Programme Management



This page is intentionally left blank

Joint Arrangements Steering Group

Proposed Amended Terms of Reference

1. To oversee and supervise the implementation of the joint working project and other transformation projects (“the Projects”) through regular meetings and monitoring of the agreed action plan, issues register and risk register.
2. To act as the Programme Board for the Transformation Programme considering reports in relation to the programme and making recommendations to the appropriate decision making bodies at each council where necessary.
3. To recommend as necessary the principal decisions that will need to be taken by the Joint Personnel Committee or each Council as appropriate (e.g. appointment of advisers etc.) in relation to the joint working project. To receive regular reports on:
 - The progress of the Projects against their action plans
 - Realisation of savings and monitoring of implementation costs
 - Emerging issues and risks relating to the Projects together with proposed mitigation measures
 - Any other joint working or transformation issues that need to be considered
4. To consider business cases for other services that could be shared and to make recommendations to each Council as appropriate
5. To maintain protocols to deal with (1) conflicts of interests of individual officers in the Shared Senior Management Team and (2) the roles of individual officers in the Shared Senior Management Team in providing advice to the Councils jointly and separately.
6. To make recommendations to each Council on relevant proposed salary budgets to feed into their respective budget setting processes
7. To be the forum for the first consideration of the review of the joint working arrangements scheduled to conclude by November 2012.
8. To recommend steps relating to the ongoing communication of matters concerning the implementation and operation of the Projects.
9. To be the forum where any issues or reports in relation to the Projects are considered prior to consideration by each Council’s decision making processes.
10. To be responsible for the consideration and recommended resolution of any disputes between the Councils pursuant to the dispute resolution process set out in the S113 agreement between the Councils dated 8 December 2010.

This page is intentionally left blank

Place Programme Board Terms of Reference

The Place programme board is responsible for the timely delivery of major regeneration projects and planning applications prioritised by Cherwell District and South Northants Councils on the grounds that they are able to make a significant contribution to the delivery of the Councils' strategic priorities.

The prime purpose of the Programme Board will be to champion and drive the programme forward to deliver the outcomes and benefits identified by each council, and to coordinate and govern the equitable use of scarce management resources across the programme .

As an informal member/officer working group, the group has no formal decision making powers; these powers have been delegated by the SNC Cabinet/ CDC Executive to the Director of Development. Therefore, when the group has reached a consensus on an issue the formal decision making route will be that decisions are taken by the Director of Development, in consultation with the Place Programme Board. In the case of major applications, decision-making resides in the statutory role of the Planning Committee/Development Control Committee (CDC/SNC) and the role of the Place Programme board is informational and advisory in terms of the progress a strategically-important application makes through the normal planning process.

Programme Board members must take the lead in supporting the authority and the programme as a whole, including ensuring the appropriate coordination of resources across the projects that comprise the programme.

Membership

One Councillor "champion" for each project, appointed by the Executive/Cabinet (CDC/SNC)

Director of Development in the role of Senior Responsible Owner of the programme

All sponsors of projects and major applications making up the programme

Finance, communications and legal expertise

Officer Support

The Place programme board will be supported by the shared Programme Manager and project managers both from within and outside the councils. Administrative support will be provided internally.

The Programme Board will include expertise from corporate functions essential to the success of major projects, specifically communications, finance and legal. It will also include a place-shaping or community development role to ensure major regeneration projects work with the community from the outset.

Terms of Reference

1. Ensure the ongoing overall alignment of the programme to the strategic direction of the two organisations
2. Coordinate allocated project resources and resolve conflicting resource demands
3. Authorise individual projects in the Programme to continue at each decision-point
4. Resolve strategic and directional issues between projects, that need the input and agreement of senior stakeholders to ensure progress
5. Escalate issues to the appropriate body (Cabinet or Executive) where necessary
6. Confirm the organisations' strategic direction, against which the projects will deliver
7. Approve the progress of the programme against the strategic objectives
8. Provide continued commitment and endorsement in support of the programme objectives at executive and communications events: championing the programme

Transformation Programme Board – Terms of Reference

The Transformation Programme Board role is proposed as an additional specific role to the Joint Arrangements Steering Group, enabling it to act as the strategic programme board responsible for the timely delivery of shared and transformed services at South Northamptonshire and Cherwell District Councils.

As an informal member/officer working group, the group has no formal decision making powers, these powers have been delegated by the Cabinet and Executive respectively to the Director of Resources. Therefore, when the group has reached a consensus on an issue the formal decision making route will be that decisions are taken by the Director of Resources in consultation with the Group.

Membership (in addition to the standard JASG Membership)

- Two Councillor “champions” for each project appointed by the Executive/Cabinet (CDC/SNC)
- Director of Resources in the role of Senior Responsible Owner
- Head of Transformation
- Heads of Service appropriate to the stage of the programme/service under review

Officer Support

The Transformation Programme board remit will be supported by the shared Programme Manager and project managers appointed from within and across the two councils. Administrative support will be provided internally.

Terms of Reference

1. Ensure the ongoing overall alignment of the programme to the strategic direction of the two organisations
2. To support and drive forward the delivery of shared or otherwise transformed services, delivering more resilient or cost effective service processes, providing strategic oversight and direction .
3. To agree how services are transformed, taking a whole council view, in terms of ICT infrastructure harmonisation, delivery of services to the customer, and taking advantage of new opportunities to review how technology supports service delivery
4. To ensure a consistent approach of moving away from service-specific technologies in favour of open standards
5. Coordinate allocated project resources and resolve conflicting resource demands
6. Authorise individual projects in the Programme to continue at each decision-point
7. Resolve strategic and directional issues between projects, that need the input and agreement of senior stakeholders to ensure progress
8. Escalate issues to the appropriate body (Cabinet or Executive) where necessary
9. Confirm the organisations’ strategic direction, against which the projects will deliver
10. Approve the progress of the programme against the strategic objectives
11. Provide continued commitment and endorsement in support of the programme objectives at executive and communications events: championing the programme

Executive

Joint Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2012/13

28 May 2012

Report of Head of Finance and Procurement

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report brings forward for Members' approval, the joint procurement strategy and action plan for 2012/13 for the council. The primary objective of the procurement strategy is to procure goods, services and works that assist in reducing service budgets in line with severe funding reduction while being fit for the purpose, meeting the needs of local people and service users, and providing value for money over their lifetime.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) to consider and approve the joint corporate procurement strategy and action plan for 2012/13 for the council which is attached at Appendix 1.

Executive Summary

Purpose and objectives of the procurement strategy

- 1.1 Cherwell District Council adopted its first formal Procurement Action Plan in 2007/08 and has refreshed it annually to cover the period to March 2012. The Council has exploited the benefits of contemporary procurement practice by investing in the formation of a Corporate Procurement Team in 2008 that operates under an innovative "invest to save" initiative, with annual targets ensuring the operation is both "self funding" and providing additional returns.
- 1.2 Procurement has a very strong link with finance, contract management, compliance and efficiencies and so the Council positioned the Corporate Procurement Team within finance under the direction of the Head of Finance.
- 1.3 The approach has secured cashable savings of £1.5m against a target of £775,000 from April 2008 to March 2012 with £613,000 achieved in year against a target of £150,000. Further non-cashable savings of more than

£180,000 and capital savings of some £124,000 have been achieved over the same period. The cumulative total for contracts let for more than a year from April 2008 to March 2012 is £2.1m. The approach to procurement outlined within the attached strategy with the implementation of a joint procurement team based on long-term planning and wider collaboration allow the team to continue to be self funded and guarantee year on year savings with the target for 2012/13 cashable savings being set at £150,000.

1.4 The challenge of continuing to provide year on year cashable savings when many areas of spend at both Councils are already under effective contracts which have delivered substantial savings is to be met by a number of initiatives:

- building procurement options appraisals into service delivery planning;
- focusing on collaboration which best delivers economies of scale savings;
- delivering more outcome based specifications which encourage supplier innovations;
- working with suppliers to introduce more efficient ways of working which will remove costs for both parties;
- improving contract management to drive out further savings;
- removing barriers to and exploiting savings from prompt payment discounts;
- seeking more inflation controls such as 1% below CPI.

1.5 The purpose of the procurement strategy is to communicate clearly to stakeholders, operational managers, procurement specialists and suppliers in the private and voluntary sectors, the council's vision for the procurement services, supplies and works so that each may play a meaningful role in improving the procurement practices and delivering budget reductions at the council.

1.6 The strategy sets out the framework for all our procurement activity. It confirms the objectives that we should be aiming to achieve, the policies to be considered and followed and the mechanisms by which we will put in place the council's vision.

Priorities

1.7 This strategy aims to ensure a coordinated approach is adopted across the council that reflects our aims and objectives. Procurement acts as one of the building block enablers to the Councils' objectives from the wider countywide and regional partnerships right down through business plans to individual officer action plans. Contract management forms part of the procurement cycle and there is interdependence between the two functions.

1.8 We can confidently echo the words of Francis Maude in saying that 'collectively (with South Northamptonshire) we have made a good start with the savings we have already delivered – but it is only the beginning. We need to challenge traditional procurement thinking and make a significant step-up in capability if we are to deliver on the challenges ahead of us.' This strategy looks to move the procurement journey forward by:

- Releasing continued savings from joint working with South Northamptonshire;

- Extending collaboration from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire into Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire to improve procurement buying power;
- Building sustainable methodologies based on the whole-life costs that take account of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012;
- Providing procurement advice and project support to transformation programmes;
- Engaging effectively with SMEs and local businesses and fulfilling the remit of the Localism Act 2011, the Big Society agenda and the implications of the Local Government Resource Review.

1.9 Achievement of the above objectives will deliver value for money, provide innovative solutions and demonstrate the Council's commitment to shaping the local community and supporting wider social, economic and environmental objectives.

Conclusion

1.10 The joint corporate procurement strategy has a fundamental role in helping the Council reduce its services budget and protect front line services as it manages the implications of reduced government funding.

1.11 The full procurement strategy is set out as an Appendix 1. It also contains:

- The Action Plan outlining key objectives for 2012/13;
- The procurement performance indicators which are the key measures the council will collect and benchmark against other similar authorities.

Consultations

Various consultations with internal and external stakeholders. A review of best practice examples from other high performing authorities.

Implications

Financial: Financial Effects: There are no adverse financial effects on the Council by implementing the procurement strategy. The cashable savings target will assist in protecting Council services and managing funding reductions.

Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant, Cherwell District Council, 01295 221559.

Legal: Legal work very closely with procurement to ensure that our processes are compliant and not open to challenge. The monitoring officer also plays a key role as part of the PSG Core and Strategy Groups.

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107

Risk Management: The main risks to the Council associated with this recommendation are legal (mitigated through the procurement and contract formation process) and service failure impacting on the customer (mitigated through

contract and performance management).

Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Performance Manager 0300 003011

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

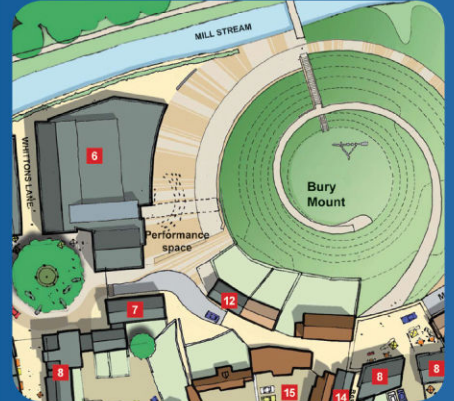
An Accessible, Value for Money Council

Executive Lead Member

Councillor Ken Atack
Lead Member Financial Management

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Joint Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2012/13
Background Papers	
Report Author	Karen Curtin, Head of Finance and Procurement Viv Hichens, Corporate Strategic Procurement Manager
Contact Information	0300 0030106 karen.curtin@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk 01295 753747 viv.Hichens@cherwell-dc.gov.uk



Joint Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2012/13



DRAFT

Foreword

Why have a Procurement Strategy?

Over 50 per cent of council spending is on goods and services bought from the private, voluntary and community sectors... Councils are already working together to procure at regional and sub-regional levels through consortia, and using approaches that drive down costs, such as e-auctions. But there is more that can be done to drive out further savings...

Local Government Association's 'Better for Less' publication, November 2011

Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council recognise that procurement is a critical enabler for delivering better for less and achieving sustainable outcomes for its local communities. It has a fundamental role in helping the Councils reduce their service budgets in line with severe funding reductions and in embracing the Localism agenda.

This strategy aims to provide a clear framework for procurement activity across both Councils to assist in the delivery of the Councils' business plan objectives. The Councils intend to continue to use the model of a self-funding corporate procurement team in enabling the delivery of a successful procurement programme.

The procurement teams at both Councils have delivered year on year cashable savings which have outweighed their costs and provided added value in terms of robust contracts which have protected the Councils' interests and implemented inflationary controls for a number of years.

The cashable savings target for procurement for Cherwell District Council for 2012/13 is £150,000 and the target for South Northamptonshire is £100,000.

The joint procurement strategy's vision for 2012/13 is to meet the challenges being laid down for local authorities head on as they are asked to re-shape and re-engineer how they deliver their services to:

- reduce budget expenditure;
- provide better for less as part of the continuous transformation programme;
- reap the benefits of joint working and collaboration in terms of savings and efficiencies;
- ensure sustainability is at the core of all the authorities procure;
- fulfill the remit of the Localism Act 2011, the Big Society agenda and the implications of the Local Government Resource Review.

Achievement of these objectives will demonstrate the Councils' commitment to shaping the local community and the delivery of savings which are redirected into front line services.

Councillor Ken Atack
Lead Member Financial Management
Procurement Champion

Councillor Ian McCord
Portfolio Holder for Resources
Procurement Champion

DRAFT

Contents

Section	Topic	Page
Section 1	Clear vision of expected outcomes	6 – 7
Section 2	Strategic procurement	8 – 12
Section 3	Sustainable procurement	13 – 14
Section 4	Objectives and outcomes	15
Section 5	Improving processes	16 – 17
Section 6	Roles and responsibilities	18 – 20
Section 7	How will we know how we are doing?	21
Section 8	Action plan and timescales	22 - 27

1. Clear vision of expected outcomes

“The most radical changes to procurement are now underway - the days when there was no strategy and no coherence to the way the Local Government bought goods and services are well and truly at an end...”

Collectively we have made a good start with the savings we have already delivered – but it is only the beginning. We need to challenge traditional procurement thinking and make a significant step-up in capability if we are to deliver on the challenges ahead of us.”

Francis Maude, Minister for the Cabinet Office, July 2011

- 1.1 Both Councils have ‘made a good start with the savings we have already delivered’ and now more than ever the further embedding of forward looking procurement practices via a joint procurement team provides an opportunity to assist both authorities in their transformation journey delivering increased efficiencies and significant additional cashable savings.
- 1.2 The first quarter of 2012/13 will see the implementation of the joint procurement team with the aligned team scheduled to be delivered from 1st July 2012 and the remainder of the year involving a process of transition as joint systems and processes are put in place.
- 1.3 Having established the “invest to save” model of procurement delivery at both Councils with annual savings targets ensuring the operation is both “self funding” and providing additional returns, the focus of the joint procurement team will be the delivery of new cashable savings amounting to £150,000 for Cherwell District Council and £100,000 for South Northamptonshire Council in 2012/13.
- 1.4 Procurement’s very strong link with finance, contract management, compliance and efficiencies means that the joint procurement team is well placed within finance under the direction of the Head of Finance and Procurement.
- 1.5 The challenge of continuing to provide year on year cashable savings when many areas of spend at both Councils are already under effective contracts which have delivered substantial savings is to be met by a number of initiatives:
 - building procurement options appraisals into service delivery planning;
 - focusing on collaboration which best delivers economies of scale savings;
 - delivering more outcome based specifications which encourage supplier innovations;
 - working with suppliers to introduce more efficient ways of working which will remove costs for both parties;
 - improving contract management to drive out further savings;
 - removing barriers to and exploiting savings from prompt payment discounts;
 - seeking more inflation controls such as 1% below CPI.
- 1.6 The joint procurement team’s skills and knowledge are to be utilised in assisting both councils on their transformation journey as alternative models of service delivery are considered and tested with both regional and national procurement networks being put to good effect.
- 1.7 By taking sustainability beyond merely environmental considerations to a proper consideration of life cycle costs and the socio-economic impact of the goods, services and works procured by the authorities, the joint procurement strategy aims to deliver additional savings and efficiencies.

- 1.8** The joint procurement strategy aims to look beyond the joint working journey being undertaken between South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council to:
- Encourage buy-in from other authorities to the contracts and frameworks put in place which will trigger retrospectively agreed volume discounts;
 - Sell the procurement services of the team to other authorities across the region, particularly district authorities with limited procurement resources.
- 1.9** Both councils need to ensure they are prepared for the impact of the Localism Act 2011, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the forthcoming Big Society initiatives, the implications of the Local Government Resource Review and the fundamental review of public procurement law by the European Commission, which could challenge the way the authorities deliver their services. The joint procurement strategy involves the sharing of best practice with other authorities across the region to ensure the councils meet these challenges head on.

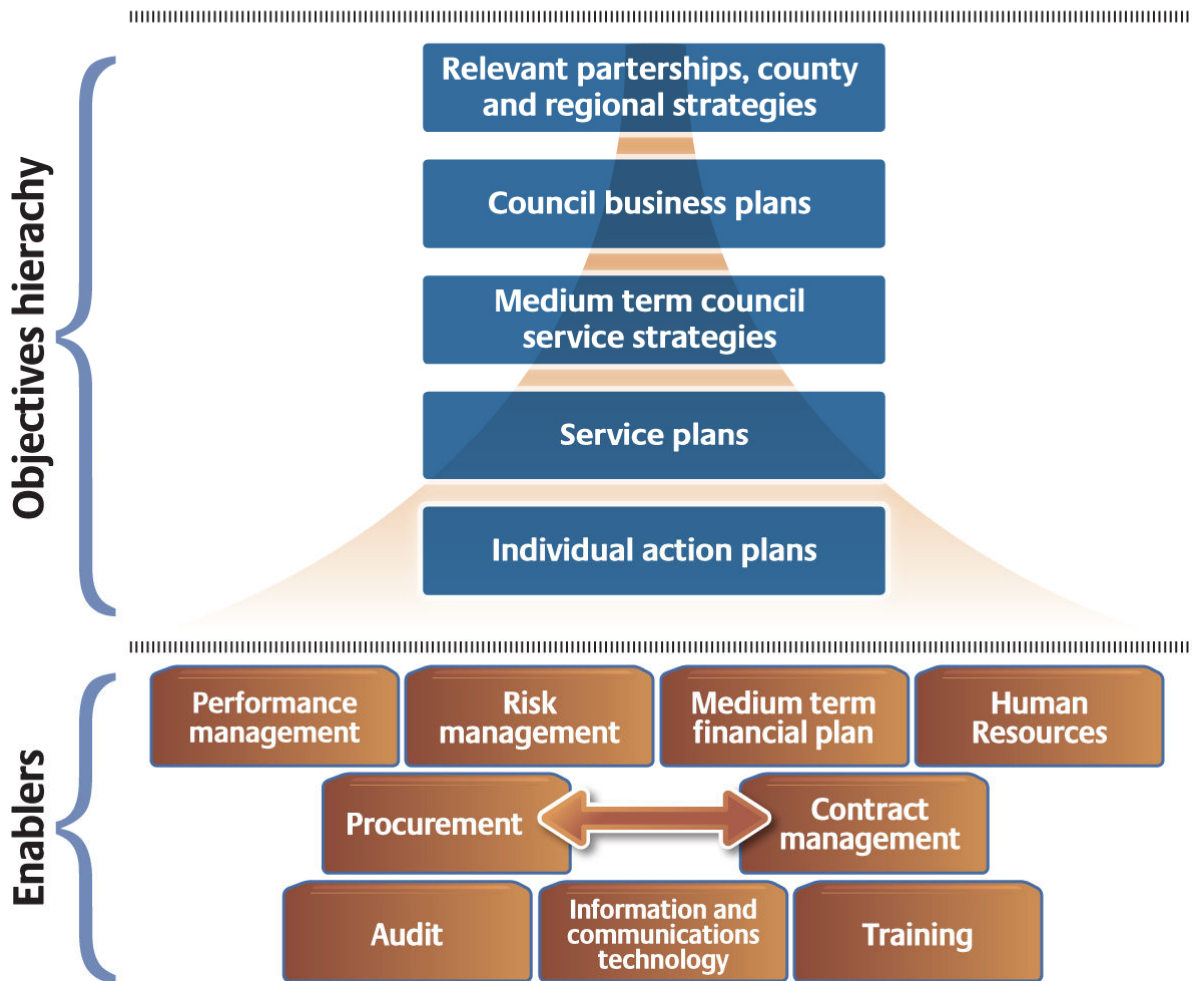
DRAFT

2. Strategic procurement

“One of the things I believe we need to get better at is in identifying best practice, publicising and emulating that best practice, and then leveraging it as effectively as possible across central government and other areas of the public sector.”

John Collington, Head of Procurement, Cabinet Office Efficiency and Reform Group

Delivering council objectives



2.1 Linking procurement to the delivering of council objectives

2.1.1 Procurement acts as one of the building block enablers to the Councils’ objectives from the wider countywide and regional partnerships right down through business plans to individual officer action plans. Contract management forms part of the procurement cycle and there is interdependence between the two functions.

2.2 Embedding value for money

2.2.1 The Councils’ drive for value for money and delivering better for less is directly linked to the Government’s efficiency agenda and feeds into the Councils’ medium term financial plans. The joint procurement team’s role involves embedding best practice from analysing the best means for projected expenditure in service plans right through to the delivery of robust contracts with effective performance management mechanisms with the potential to deliver further year on year savings.

2.3 Sustainable procurement, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and whole life costing

- 2.3.1 Strategic procurement by nature is sustainable procurement and by considering socio-economic and environmental factors it can deliver the best value for money over the lifetime of the goods, services or works being procured. The focus needs to be on the whole life cost of all that is procured rather than just focusing on the up front prices.
- 2.3.2 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 sets out a number of requirements that public authorities must comply with before starting the procurement process for an above-threshold services contract, including consideration of:
- how what is being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Council's area;
 - how the proposed improvements in economic, social and environmental well-being might be secured;
 - whether consultation has been, or is proposed to be, undertaken on the potential improvements themselves or how they might be secured;
- 2.3.3 Legislation, therefore, allows factors such as carbon footprint, replacement cycles and social benefits to be taken into consideration with the evaluation process with the onus on suppliers to provide information about expected lifetimes and warranties when supplying goods and the demonstration of sustainable practices when it comes to services and works. The correct stage to address these issues is right at the beginning of the procurement process – during the formation of the business case and in the writing of the specification.
- 2.3.4 Section 3 develops the Councils approach to Sustainable Procurement and outlines how the joint procurement team will work with the Environmental Officers at each Council to ensure that sustainability is a golden thread that runs through all procurement exercises and is part of the drive for securing better for less.

2.4 Equalities

- 2.4.1 The Councils have in place pre-qualifying safeguards that ensure all work carried out on behalf of the Councils by external contractors is compliant with the latest equalities legislation with each interested party providing evidence not only of the policy but how it is put into practice.
- 2.4.2 The equalities questionnaires aim to:
- Establish that all organisations applying for work with the Councils have a genuine commitment to equality of opportunity and that this will be effectively applied in their service delivery.
 - Encourage best practice with all organisations that work for the Councils.
 - Protect the Councils from prosecution in failing to meet its own commitments to equal opportunities legislation.
- 2.6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Procurement Strategy and Action Plan in line with the requirements of the Equality Standard and the Equality Act (2010) and is compliant.

2.5 Collaboration

- 2.5.1 Both Councils have already demonstrated how effective collaboration with other public bodies and partnering arrangements makes an essential contribution towards providing better for less and collaboration between the Councils on dry waste

recycling and internal audit services in 2011/12 has provided substantial savings to both authorities.

Current Collaborative Procurement Arrangements at South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council



2.5.2 The joint procurement teams will seek to build upon and share the range of collaborative partnerships in place across both authorities as outlined in the diagram above. The focus will continue to be:

- The sharing of annual forward plans and contracts registers to identify the best opportunities for economies of scale purchasing;
- Utilising frameworks put in place by organisations with much greater buying power than the combined Councils' needs;
- Devising specifications and performance criteria which will encourage supplier innovations and introduce more efficient ways of working;
- The sharing of the resources required for putting contracts in place.
- Working on initiatives such as prompt payment discounts, market engagement workshops, joint e-tendering purchasing and the delivery of procurement and contract management training to officers across the Councils.

- 2.5.3 An alternative form of collaboration is the use of a professional buying organisation (PBO). The use of PBOs is well established by both Councils and are used to:
- provide low-value, high-volume supplies, such as stationery and cleaning materials – often via catalogues;
 - act as agents in setting up/facilitating joint contracts for groups of public authorities;
 - supply goods and services, such as fuel and mobile telephones;
 - act as a forum for the exchange of information and learning regarding procurement and commissioning;
 - provide a source of procurement advice and guidance;
 - establish national or regional contracts.

2.6 Delivering value for money via the public, private and voluntary sectors

- 2.6.1 The Councils are committed to the promotion of a mixed economy of service provision to provide better for less by working with public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

Public Sector

- 2.6.2 The Councils continue to look for partnership opportunities within the public sector including the NHS, the police and educational establishments across a range of areas from corporate supplies such as agency staff, stationery, and cleaning materials to services such as internal audit and facilities management to works such as construction and property maintenance.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

- 2.6.3 The Councils have a strong commitment to developing the local economy and will continue to engage effectively with SMEs by:
- Providing workshops for individual opportunities such as printing, engineering services, facilities management and property maintenance;
 - Breaking requirements down into individual lots where appropriate to allow local specialists an opportunity to bid for contracts;
 - Making it a condition of larger schemes that contractors allow Council contractors to bid for sub-contracted work.

The Voluntary Sector

- 2.6.4 The Councils engage with the voluntary sector via a range of grant aided initiatives and there is currently a move to the commissioning of services with contractual performance obligations which provide better service delivery for the community. A good recent example was the commissioning of voluntary services covering debt advice, car driving schemes and initiatives to increase the pool of volunteers across the Cherwell district which also drew in partnerships from across the South Northamptonshire district.
- 2.6.5 The Council is actively looking into facilitating the Localism Act 2011, the Big Society Agenda and the Local Government Resource Review and how procurement can play a part in releasing resources, funds and support from a central position by pushing them down to a local level to enable local people to take local actions and decisions for themselves. Both Councils are seeking to utilise partnerships with the Northamptonshire Procurement Network Group and the Strategic Procurement Partnership for Oxfordshire to share resources and deliver a joined up response, especially in terms of how Big Society initiatives are assessed and evaluated.

2.7 Governance and compliance

- 2.7.1 All procurement activities must be conducted in compliance with the Councils' Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) and the relevant EU procurement legislation. Advice should be sought from Law and Governance on any compliance issues that arise.
- 2.7.2 Reporting on procurement activities, requests for approval and contract management reports need to be handled within approved governance arrangements. The Joint Procurement Steering Group provides a platform for the major value and high risk contracts to be discussed.
- 2.7.3 Section 5 of this strategy and action plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of all key officers from the Joint Procurement Steering Group with the Head of Finance and Procurement as lead to the responsible officers for each procurement exercise.
- 2.7.4 Effective application of procurement across the Councils will only be delivered through the active participation and strict compliance of all those who control budgets and authorise expenditure as well as those with appropriate technical expertise/service experience. The joint procurement team is responsible for engaging with all such officers and for embedding an understanding of the Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2.7.5 Once contracts or other procurement arrangements are in place, the joint procurement team needs to ensure ongoing compliance and for this purpose contract management responsibility is being clearly defined so that each contract has an 'owner'. Performance monitoring against key performance indicators is an essential function to ensure that value for money is being achieved. The working relationship between procurement officers and contract managers is vital.

2.8 References

- 2.8.1 Other corporate strategies to ensure business continuity for all users and delivery of Councils' objectives.
- 2.8.2 The Councils have many applicable policies and practices relevant to this strategy, which include, but are not limited to:
- Corporate Procurement Rules
 - Standing Orders
 - Whistle blowing Policy
 - Risk Management Policy
 - Performance Management Framework
 - Equality and Diversity Policy

3. Sustainable procurement

“Sustainable Procurement is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.”

The National Sustainable Procurement Action Plan, ‘Procuring the Future’

3.1 Putting sustainable procurement into practice

- 3.1.1 As outlined in Section 2.3, Sustainable Procurement is about taking environmental, social and economic factors into account in purchasing decisions. It is about looking at what your products are made of, where they come from and who has made them.
- 3.1.2 Value for money is delivered by considering the optimum combination of whole life cost (including cost to the environment in terms of environmental impact) and quality (or fitness for purpose) to meet the user’s requirements. In other words, considering the environmental, social and financial costs over the total lifespan of whatever is being purchased.
- 3.1.3 Purchasing in a sustainable manner offers potential whole life cost savings, supports the Councils’ Business Plans and Low Carbon Strategies and safeguards our reputations as responsible public bodies working to protect the health of our staff and the residents of and visitors to our Districts. The key objectives addressed by this strategy are:
- Reducing fossil fuel use to minimise climate change
 - Reducing use of hazardous and harmful materials (expanded on in the Councils’ Quick Guide to Sustainable Procurement)
 - Reducing waste
 - Improving public health and quality of life
 - Increasing levels of employment, skills and equality across the districts
 - Ensuring fair pay and working conditions throughout our supply chain
 - Protecting biodiversity
 - Complying with current legislation and anticipating future legislation

3.2 Key principles of the Councils’ approach to sustainable procurement

3.2.1 People, Education and Awareness

- Promote awareness, train and encourage internal procurers and commissioners to review their consumption of goods and services, reduce waste and adopt more environmentally friendly alternative products.
- All procurement staff will participate in specialist Sustainable Procurement training, including the use of sustainable procurement toolkits, and will participate in annual refreshers.
- Sustainable Procurement will be incorporated in to the induction, job descriptions, objectives and recruitment criteria for all relevant staff.

3.4.2 Policy, Strategy & Communications

- Consider the costs and benefits of environmentally preferable goods and services as alternatives.
- Investigate opportunities for the recycling and re-use of materials where appropriate.

- Deliver the procurement actions associated with the Councils' Low Carbon and Climate Change Strategies.
- Work in partnership with other organisations in Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire and across the East Midlands and South East regions to improve sustainable procurement.

3.4.3. Procurement Process

- Prior to any procurement process, buyers will review the aggregate requirement to minimise volume, scale, costs and environmental impact, establishing that:
 - there is a genuine operational need for the purchase;
 - all cost effective opportunities for products to be shared, upgraded, refurbished, leased or delivered as a service have been exploited;
 - the product will be used efficiently, minimising waste;
 - the forecast of what is remaining is accurate.
- Where relevant, buyers will identify actions to reduce impacts through supplier pre-qualification, specifications, evaluation criteria, supplier development and continuous improvement.
- Make procurement decisions based on long term value for money using whole life costing, including initial purchase cost, operating, and management and disposal costs.
- Whole life costing will be used for all capital investments, waste contracts and in comparing consumables against reusable alternatives.
- Ensure that where appropriate, suppliers' environmental credentials are considered in the supplier evaluation process and that environmental criteria are used in the award of contracts.
- Ensure that consideration is given to inclusion, within all specifications, of a facility for suppliers to submit offers for environmentally friendly alternatives.
- Specify, wherever possible and practicable, the use of environmentally friendly goods.

3.4.4 Engaging Suppliers

- When considering the sourcing strategy, buyers will consider the potential to:
 - break down larger contracts to match SME and Social Enterprise capacity;
 - encourage collaboration between local SMEs and Social Enterprises to compete for larger contracts;
 - encourage larger suppliers to sub-contract to local SMEs and Social Enterprises and;
 - hold supplier pre-tender workshops to explain the Councils' environmental and equality objectives, explore opportunities for innovation and ensure that specifications are deliverable by the marketplace.
- Encourage and persuade suppliers to adopt environmentally friendly processes and supply environmentally friendly goods and services.

4. Objectives and outcomes

In order to achieve our vision for procurement at both Councils it is vital that we have clear overarching objectives and outcomes.

Objectives	Outcomes
Alignment with the Councils' strategic objectives and business plans	Assisting, adding value and mitigating risks with the transformation programme
Compliance	Mitigating the risk of challenge and contract failure
Promotion of what procurement can offer both organisations	Effective, compliant and value for money contracts
Value for money	Reduction in revenue budgets to meet savings targets
Collaboration and partnership	Increased value for money via economies of scale, spreading the cost of procurement and improving efficient working practices including the introduction of a single set of Contract Procedure Rules common to both Councils
Qualified and highly skilled procurement resource	A qualitative resource able to both meet the growing procurement needs of the Councils and to be sold on as a service to other Councils
Optimum utilisation of technology	Reduction in administration and more time to focus on improved outcomes and value for money
Sustainability at the core	Additional savings via focusing on lifetime costs and meeting the Council's sustainability targets
Internal stakeholder engagement	More effective outcomes via early engagement and a process of continuous improvement
Effective supplier engagement – particularly with local businesses and SMEs	Better value for money and meeting the Councils' requirements to engage with the local economy
Benchmarking	Assurance that contracted rates provide value for money within each market sector
Reflective learning and recording of achievements	Continuous improvement and further promotion to the internal market of the value of working with the procurement function

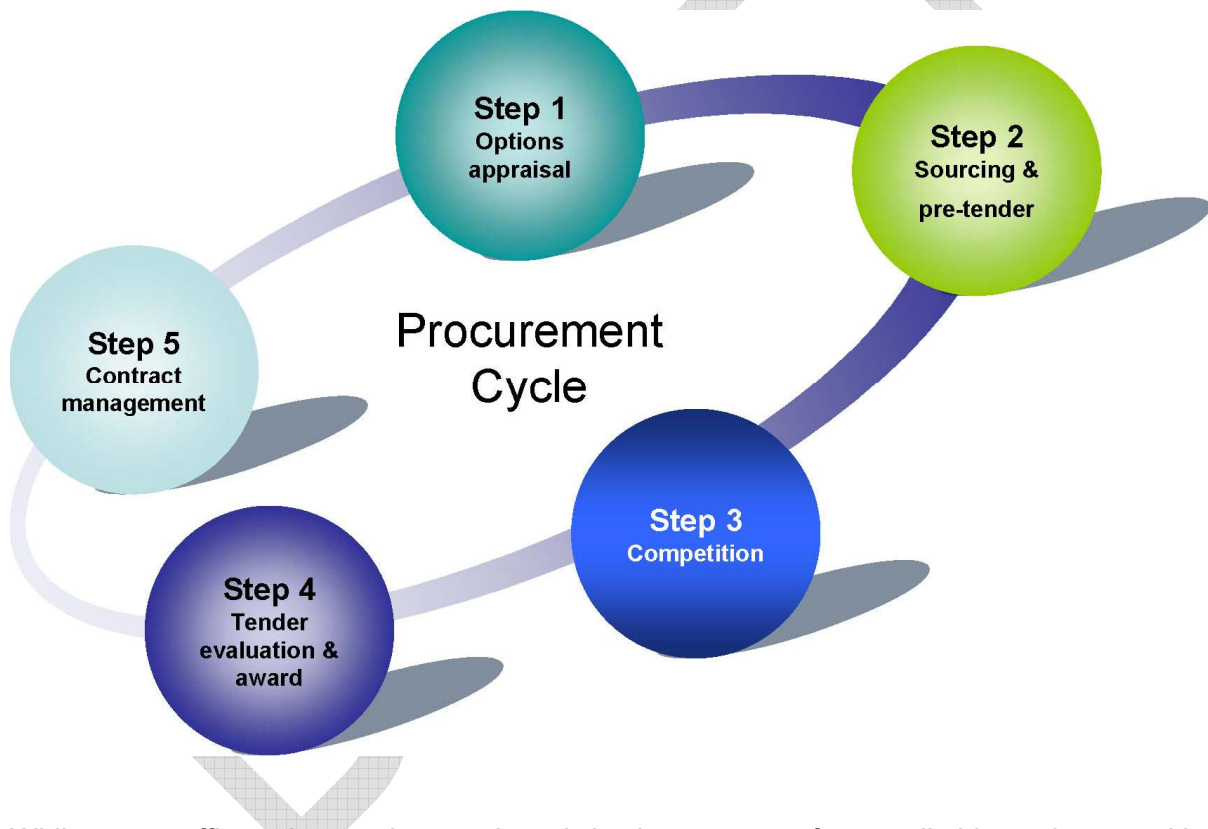
5. Improving processes

“UK-based suppliers are finding themselves excluded; opportunities for growth are missed due to the public sector’s timidity and carrying out procurement in the UK costs over twice as much as in France. This is wrong from every point of view...While other countries manage to settle down and develop long-term relationships with business – this country appears to have taken a rather less successful overly formal and legalistic approach, failing to think beyond the immediate contract and failing to adequately support our businesses...”

Francis Maude, Minister for the Cabinet Office, November 2011

Sharing and Improving on Best Practice

- 5.1 Both councils have worked hard at improving their procurement processes seeking to actively engage with the market and reduce the burden of the tendering process on potential suppliers. Key to this has been embedding an appreciation of the entire procurement life cycle from planning to contract expiry, as detailed in the diagram below:



- 5.2 While many officers have taken on board the importance of an auditable and competitive process, the implementation of a joint procurement team provides an opportunity to:

- Review and align the Contract Procedure Rules and procurement guidelines;
- Produce a single set of procurement templates which take the best from both councils;
- Embed procurement forward planning into the service plan process;
- Develop the options appraisal methodology to take account of the changing procurement landscape and the growing range of solutions for service delivery;
- Implement a corporate approach to contract management with the sharing of best practice across both councils.

A shared set of rules and guidelines

- 5.3** It is vital for officers across both councils to have a common set of Contract Procedure Rules with clear roles and responsibilities that can be allocated and owned, from the Joint Management Team to the Joint Procurement Steering Group to project officers and the joint procurement team. This will ensure a consistency of approach and mitigate against the risk of non compliance issues arising from having different rules in different places. Underpinning this there needs to be clear guidelines for operational and procurement staff alike, which go beyond tick box lists to encouraging best practice and strategies that delivery lifetime value from contracts.

Procurement templates fit for multiple purposes

- 5.4** By bringing together and further developing the templates from low value, straight forward invitation to quote exercises to high value, complex collaborative exercises for goods, services and works both authorities will be equipped with the latest set of tools which will be subject to regular review and adaptable to the changing needs of the councils' procurement programme.

Embedding Procurement forward planning in the service planning process

- 5.5** Heads of Service and operational managers have been approached during the service planning process to identify potential projects before the start of the financial year and this information will:
- Enable better forward planning and identification of the procurement route which will provide best value for money;
 - Ensure the optimum allocation of procurement resources throughout the year;
 - Provide the opportunity to compare forward plans with other councils across the region reap the maximum benefit from economies of scale and buying power.

Ensuring all options are considered

- 5.6** The procurement landscape is more complex than ever and it isn't enough to simply presume that the council needs more of the same or that external provision is best or that if there is a framework available the Councils should use it. By involving the joint procurement team at the outset of projects better quality contracts which provide greater savings and whose management are less of a drain on internal resources can be delivered across all areas.

Getting more out of contracts – corporately

- 5.7** Both Councils have shining examples of best practice when it comes to contract management but this is seldom shared corporately. The forming of a joint procurement team provides an opportunity to develop effective contract management models to fit all service areas. By focusing on outcome based performance indicators (which add value to contracts, mitigate the risk of failure and ensure savings promised at tender stage are realised) more time can be spent on delivering the wider transformation programme.
- 5.8** This is an area which is a key focus for many other local authorities at present and procurement network channels can be effectively used to reduce the cost of implementing processes and, where appropriate, the procurement of contract management software.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Ownership and Governance

Successful procurement requires an awareness of wider business issues such as culture change, communication, people skills and multi-stakeholder requirements, all of which must be addressed to ensure that changes are successfully implemented and contribute positively to Council policy.

This strategy is owned by the Head of Finance and Procurement and will be updated annually in accordance with progress to date. The strategy and action plan will be reviewed at the quarterly meeting of the Joint Procurement Steering Group Strategy Group.

The Head of Finance and Procurement has professional responsibility for the joint corporate procurement team and discharges this responsibility through the Procurement Manager.

The Procurement Manager also has day to day responsibility for:

- taking a lead in the development, implementation and monitoring of the procurement strategy and action plan, reporting progress to Head of Finance and Procurement and the Joint Procurement Steering Group Strategy Group
- managing the Contracts Register
- administering meetings of the Joint Procurement Steering Group Strategy Group
- organising all procurement requirements across both councils via the joint procurement team
- providing strategic and operational support, guidance and advice on procurement practice to all service areas across both Councils
- Becoming a focal point for sharing good practice across the Council
- Delivering and facilitating procurement training to the joint procurement team and officers across both Councils
- Undertaking an onward going cycle of spend analysis on the Councils' expenditure to highlight areas for potential savings/benefits to both authorities.

The joint procurement team will set and maintain standards and provide a range of training opportunities that lead skills development for all officers involved with procurement.

The Head of Law and Governance is the guardian of the Contract Procedure Rules and has delegated authority to amend them in the light of any changes in the law which necessitate this.

6.2 Joint Procurement Steering Group

The Joint Procurement Steering Group comprises a Core Group of:

- The Head of Finance and Procurement (as Lead)
- The Monitoring Officer
- The Section 151 Officer
- The Portfolio Holder for Resources at South Northamptonshire Council and the Lead Member for Financial Management at Cherwell District Council (on a case by case basis at his/her election)

or their nominees and a Strategy Group comprising:

- The Portfolio Holder for Resources at South Northamptonshire Council
- The Lead Member for Financial Management at Cherwell District Council

- The Head of Finance and Procurement (as Lead)
- The Monitoring Officer
- The Section 151 Officer
- A nominated Head of Service – rolling one year membership from each directorate
- The Procurement Manager

or their nominees.

The PSG core group meets whenever there is business to discuss and the Strategy Group meets quarterly.

The function of the PSG Core Group is to:

- Consider and, if appropriate, authorise the undertaking of any procurement between the relevant thresholds at each Council, and
- Consider and, if appropriate, approve the award of all Contracts between the relevant thresholds at each Council.
- Waive the call for competition over the threshold agreed for a Head of Service at each Council up to the relevant EU threshold for goods, services and works.

The terms of reference of the Joint PSG Strategy Group are to:

- Review and monitor the Joint Procurement Action Plan
- To monitor and advise on the Councils' delivery of value for money and sustainable outcomes through its procurement strategy, action plan and annual work programme;
- To closely monitor and introduce initiatives to meet the requirements of the Localism Bill;
- Perform a strategic and scrutiny role in relation to the Councils' commissioning programme and all matters relating to the Councils' contracting policy;
- Provide a forum for Project Officers to discuss policy development, seek strategic advice and raise questions, issues and problems with contract policy;
- Define and spread best-practice as it relates to contracting and contract management and monitoring;
- Provide advice to Officers as appropriate on contracting issues;
- To monitor the impact and advise Members and the Shared Chief Executive on the need for any revision to the Contract Procedure Rules (CPR), including changes to financial thresholds.

6.3 Directors

- Oversee procurement activity within their Directorate;
- Ensure the requirements of the CPR are upheld at all times; and

6.4 Heads of Service

- Ensure there is sufficient budget available for the works, services and/or supplies to be acquired by their Project Officer;
- Ensure that the procurement proceeds in all respects in conformity with the CPR;
- Authorise procurement projects and Contract awards affecting their service within their responsibility threshold;
- Record on the Council's Contracts Register the detail of all Contracts exceeding £10,000 that are awarded in connection with their service area;
- Manage all Contracts within their service area;
- Waive the call for competition as per the procedures at each Council below the agreed threshold;
- Sign Contracts within their responsibility threshold on the Council's behalf;
- Produce half yearly Contract management reports to the Joint PSG Strategy Group

- Review, in conjunction with the Corporate Procurement Manager, any Approved Supplier List created by the Council for their service area in accordance with section 26 of the CPR.

6.5 Officers Responsible for Procurement Projects

- Plan and co-ordinate specific procurement projects;
- Obtain all necessary authorisations (whether from their Head of Service, the Joint PSG Core Group or the Cabinet/Executive) prior to progressing any stage of a procurement project;
- Draw up or revise tender specifications with the support of the assigned procurement officer
- Ensure the Contract forms chosen for use in connection with the procurement are appropriate for their intended purpose;
- Collate and assemble all tender documentation;
- Undertake competitive processes, particularly bid evaluations, in such a way as to ensure all bidders are treated fairly and equally;
- Prepare reports to the Executive, the Joint PSG Core Group, the Joint PSG Strategy Group or Service Heads as appropriate;
- Ensure all necessary permissions are concluded before their Contract begins;
- Administer and monitor their Contracts on a day to day basis to ensure compliance with the specified standards;
- Ensure prompt payment to suppliers for work done to the required standard so as to further the Council's Economic Development Strategy objectives;
- Ensure on a bi-monthly basis that information held on the Contracts Register is fully up-to-date; and
- Manage and maintain any Approved Supplier List created by the Council for their service area in conjunction with the joint Corporate Procurement Manager.

6.6 Joint Procurement Team

- The key role of the joint procurement team is to work in co-operation with departments to ensure value for money (right time, place, quantity, quality and price) procurement practice – from options appraisal right through to the completion of the contract life cycle – is being exercised by departments and to support them as necessary to promote best practice in line with the Contract Procedure Rules. Essential to the success of this objective is the rigorous monitoring of an audit and compliance plan to enable contracts to be established for relevant aspects of the business and recorded on the corporate contracts register.
- The scope of the joint procurement team within the Councils has been clearly defined as 'gamekeeper' for the Councils Contract Procedure Rules, the provider of tender and contract management assistance and advice and the manager of the corporate contracts register, ensuring that professional procurement processes are followed and recognised and a consistent approach applied to all projects.
- The joint procurement team provides leadership and has already developed a good track record of managing successful procurement projects across both Councils.
- The team will provide savings and a robust contract management process that requires further embedding across all service areas.

7. How will we know how we are doing?

7.1 The Procurement Manager reports to the Head of Finance and Procurement on a regular basis on the following:

- Progress against the targets set out in the procurement strategy and action plan;
- Opportunities for major collaborative ventures;
- Reports on specific procurement exercises.

The joint procurement team seeks feedback from our internal and external customers on a project by project basis.

The joint procurement team undertakes benchmarking against expenditure by other local authorities and public bodies to evidence value for money within all contracts.

The Joint Procurement Steering Group will oversee the implementation of this procurement strategy and the delivery of the action plan.

The Joint Procurement Steering Group will meet quarterly and be responsible for the achievement of the corporate efficiency and savings targets; to programme manage projects especially the large savings areas; to identify non-contract spend and schedule actions on the procurement plan, and to undertake a scrutiny role to ensure that contracts are effectively managed and to ensure that projected savings are monitored and delivered.

Each Council has a member champion for procurement whose role is to:

- Promote procurement at a Joint Management Team level and raise the profile of procurement with members;
- Receive quarterly updates of the procurement action plan to monitor progress on its implementation;
- Make recommendations to the Joint Management Team for changes in strategy, policy or corporate resources.

Key Performance Indicators

The Council will report quarterly on the three indicators listed below:

KPI 1 – Savings

Procurement cashable savings target of £100,000 for South Northamptonshire Council and £150,000 for Cherwell District Council. Target 25% of target achieved per quarter.

KPI 2 - Action plan on track

Traffic light report on each action published in the Action Plan. Target 80% of actions on track.

KPI 3 - Customer Satisfaction

Percentage of customers satisfied or very satisfied with the procurement service received. Target 80%+. The joint procurement team will be base lined via a customer satisfaction survey in June 2012 and will then be measured annually.

8. Action plan and timescales

8.1 Embed the use of the Joint Procurement Strategy objectives across the Council and ensure good governance and full compliance		
Action	Lead	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption by both Councils of a common set of Contract Procedure Rules 	Head of Law & Governance	Q1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rollout and reinforce the strategy and compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules to JMT via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quarterly presentations to JMT, highlighting key areas requiring focus; bi-annual 1-2-1's with HoS focusing on service specific projects and issues arising. 	Procurement Manager	Q2 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement Manager 	Procurement Manager	Q3 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the role of Procurement Champions across both Councils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create and publicise clear terms of reference; undertake a gap analysis exercise to better understand training needs across both Councils; consider workshops, case studies and e-learning; evaluate relevance and cost of industry recognised qualifications; implement feedback questionnaires to further develop training. 	Procurement Manager	Q3 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce the importance of the Contract Procedure Rules to officers across both Councils via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> publicity on intranets; quarterly attendance by a procurement representative at DMTs on the job training on a project by project basis 	All procurement officers	Q1 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the scrutiny and policy development role of the Procurement Steering Group Strategy Group. 	Head of Finance and Procurement	Q2 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and publish KPIs. 	Procurement Manager	Onward going

8.2 Sustainability		
Action	Lead	Focus
<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. 	All procurement officers	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness, train and encourage buyers to review their consumption of goods and services, reduce usage and adopt more environmentally friendly alternative products. 	All procurement officers	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure sustainability is addressed with each procurement exercise by utilising the sustainability questions within the stakeholder questionnaires and encouraging sustainability to be included within evaluation criteria as well as the assessment/pre-qualification stages. 	All procurement officers	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Sustainable Procurement Strategy with the market place via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-tender market engagement exercises; Working with the council supplier workshops; Including a copy of the policy with all quotation and tender exercises. 	All procurement officers	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage project officers to break down larger contracts to match SME and Social Enterprise capacity where appropriate. 	All procurement officers	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the inclusion of sustainability factors within contract management key performance indicators. 	All procurement officers	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make provision for the collection of cost benefit data for sustainable solutions put in place. 	All procurement officers	Q4

8.3 Value for money and transparency		
Action	Lead	Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver significant cost and efficiency savings; Cherwell District Council - £150,000 target and South Northamptonshire £100,000 target. • Monitor off contract and expenditure approved without an order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promoting benefits of correct purchasing sequence; ○ Challenging habitual offenders by escalating within Finance. • Ensure clear visibility and procedures for all procurement exercises with data published on corporate websites. • Ensure corporate websites make it easier for local businesses to trade with us: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop use of engagement forums for all relevant projects ○ Seek and record feedback from local businesses • Track expenditures with local businesses and SME`s. 	<p>All procurement officers</p> <p>All procurement officers</p> <p>Procurement Manager</p> <p>Procurement Manager</p> <p>All procurement officers</p>	

8.6 Collaboration, Selling and Marketing		
Action	Lead	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share forward plans with councils across Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and identify opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration to provide further savings from economies of scale; Providing procurement services to councils for a fee. 	Procurement Manager	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report back quarterly on collaborative exercises and services provided to other councils, confirming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings achieved or revenue received; Lessons learnt. 	Procurement Manager	Q1 to Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote existing contracts open to other authorities which can be sold on in 2012/13: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report back quarterly on progress and any additional savings or discounts achieved for either Council 	All procurement officers	Q1 to Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market procurement services to other public sector bodies including Parish and Town Councils and schools. 	Procurement Manager	Q2 to Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop further strategic links with procurement partners to share best practice, reduce duplication and administration costs and release additional savings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfordshire Procurement Hub Strategic Procurement Partnership for Oxfordshire (SPPO) Northamptonshire Procurement Network Group Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Procurement Partnership (MKOB) East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE) 	All procurement officers	Onward going

8.7 Develop the corporate contract management methodology and promote across all service areas		
Action	Lead	Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a Council wide register of all contracts/agreements for all term contracts with a lifetime value of more than £10K: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alert responsible procurement officer and service three months ahead of annual reviews; ○ Alert responsible procurement officer and service in sufficiently ahead of extension options to allow re-tender if required; ○ Identify contract renewals in ample time for adding to the forward plan; 	All procurement officers	Onward going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a high line quarterly report on contract performance including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional savings; ○ Lessons learnt to be shared. 	All procurement officers	Q1 to Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollout the Contracts Management Steering Group across both councils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agree membership and Terms of Reference; ○ Implement contract management template for all contracts on the contracts register in phases throughout the year; ○ Provide quarterly reviews on best practice for sharing with service areas via Intranet and other internal communications vehicles; ○ Develop a range of performance management criteria for a range of supplies and services contracts. 	Procurement Manager	Q3 Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other authorities over contract management training and best practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify service areas to deliver training to; ○ Implement training in phases. 	Procurement Manager	Q3 Q4 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an options appraisal on contract management software available and report back to the Joint PSG Strategy Group 	Procurement Officers	Q4

This page is intentionally left blank