



Annual Meeting of Council

Wednesday 17 May 2023

Members of Cherwell District Council,

The Annual Meeting of Council will be held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA on Wednesday 17 May 2023 at 6.30 pm, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

Tuesday 9 May 2023

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

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

3 Presentation of Certificate of Recognition to Cherwell District Council

Thames Valley Police Chief Superintendent, Emma Garside, will present a Certificate of Recognition to Cherwell District Council in recognition of the TVLF multi-agency response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, between February 2020 and May 2021.

The Chairman will receive the Certificate on behalf of the Council.

4 Communications (Pages 7 - 8)

To receive communications from the Chairman and/or the Leader of the Council.

5 Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/2024

6 Investiture of Chairman

7 Vote of Thanks to Immediate Past Chairman

8 Election of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/2024

9 Investiture of Vice-Chairman

10 Minutes of Council (Pages 9 - 30)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of Council held on 27 February 2023.

Council Business Reports

11 Annual Council Business Report 2023/2024 (Pages 31 - 38)

“” An addendum and the appendices to this report will be published as a supplement to the agenda **

Report of Chief Executive

Purpose of report

To note the results of the 4 May 2023 district elections and agree the governance arrangements for the council following the elections for the municipal year 2023/2024.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the results of the District Elections held on 4 May 2023.
- 1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders.
- 1.3 To appoint the Leader of the Council (if required).
- 1.4 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive portfolios for Municipal Year 2023/2024.
- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2.

- 1.6 To appoint members (and where required, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups (Appendix 3).
- 1.7 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.8 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.9 To appoint an Executive member representative and Executive member substitute to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 1.10 To appoint three non-Executive representatives to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member and an Executive member substitute to each of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Advisory Groups: Housing Advisory Group, Infrastructure Advisory Group, Environment Advisory Group and Planning Advisory Group (subject to approval by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership at its meeting of 13 June including confirmation of final title).
- 1.12 To appoint members to the Boundary Review Working Group.

12 Member Development Framework (Pages 39 - 52)

Report of Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance

Purpose of report

To consider and agree the Member Development Framework and note the Member Development Programme for 2023/24.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the Member Development Framework (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Note the Member Development Programme for 2023/2024 (Appendix 2).
- 1.3 Note that the Monitoring Officer/Assistant Director Law & Governance will regularly review and amend the Programme where necessary throughout the Municipal Year to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

13 Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee 2022/23 (Pages 53 - 64)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance

Purpose of report

This report presents the annual report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the contents of the Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23.

14 Urgent Business

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

FIRST MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

Appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

At the conclusion of the Council's proceedings all Members are asked to remain in their seats in the Council Chamber while Committees meet for the purpose of electing their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen.

The Monitoring Officer will ask the Members on each Committee to stand in turn and those Members are asked to stand (where able)/sit as appropriate:

- Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee
- Appeals Panel
- Budget Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Planning Committee
- Standards Committee

The Monitoring Officer will seek nominations for Chairman. Once appointed, the Chairman of each Committee will seek nominations for Vice-Chairman.

For information

Please note:

Members are advised that written questions and motions for the next scheduled Council meeting on Monday 17 July must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director Law and Governance, democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, by noon on Wednesday 5 July.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 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.

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 democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

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CHAIRMAN'S ATTENDANCE

28 February 2023 – 17 May 2023

Wednesday 1 March

The Chairman attended one of the Banbury Rotary Club Children's Spring Concerts which were held at St. Mary's Church in Banbury. After a lapse of 3 years due to Covid restrictions the concerts were organised again with 16 local schools performing over 3 nights. Over past years more than £95,000 has been raised for various children's charities with the proceeds from this year's concerts being donated to The Sunshine Centre, Helen & Douglas House and Children Seen and Heard.

Saturday 18 March

The Chairman and his wife attended the Banbury Mayor's Civic Dinner which was held at Banbury Town Hall. An auction was held with the money raised being donated to the Mayor's chosen charities – Katharine House Hospice, Frank Wise School and Helen & Douglas House.

Thursday 23 March

At the invitation of the Very Reverend Canon John Y Batthula, the Chairman joined members of the Catholic Community from in and around Bicester at a Thanksgiving Mass on the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Parish, the 70th Anniversary of the Guild of St. Stephen and the 60th Anniversary of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. The service was officiated by the Archbishop of Birmingham in the presence of past and present priests, as well as deacons and parishioners. The service was followed by a buffet supper at the St. John Paul II Centre in Bicester.

Friday 21 April

The Chairman and his wife attended the Chair of South Oxfordshire District Council's Charity Dinner which was held at the Red Lion in Chalgrove. The event was held to raise funds for the Chairman's charities – the River Thames Conservation Trust and First Steps Family Hubs in Chalgrove and Watlington.

Sunday 23 April

The Chairman attended a St. George's Day lunch at Denis Mediterranean Restaurant in Bicester which was raising funds for the Mayor's charities – Nai House, Heyford and Bicester Veterans and Causeway Carers Bicester Rethink Group.

***Sunday 7 May**

The Chairman and his wife attended Bicester Town Council's Church Service at St. Edberg's Church in Bicester to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.

***Tuesday 9 May**

The Chairman, in recognition of past service, was nominated to attend one of the LGA Royal Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace. As this event is due to be attended on the date of agenda publication, the Chairman will give a short verbal update at the meeting.

***Monday 15 May**

The Chairman attended Bicester Town Council's Annual Meeting and Mayor Making incorporating the presentations for the Good Citizen Awards and Grant AID which was held at the John Paul II Centre in Bicester.

Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 27 February 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Les Sibley (Chairman)
Councillor Jason Slaymaker (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Hannah Banfield
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Hugo Brown
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Ian Corkin
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Angus Patrick
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Eddie Reeves
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Katherine Tyson
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Amanda Watkins
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Richard Mould

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law, Governance & Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer
Lynsey Parkinson, Finance Business Partner – Corporate
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus

61 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

62 **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers to the meeting.

63 **Communications**

Councillor Cotter

Councillor Cotter's apologies had been reported to the meeting. Due to illness, with the support of his Group Leader Councillor Tyson, Councillor Cotter had asked that Council agree a dispensation from attending meetings until the May elections.

Council agreed the dispensation request. On behalf of Council, the Chairman extended best wishes to Councillor Cotter.

Committee Membership Change

The Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Wood, advised Council of a Conservative Group committee membership changes. Councillors Dallimore

and Williams had switched as named and full Committee member on Planning Committee.

Chairman's Engagements

A copy of the events attended by the Chairman was published with the agenda.

Chairman's Afternoon Tea

The Chairman reported that his Charity Afternoon Tea was held on Sunday 18 February and thanked everyone who had attended and donated. It was a very successful event with funds raised going to Alexandra House of Joy, the charity he was supporting during his term as Chairman.

Meeting Length

The Chairman referred to the email that had been sent all Councillors from the Monitoring Officer. It was the responsibility of all Councillors to ensure that the district council sets a lawful budget by 11 March. This was therefore the most important item on our agenda this evening and I will be ensuring that we allow enough time to debate the budget.

Due to the length of the agenda, out of courtesy to other Members, the Chairman asked Members to remain in their seat during items and advised, if needed, he would adjourn the meeting to allow for a comfort break at a suitable point.

Members' Pigeon Holes

Members were reminded to check their pigeon hole and take any post.

Resolved

- (1) That a dispensation to the date of the local elections, 4 May 2023, be granted to Councillor Cotter.
- (2) That the Conservative Group amendments to the Planning Committee membership be noted:
 - Councillor Dallimore: from named substitute to full Committee member
 - Councillor Williams: from full Committee member to named substitute

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

65 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

66 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

67 **Minutes**

a) **Minutes of the Executive, Portfolio Holder Decisions and Executive Decisions made under Special Urgency**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive and Lead Member decisions as set out in the Minute Book be received and that it be noted that since the last meeting of Council on 18 December 2022, no decisions had been taken by the Executive which were not included in the 28 day notice.

b) **Minutes of Committees**

Resolved

That the minutes of Committees as set out in the Minute Book be received.

68 **Questions**

a) **Written Questions**

The Chairman advised Council that two written question, addressed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Wood, had been submitted with advance notice in accordance with the Constitution and had been published with the agenda. Responses to the questions had been published as a supplement to the agenda (and were an annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).

The first question was from Councillor Broad in relation to the Pan Regional Partnership (PRP).

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Broad queried the inclusion of the OxCam ARC in the budget papers when the PRP was changing. The Leader explained that the PRP was a bottom up entity and there was no longer a centralised strategic plan rather an ongoing willingness to work together. The new organisation was currently in shadow form and when it stood up in the summer, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider inviting the independent PRP Chair to attend one of their meetings.

The second question was from Councillor Middleton in relation to the 5 year housing land supply.

By way of a supplementary question and referring to the Leader's published response, Councillor Middleton queried if the new formula would be applied to

the Cherwell Local Plan 2040. The Leader highlighted that there was a difference between information for monitoring reports and local plan making and offered to arrange an officer response if Councillor Middleton wished to have any further clarification.

b) Questions to the Leader of the Council

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Cherry: Fly tipping at Harlech Close, Banbury

Councillor Cherry: Woodgreen Avenue car park lights

Councillor Watkins: Cars and bicycles using pedestrianised areas in Banbury Town Centre

Councillor Woodcock: One year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine and ongoing support by CDC

Councillor Pruden: Working with residents to build communities at Graven Hill

Councillor Mawer: Housing for Ukrainian refugees

Councillor Reynolds: Agenda length

Councillor Reynolds: Work from Home policy for Cherwell employees

Councillor Patrick: Lobbying central Government to support hybrid committee and parish meetings

c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes

There were no questions to Committee Chairman on the minutes of meetings.

69

Members' Allowances 2023/2024

The Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report to determine the levels of the allowances to be paid to Members for the forthcoming 2023/2024 financial year and proposed changes to the Members Allowance Scheme following the consideration of the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations be adopted and the following levels of allowances to be included in the 2023/2024 Members' Allowance Scheme be agreed:
 - That the Basic Allowance be increased by 2.75% in line with the agreed staff cost of living pay award for 2023/2024 & rounded up to give 12 equal payments.
 - Basic Allowance - £4836
 - That, a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chairman of the Council be introduced at the same rate as the basic allowance at £4704, backdated to 18 May 2022 (the date the current Council Chairman took up office) and that this replaces the current £2000 civic allowance and that this SRA be increased by 2.75%, in line

with the agreed staff cost of living pay award, for 2023/2024, rounded up, to give 12 equal payments.

- Chairman of the Council - £4836
- That the respective Leader and Deputy Leader Special Responsibility Allowances be combined with the Special Responsibility Allowance to Executive Members holding a portfolio, to become a single Special Responsibility Allowance for each role and it be noted that there is no change to the SRAs paid, rather the change ensures greater transparency.
- That Special Responsibility Allowances for the Leader, Deputy Leader, Executive Members holding a Portfolio, Leader of the Opposition, Chairman of Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee, Chairman of Budget Planning Committee, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chairman of Planning Committee be increased by 2.75%, in line with the agreed staff cost of living pay award, for 2023/2024, rounded up to give 12 equal payments.
 - Leader of the Council - £15,408
 - Deputy Leader of the Council - £9936
 - Executive Members Holding a Portfolio - £7188
 - Leader of the Opposition - £3324
 - Chairman of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee - £3996
 - Chairman of the Budget Planning Committee - £3996
 - Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - £3996
 - Chairman of the Planning Committee - £4788
- That the current arrangement for ad-hoc Special Responsibility Allowance payments to the Chairmen of the Licensing Committee, Personnel Committee and Standards Committee end and that fixed Special Responsibility Allowances be paid to reflect that these committees now have scheduled meetings (2 each for Licensing Committee and Standards Committee and 4 for Personnel Committee) and it be agreed that, as the fixed SRA was based on 2022/2023 allowance levels, the SRAs be increased by 2.75%, in line with the agreed staff cost of living pay award, for 2023/2024, rounded up, to give 12 equal payments.
 - Chairman of the Licensing Committee - £852
 - Chairman of the Personnel Committee - £1428
 - Chairman of the Standards Committee - £852
- That, as the Appeals Panel will continue to meet on an ad-hoc basis, there be no change to arrangements for Special Responsibility Allowance arrangements for the Appeals Panel Chairman, but the Allowance be increased by 2.75%, in line with the agreed staff cost of living pay award, for 2023/2024, rounded up, to give 12 equal payments:
 - Chairman of the Appeals Panel - £288 SRA plus £288 per meeting to a capped limit of £1728
- That a cap on the number of Special Responsibility Allowances paid to an individual councillor be introduced for the exceptional case that a councillor occupies two or more positions qualifying for an SRA, and that the limit be a maximum of two Special Responsibility Allowances be paid to one councillor at any one time.

- That the Co-optee and Independent Person Allowance be increased by 2.75%, in line with the agreed staff cost of living pay award, for 2023/2024, rounded up, to give 12 equal payments and that the roles be separated within the Members' Allowance Scheme:
 - Co-optee Allowance - £828
 - Independent Persons Allowance - £828
 - That Dependents' Carers' and Childcare Allowances remain at the current level, are paid on the basis of the actual costs incurred up to the maximum hourly rate set out below and to a maximum cap of 40 hours per month and are subject to the submission of receipts, with the restriction extended so neither allowance can be paid to a member of the claimant's household.
 - Childcare £10 per hour
 - Dependent relative care £20 per hour
 - That mileage remains at the current level in line with HMRC approved mileage rates and if any adjustments are implemented by HMRC then the revised rates should be applied to Members travel allowances at the date of implementation by HMRC.
 - Bicycles 20p per mile
 - Motorcycles 24p per mile
 - Motor vehicles 45p per mile
 - Electric or specialised vehicles 45p per mile
 - That there be no change to the subsistence allowances payable up to the maximum amount:
 - Breakfast allowance £6.02
 - Lunch allowance £8.31
 - Evening allowance £10.29
 - That Democratic Services continue to book overnight accommodation, if required.
 - That no change to the list of approved duties be made at this time but the Assistant Director Law and Governance be requested to seeks details from Members of attendance at Parish Council meetings as part of the next review of Members' Allowances for further consideration for potential inclusion in the list of approved duties.
 - That Non-Executive Director Allowances be increased by 2.75%, in line with the agreed staff cost of living pay award, for 2023/2024, rounded up, to give 12 equal payments and that expenses be paid at the same levels set out at (j), (k) and (l) above and costs recharged to the relevant company:
 - Non-Executive Directors Graven Hill Village Holding Company Limited - £4788
- (2) That the Assistant Director Law and Governance be authorised to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2023.
- (3) That the Assistant Director Law and Governance be authorised to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2022/2023) Scheme and to

publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

- (4) That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for its report and set a fee of £300 for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review and propose the same level of fee for any reviews carried out in 2023/2024 capped at a maximum of £1200 per person, which could be funded from existing budgets.

70 **Budget Setting for 2023/24 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy up to 2027/28**

Prior to consideration of the item, the Chairman advised that no amendments to the budget had been notified and the item would therefore be debated as published in the agenda. It was convention for the estimates to be taken as one integrated set of financial figures and it was not appropriate to debate the revenue and capital estimates and the Business Plan separately.

The Chairman reminded Members that the arrangements for debating the budget were set out in the meeting procedure rules. The proposer, when presenting the budget, and Group Leaders (or their nominated representative) when responding to the budget may speak for up to 10 minutes. All other speakers had a three minute time limit.

The Assistant Director of Finance (S151 Officer) submitted a report which was the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24 to 2027/28 and set out the Executive's proposed Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2023/24, medium term financial strategy to 2027/28, capital programme to 2027/28 and all supporting policies, strategies, and information.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Nell, paid tribute to the Assistant Director of Finance and the finance team who had worked hard on the budget process and submitted a balanced budget to Council against a difficult financial backdrop. Councillor Nell also thanked the Budget Planning Committee and Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee for their hard work supporting the budget setting and business plan process.

Having presented the report, Councillor Nell proposed the adoption of the Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2023/24, medium term financial strategy to 2027/28, capital programme to 2027/28 and all supporting policies, strategies and information. Councillor Wood seconded the proposal.

Councillor Hingley, on behalf of the Progressive Oxfordshire Group, addressed Council in response to the budget.

Councillor Woodcock, on behalf of the Labour Group, addressed Council in response to the budget.

Councillor Webster, on behalf of the Independent Group, addressed Council in response to the budget.

A recorded vote was taken, and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Hannah Banfield	Against
Councillor Andrew Beere	Against
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	Against
Councillor Nathan Bignell	For
Councillor Maurice Billington	For
Councillor John Broad	Abstain
Councillor Hugo Brown	For
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	Against
Councillor Patrick Clarke	For
Councillor Ian Corkin	For
Councillor Gemma Coton	Abstain
Councillor Andrew Crichton	Against
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	For
Councillor John Donaldson	For
Councillor Donna Ford	For
Councillor Ian Harwood	For
Councillor David Hingley	Abstain
Councillor Matt Hodgson	Against
Councillor Simon Holland	For
Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Fiona Mawson	Abstain
Councillor Ian Middleton	Abstain
Councillor Perran Moon	Against
Councillor Adam Nell	For
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	Against
Councillor Angus Patrick	Abstain
Councillor Lynn Pratt	For
Councillor Chris Pruden	Abstain
Councillor Eddie Reeves	For

Councillor George Reynolds	For
Councillor Dan Sames	For
Councillor Les Sibley	For
Councillor Jason Slaymaker	For
Councillor Katherine Tyson	Abstain
Councillor Dorothy Walker	Abstain
Councillor Amanda Watkins	Against
Councillor Douglas Webb	For
Councillor Fraser Webster	For
Councillor Bryn Williams	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For
Councillor Sean Woodcock	Against

Resolved

- (1) That, having due regard, the statutory report of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 25 report) be noted.
- (2) That the proposed Fees and Charges schedule for 2023/24 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved and it be noted that statutory notices would be placed where required.
- (3) That, having given due consideration, the Equality Impact Assessment of the Budget be noted.
- (4) That a pension fund prepayment for the years 2023/24 – 2025/26 of £5.7m be approved.
- (5) That the Business Plan and Annual Delivery Plan (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (6) That the net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2023, as set out in annexes to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (7) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2023/24, including the Savings Proposals, and Pressures, as set out in annexes to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (8) That an increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2023 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £148.50 per annum be agreed.
- (9) That, for long term empty properties, an additional Council Tax premium charge of 100 percent for properties empty for two years or

more, 200 percent for properties empty 5 years or more and 300 percent for properties empty 10 years or more be approved.

- (10) That the removal of the 25 percent discount currently available for 12 months to properties that are uninhabitable or undergoing structural repairs be approved.
- (11) That the Capital Bids 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2027/28 (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (12) That the Capital and Investment Strategy 2023/24 and revised 2022/23, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (13) That the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, including the Prudential Indicators, and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2023/24 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (14) That a minimum level of General Balances of £6m as supported in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (15) That the Reserves Policy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (16) That the medium-term reserves plan (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (17) That the Pay Policy Statement, as required by the Localism Act 2010, (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

71 **Adjournment of Council Meeting**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Wood, confirmed that he did not require Council to adjourn to allow Executive to meet discuss any issues arising from the budget.

72 **Calculating the amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24 and setting the Council Tax for 2023/24**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report to detail the calculations for the amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24 and the setting of Council Tax for 2023/24.

A recorded vote was taken, and Members voted as follows

Councillor Hannah Banfield	Abstain
Councillor Andrew Beere	Against

Councillor Rebecca Biegel	Against
Councillor Nathan Bignell	For
Councillor Maurice Billington	For
Councillor John Broad	For
Councillor Hugo Brown	For
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	Against
Councillor Patrick Clarke	For
Councillor Ian Corkin	For
Councillor Gemma Coton	For
Councillor Andrew Crichton	Against
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	For
Councillor John Donaldson	For
Councillor Donna Ford	For
Councillor Ian Harwood	For
Councillor David Hingley	Abstain
Councillor Matt Hodgson	Against
Councillor Simon Holland	For
Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Fiona Mawson	For
Councillor Ian Middleton	Abstain
Councillor Perran Moon	Against
Councillor Adam Nell	For
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	Against
Councillor Angus Patrick	For
Councillor Lynn Pratt	For
Councillor Chris Pruden	For
Councillor Eddie Reeves	For
Councillor George Reynolds	For
Councillor Dan Sames	For
Councillor Les Sibley	For
Councillor Jason Slaymaker	For
Councillor Katherine Tyson	For
Councillor Dorothy Walker	For

Councillor Amanda Watkins	Against
Councillor Douglas Webb	For
Councillor Fraser Webster	For
Councillor Bryn Williams	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For
Councillor Sean Woodcock	Against

Resolved

- (1) That it be noted that the Council Tax Base 2023/24 was determined at the Executive meeting held on 9 January 2023:
 - a) for the whole Council area as 58,184.30 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (“the 1992 Act”)]; and
 - b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the attached annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
- (2) That it be agreed that the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) be £8,640,369.
- (3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the 1992 Act:
 - a) £131,520,045 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the 1992 Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.
 - b) £116,837,989 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the 1992 Act.
 - c) £14,682,056 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the 1992 Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the 1992 Act).
 - d) £252.34 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (6(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).

- e) £6,041,687 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act as per the attached annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
- f) £148.50 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates.
- (4) That it be noted that for the year 2023/24, Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the 1992 Act, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:

Valuation Band	Oxfordshire County Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley
	£	£
A	1,156.02	170.85
B	1,348.69	199.33
C	1,541.36	227.80
D	1,734.03	256.28
E	2,119.37	313.23
F	2,504.71	370.18
G	2,890.05	427.13
H	3,468.06	512.56

- (5) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the 1992 Act, hereby sets the amounts shown in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2023/24 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
- (6) That the Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the 1992 Act.

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge 2023

The Chief Executive submitted a report to present the findings of and resulting activity in line with the council's Corporate Peer Challenge, which was carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA) in November 2022. The Corporate Peer Challenge had provided a very positive picture of the Council and had recognised the considerable achievement of responding to the covid

pandemic and decoupling its partnership from Oxfordshire County Council, during which service delivery for its residents was always at the centre of its decision making. The recommendations were all in line with current activity and provided a powerful base from which the organisation could move forward as a standalone and ambitious District Council – one that took pride in putting our residents and communities at the heart.

Resolved

- (1) That the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge report (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be endorsed.
- (2) That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the progress that has already been made towards the Peer Review recommendations, which are set out in the proposed Action Plan, be noted.

74

Updates to Constitution

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report which sought agreement to updates to the Constitution. The Constitution was the document by which, in accordance with the law, the Council exercised all its powers and duties. It was essential that it was reviewed to ensure it remained fit for purpose.

Following the decoupling from Oxfordshire County Council and implementation of the new senior management structure the Scheme of Delegation and Contract Rules of Procedure were identified as a priority for review and amendment and the action to do so was included in the Council's Annual Delivery Plan. There were also committee changes proposed.

Resolved

- (1) That the amendments to the Constitution in relation to the Officer Scheme of Delegation, Contract Procedure Rules, Personnel Committee terms of reference, Appeals Panel terms of reference, Shareholder Committee terms of reference and Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee terms of reference be agreed.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make the amendments to the Constitution, including a delegation to make textual amendments to address any inconsistencies or correct any cross-referencing errors arising from or as a consequence of the amendments (insofar as the Monitoring Officer does not already have such a delegation).

75

Revisions to the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy

The Assistant Director of Regulatory Services & Community Safety submitted a report which sought approval of revisions to the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy following public consultation.

The Council had a statutory duty to ensure the proper administration of taxi licensing legislation in the district. Taxi services were an important part of the local economy and therefore fulfilling this statutory duty contributed to the Council's priority to ensure the district had an enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres. The primary purpose of the licensing regime was to promote public safety and therefore the Council's work to licence taxi drivers, vehicles and operators also supported the commitment to work with partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. Further, the proposed revisions to the licensing policy included measures to reduce the carbon emissions of the taxi fleet in support of the council's commitment to protect the environment and to help achieve net zero targets.

Resolved

- (1) That the work undertaken to prepare a revised and updated Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy and the outcomes of the public consultation on that revised policy be noted.
- (2) That the revised Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy and supporting appendices (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

76

Appointment of Independent Persons to Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report to appoint Independent Persons to the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the membership of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee be amended to include two Independent Persons (non-voting).
- (2) That the appointment of Sarah Thompson as an Independent Person for a four year term expiring on the date of the February Council meeting in 2027 be endorsed and authority delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make the appointment.
- (3) That the appointment of Harry Lawson as an Independent Person for a four year term expiring on the date of the February Council meeting in 2027 be endorsed and authority delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make the appointment.
- (4) That it be noted that the appointment of Independent Persons may be renewable in 2027 for a further term of four years subject to the

Independent Persons wishing to continue in the role and Council agreeing the renewal of the appointment.

77 **Motions**

The Chairman advised that three motions had been submitted. No amendments to any of the motions had been submitted. In line with the Constitution, no amendments were now permitted.

Motion One: Children's health, wellbeing and access to educational provision

It was proposed by Councillor Reeves and seconded by Councillor Nell that the following motion be adopted.

"This Council notes with concern Oxfordshire County Council's decision to withdraw school bus services under its Spare Seats scheme without parental or wider public consultation.

Oxfordshire's Spare Seats programme has offered children a safe and affordable bus service to school for over 35 years, the scheme having largely been cost-neutral throughout its operation. Under the scheme, families are offered spare seats for their children on school buses taking children eligible for free home-to-school transport at reasonable cost.

Following a decision by Oxfordshire County Council, nearly 10 routes in predominantly rural areas are set to be cancelled from September 2023, with more set to follow as contracts are retendered. This decision will affect the 1-WA17 route serving the Warriner School and the 2-ML05 route to the Marlborough CoE School. Over the medium term, as many as 1,384 students could be affected.

Oxfordshire County Council has defended its decision on the basis that it has no legal obligation to operate the scheme, adding that its continuation:

"would incur a financial cost and reinforces children travelling to schools further away than their nearest school".

This Council strongly disagrees with this reinterpretation of what has been established policy and practice. For clarity, it does so on financial grounds as well as for reasons of personal choice, child safety and environmental protection.

This Council asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Leader and Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to urge them to reverse their decision as a matter of urgency."

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried with twenty-three votes for, nine against and ten abstentions.

Motion Two: Housing Affordability Mix

It was proposed by Councillor Middleton and seconded by Councillor Banfield that the following motion be adopted:

“Providing truly affordable housing is one of the highest priorities for this council. However, our policies currently mandate that only 30-35% of new housing should be designated affordable.

In contrast we have recently accepted Oxford City council’s affordability ratio of 50% for new housing built in Cherwell to meet their needs. It would seem equitable that we should give the same consideration to Cherwell families and residents who are also in desperate need of affordable housing in the district.

As the Cherwell 2040 Local Plan has now been further delayed and will be subject to revision, we have a timely opportunity to correct this imbalance and include an increase in our own affordability requirement for future housing developments within Cherwell. This will show our commitment to our own residents is as great as it is to those from the city.

This Council requests that the Executive consider including an affordable element of at least 50% within future housing developments and that this be included as a requirement in the emerging Local Plan 2040 along with a clear definition of what affordable housing encompasses.

We also request that the Leader writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to request that his department urgently commissions a review of both affordability criteria and guarantees of profit margins which allow developers to adjust affordability ratios based on Gross Development Values and Viability Assessments.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried with forty votes for, none against and two abstentions.

Motion Three: London Road Crossing, Bicester

It was proposed by Councillor Pruden and seconded by Councillor Coton that the following motion be adopted.

“The government recommitted in the 2022 Autumn Statement to the delivery of East West Rail (EWR). In 2021, EWR consulted on a series of proposals to address the fact that increased train frequency would, in due course, require the level crossing at London Road, Bicester, to be closed. The Chief Executive of EWR told a meeting of local elected representatives on 13 January that EWR would publish its proposals for the whole line by June.

This Council:

- Strongly supports East West Rail as it will increase opportunities for lower carbon
- travel and support sustainable growth and opportunity;

- Notes that the closure of the London Road would sever the road connection between the south-east of Bicester and the town centre;
- Believes that it must be a priority, working with Oxfordshire County Council and East West Rail, to find a sustainable, funded solution that continues to provide a suitable rail crossing for cars, cycles and pedestrians at or near London Road;
- Recognises that the next four months are critical to ensuring that this solution is adequately funded by EWR and national government, given that the new line is of national importance while the negative impact of closing London Road would fall on the local community in Bicester;
- Resolves to ask the Leader to write to the Chief Executive of East West Rail, stating this Council's support for a new railway crossing at or near London Road that is suitable for cars, cycles and pedestrians."

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was unanimously agreed.

Resolved

- (1) That the following motion be adopted:

"This Council notes with concern Oxfordshire County Council's decision to withdraw school bus services under its Spare Seats scheme without parental or wider public consultation.

Oxfordshire's Spare Seats programme has offered children a safe and affordable bus service to school for over 35 years, the scheme having largely been cost-neutral throughout its operation. Under the scheme, families are offered spare seats for their children on school buses taking children eligible for free home-to-school transport at reasonable cost.

Following a decision by Oxfordshire County Council, nearly 10 routes in predominantly rural areas are set to be cancelled from September 2023, with more set to follow as contracts are retendered. This decision will affect the 1-WA17 route serving the Warriner School and the 2-ML05 route to the Marlborough CoE School. Over the medium term, as many as 1,384 students could be affected.

Oxfordshire County Council has defended its decision on the basis that it has no legal obligation to operate the scheme, adding that its continuation:

"would incur a financial cost and reinforces children travelling to schools further away than their nearest school".

This Council strongly disagrees with this reinterpretation of what has been established policy and practice. For clarity, it does so on financial grounds as well as for reasons of personal choice, child safety and environmental protection.

This Council asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Leader and Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to urge them to reverse their decision as a matter of urgency.”

(2) That the following motion be adopted:

“Providing truly affordable housing is one of the highest priorities for this council. However, our policies currently mandate that only 30-35% of new housing should be designated affordable.

In contrast we have recently accepted Oxford City council’s affordability ratio of 50% for new housing built in Cherwell to meet their needs. It would seem equitable that we should give the same consideration to Cherwell families and residents who are also in desperate need of affordable housing in the district.

As the Cherwell 2040 Local Plan has now been further delayed and will be subject to revision, we have a timely opportunity to correct this imbalance and include an increase in our own affordability requirement for future housing developments within Cherwell. This will show our commitment to our own residents is as great as it is to those from the city.

This Council requests that the Executive consider including an affordable element of at least 50% within future housing developments and that this be included as a requirement in the emerging Local Plan 2040 along with a clear definition of what affordable housing encompasses.

We also request that the Leader writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to request that his department urgently commissions a review of both affordability criteria and guarantees of profit margins which allow developers to adjust affordability ratios based on Gross Development Values and Viability Assessments.”

(3) That the following motion be adopted:

“The government recommitted in the 2022 Autumn Statement to the delivery of East West Rail (EWR). In 2021, EWR consulted on a series of proposals to address the fact that increased train frequency would, in due course, require the level crossing at London Road, Bicester, to be closed. The Chief Executive of EWR told a meeting of local elected representatives on 13 January that EWR would publish its proposals for the whole line by June.

This Council:

- Strongly supports East West Rail as it will increase opportunities for lower carbon
- travel and support sustainable growth and opportunity;

- Notes that the closure of the London Road would sever the road connection between the south-east of Bicester and the town centre;
- Believes that it must be a priority, working with Oxfordshire County Council and East West Rail, to find a sustainable, funded solution that continues to provide a suitable rail crossing for cars, cycles and pedestrians at or near London Road;
- Recognises that the next four months are critical to ensuring that this solution is adequately funded by EWR and national government, given that the new line is of national importance while the negative impact of closing London Road would fall on the local community in Bicester;
- Resolves to ask the Leader to write to the Chief Executive of East West Rail, stating this Council's support for a new railway crossing at or near London Road that is suitable for cars, cycles and pedestrians."

78 **Chairman's Closing of the Meeting**

Prior to closing the meeting and having regard to the meeting being the last Full Council meeting prior to the 4 May local elections, the Chairman thanked all Councillors who may not be standing and extended best wishes to all Councillors seeking re-election.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Council

17 May 2023

Annual Council Business Report 2023/2024 [Addendum to report and Appendices to follow]

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To note the results of the 4 May 2023 district elections and agree the governance arrangements for the council following the elections for the municipal year 2023/2024.

1.0 Recommendations

** The recommendations are also included in the relevant section of the report **

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the results of the District Elections held on 4 May 2023.
- 1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders.
- 1.3 To appoint the Leader of the Council (if required).
- 1.4 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive portfolios for Municipal Year 2023/2024.
- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2.
- 1.6 To appoint members (and where required, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups (Appendix 3).
- 1.7 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.8 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.

- 1.9 To appoint an Executive member representative and Executive member substitute to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 1.10 To appoint three non-Executive representatives to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member and an Executive member substitute to each of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Advisory Groups: Housing Advisory Group, Infrastructure Advisory Group, Environment Advisory Group and Planning Advisory Group (subject to approval by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership at its meeting of 13 June including confirmation of final title).
- 1.12 To appoint members to the Boundary Review Working Group.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution requires that at the annual meeting, Council shall:
- Note the results of the District Elections, if held, and the constitution of Political Groups and Group Leaders and elect the Leader of the Council if required
 - Conduct any business concerning the establishment of and appointments to the Executive, including the appointment of Deputy Leader and the allocation of functions to Portfolio Holders
 - Conduct any business concerning the establishment of, and appointment to:
 - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - The Standards Committee
 - Such other Committees as the Council consider appropriate

3.0 Report Details

4 May 2023 District Election Results

- 3.1 Councillors were elected to district wards as set out below. All councillors will serve a four year term.

Ward	Elected	Party
Adderbury, Bloxham and Bodicote	Robert Pattenden	Liberal Democrats
Banbury Calthorpe and Easington	Lynne Parsons	Labour
Banbury Cross and Neithrop	Becky Clarke	Labour
Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown	Sean Woodcock	Labour & Co-operative
Banbury Hardwick	Besmira Brasha	Labour
Banbury Ruscote	Isabel Amelia Creed	Labour
Bicester East	Tom Beckett	Green

Bicester North and Caversfield	Simon Lytton	Liberal Democrats
Bicester South and Ambrosden	Nick Cotter	Liberal Democrats
Bicester West	Harry Knight	Independent – Bicester West Resident
Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton	Doug Webb	Conservative
Deddington	Andrew McHugh	Conservative
Fringford and Heyfords	Nigel Simpson	Conservative
Kidlington East	Ian Middleton	Green
Kidlington West	Lesley McLean	Liberal Democrat
Launton and Otmoor	Julian Nedelcu	Liberal Democrats

Recommendation

1.1 To note the results of the District Elections held on 4 May 2023.

Constitution of the Council and Constitution of Political Groups and Political Group Leaders

3.2 The current constitution of the Council (48 Members) is:

- 20 Conservative (41.67%)
- 12 Labour / Labour & Co-operative Party (25.00%)
- 10 Liberal Democrat (20.83%)
- 3 Independent (6.25%)
- 3 Green (6.25%)

3.3 Political Groups that have been formed will be notified to the Chief Executive. Where appointed by Political Groups, Group Leaders will also be notified. At the time of agenda publication, Political Groups had not been notified and will be published as an addendum.

Recommendation

1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders.

Leader of the Council

3.4 The appointment of the Leader of the Council is a Council function in accordance with provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended. The Leader of the Council comes from the majority political grouping.

3.5 In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended, the Leader of the Council, must be re-appointed every four years.

- 3.6 The Leader will hold office until:
- they resign from the office
 - they are suspended from being a Councillor under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 (although he may resume office at the end of the period of suspension)
 - the expiration of their term of office
 - they are no longer a councillor
 - they are removed from office by resolution of the council,
- 3.7 Following the 4 May 2023 elections, an addendum will be published advising once political discussions have concluded and Council will appoint a Leader, if required.
- 3.8 The Leader of the Council shall be the Chairman of the Executive and it is their responsibility to determine the size and membership of the Executive (providing the membership comprises between two and nine members, not including the Leader). The Leader shall also determine the remit of each portfolio. Council does not have any decision-making in this regard.
- 3.9 All executive functions are vested in the Leader and it is the Leader's responsibility to determine how such functions shall be delegated. This responsibility can be a simple re-affirmation of the existing delegation of executive functions to Executive, and Officers. The Council does not have any decision making role in this regard.

Recommendation

- 1.3 To appoint the Leader of the Council (if required).

Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive 2023/2024

- 3.10 The Leader of the Council will advise Council of their appointment of Deputy Leader and the Executive Portfolios for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

Recommendation

- 1.4 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive Portfolios for 2023/24.

Committee Appointments 2023/2024

- 3.11 The current constitution of the Council is set out at paragraph 3.2. The constitution of Political Groups will be published as an addendum to this report.
- 3.12 The Council is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to review the political balance on its committees on an annual basis. Appendix 1 summarises how the rules operate.
- 3.13 Appendix 2 (to follow) sets out the arithmetical product of the rules for the Council's committees. The figures in Appendix 2 show the adjustments which are necessary to achieve the balance across and within committees to comply with the rules.
- 3.14 There are currently no committees on which the allocation of seats are not subject to the political balance requirements.

- 3.15 Appendix 3 (to follow) sets out Group nominations to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the political balance requirements.

Recommendations

- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2.
- 1.6 To appoint members (and where required, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups (Appendix 3).

Appointment of Representatives

- 3.16 Council is asked to appoint a representative to the Oxfordshire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2023/2024. The representative cannot be a member of the Executive.
- 3.17 Council is asked to appoint a representative to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2023/2024.
- 3.18 Council is asked to appoint members as the council's representative (by precedent and custom across all Oxfordshire councils, the Leader) and named substitute (an Executive member) to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership for the municipal year 2023/2024.
- 3.19 Council is asked to appoint members to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel. The Scrutiny Panel comprises 18 councillors, three appointed annually by each constituent Council of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. Three non-Executive members should be appointed by each constituent council having regard to the council's own political balance. It is a requirement at Panel meetings that at least one member from each of the partners is in attendance for the meeting to be quorate.
- 3.20 The Future Oxfordshire Partnership has four advisory groups: Housing Advisory Group, Infrastructure Advisory Group, Environment Advisory Group and Planning Advisory Group *subject to approval by the 13 June Future Oxfordshire Group meeting including confirmation of final title. The membership of each Advisory Group includes an Executive member of each partner authority and an Executive member substitute. It is custom across Oxfordshire councils that the Executive member whose portfolio most closely fits the role of the group is appointed to the respective Advisory Group.

Recommendations

- 1.7 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.8 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.9 To appoint an Executive member representative and Executive member substitute to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

- 1.10 To appoint three non-Executive representatives to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member and an Executive member substitute to each of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Advisory Groups: Housing Advisory Group, Infrastructure Advisory Group, Environment Advisory Group and Planning Advisory Group (subject to approval by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership at its meeting of 13 June including confirmation of final title).

Boundary Review Working Group

- 3.21 Council established an informal Community Governance & Boundary Review Working Group at the time the district wide community governance review commenced. The remit of the working group includes agreeing responses on behalf of the Council on boundary reviews. Oxfordshire County Council is currently undergoing a boundary review and this Council will have an opportunity to comment on the proposals.
- 3.22 The Working Group is not subject to proportionality but does reflect the political make up of the council, whilst ensuring each Group has a representative.
- 1.12 To appoint members to the Boundary Review Working Group.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is required to note the results of the District Council elections, appoint a new Leader (if required), agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements and to agree the appointments to each of the Committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups.

5.0 Consultation

Group Leaders

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To amend the appointments. This is not recommended as nominations have been submitted by Group Leaders following consultation with their Groups and in accordance with the proportionality calculations.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer, 01295 221845

Michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 It is a legal requirement for Council to appoint a Leader, agree proportionality after an election and make appointments to committees. It is for the Council Leader to appoint the Deputy Leader and the other Executive members, and to allocate Lead Member responsibilities.

Comments checked by:

Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director Law & Governance

shiraz.sheikh@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.3 In ensuring the legal requirements are met risk to the authority is mitigated.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus,

shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

7.4 Appointments are made using the principles of proportionality as set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Section 15). Each Group appoints whomever it wishes to serve on a committee to fulfil its proportional entitlement.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus,

shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

None, this report is pursuant to a statutory requirement

Lead Councillor

None

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- (to follow) Appendix 1 – Local Government & Housing Act 1989 – Political Balance
- (to follow) Appendix 2 - Allocation of seats on committees subject to political balance requirements
- (to follow) Appendix 3 – Committee appointments

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager, 01295 221589,
natasha.clark@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Cherwell District Council

Council

17 May 2023

Member Development Framework

Report of Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance

This report is public

Purpose of report

To consider and agree the Member Development Framework and note the Member Development Programme for 2023/24.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the Member Development Framework (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Note the Member Development Programme for 2023/2024 (Appendix 2).
- 1.3 Note that the Monitoring Officer/Assistant Director Law & Governance will regularly review and amend the Programme where necessary throughout the Municipal Year to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The LGA Corporate Peer Review Report noted that “Cherwell District Council’s member development programme continues to be developed, it is recognised and appreciated by members. There is a positive focus on continuous improvement.”
- 2.2 Following elections, all Members, but particularly newly elected Members, are provided with an initial induction programme of training following the Election. A Programme of Member Development is also run in the remainder of the year to brief all Members on relevant current issues.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The Member Development Framework is attached at Appendix 1. It emphasises the purpose and importance of Member development, the approach and opportunities to support Members in gaining the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their various roles effectively.
- 3.2 The Member Development Programme 2023/24 is attached at Appendix 2. The programme includes the topics agreed as part of the 2023/24 meeting calendar by Council in October 2022. It includes key induction sessions that will be mandatory for newly elected Members, and are open to all Members to attend. Equally, as always, some development sessions remain mandatory for some or all Members.
- 3.3 The Political Group Leaders (PGL) met on 20 April 2023 and gave consideration to the Member Development Framework and the Programme for 2023/24. Group Leaders unanimously endorsed the Framework.
- 3.4 The Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance will regularly keep the Programme regularly reviewed and amend it where necessary to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This will ensure that the Programme retains flexibility with additional development sessions being added as and when a need is identified.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Council is recommended to agree the Member Development Framework and note the Programme. The Programme will be kept under review, training dates will be added and made available to Members as soon as possible.

5.0 Consultation

Corporate Leadership Team
Political Group Leaders

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to agree the Member Development Framework. This is not recommended as the Framework was endorsed by Political Group Leaders.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no budget implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, Michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance,
shiraz.sheik@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 7.3 Failing to put a Member Development programme in place potentially leaves elected Members unable to fulfil their electoral mandate and poor decision making and potential for challenge.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus, shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 7.5 The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. The Member Development Framework will be sensitive to the protected characteristics of the councillor cohort, and considerate of their diverse needs (e.g. making training sessions accessible). In addition, equality will continue to be one of the components of member training in order to ensure that the organisation fully understands its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus, shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Sustainability Implications

- 7.6 There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Jo Miskin, Climate Action Manager, jo.miskin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

Lead Councillor

N/A

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Member Development Framework
- Appendix 2 – Member Development Programme 2023/24

Background papers

None

Report Authors and contact details

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer – Scrutiny & Democratic Lead

Tel: 01295 221534,

Email: democracy@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Members' Development Framework

1. Strategic aims of the framework

1.1 This development framework aims to:

- promote the purpose and importance of councillor development and ensure buy-in from all councillors and officers.
- promote a positive and inclusive culture of learning, development and continual improvement.
- ensure the needs of councillors including individual learning styles are understood and catered for.
- provide a high quality and engaging programme of learning and development to ensure councillors can be effective and confident in their role.
- strengthen councillor-officer relationships.
- enhance democracy, participation and councillor diversity.
- celebrate achievements and impact.

2. Identifying training needs

2.1. The key roles and functions of councillors can be summarised as:

- policymaker
- community leader and networker
- community leader/representative/advocate
- ward representative
- Council representative
- decision-maker
- scrutiniser
- regulator
- spokesperson

2.2. Additional responsibilities of Portfolio Holders include:

- promoting the objectives and values of the Council
- ensuring the development of new policies
- providing guidance on budget and political priorities
- contributing to effective decision-making
- promoting reports and answering questions from other elected members and the public

3. How learning and development opportunities will be provided

3.1. The learning and development programme will aim to support councillors through the various stages of their political careers from induction through comprehensive ongoing learning and development.

- 3.2. Councillors will be required to attend learning events where these relate to the regulatory functions of the Council, such as planning and licensing matters (see section 6). They will be encouraged to attend other learning and development events to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- 3.3. All Councillors will be expected to attend mandatory development events on key topics as identified in the Member Development Programme. These may include sessions on:
 - Equalities and Diversity
 - Safeguarding
 - Mandatory Committee specific – Planning, Accounts, Audit & Risk
 - Committee specific – Scrutiny, Personnel
 - Local government finance
 - Code of Conduct (mandatory within 6 months of election/re-election)
 - Community engagement
 - Information Governance
 - Risk management
- 3.4. Additional learning events will be provided specifically for Portfolio Holders, Chairs and other councillors as appropriate. These may include:
 - Chairing meetings
 - Dealing with the Media
- 3.5. Councillors will be informed of forthcoming learning and development events by member updates.
- 3.6. Where practicable and appropriate, learning events will be recorded and evaluation feedback will be obtained.
- 3.7. Individual requests made by Councillors for specific development activities will be accommodated wherever possible, subject to the relevance to their role and utilising the training budget to maximise training opportunities for all councillors.
- 3.8. Requests for training should be made to the Democratic and Elections team. Approval of external training will be made by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the relevant Group Leader subject to budget. Copy of the course notes and feedback should be provided to Monitoring Officer after attending external training.

4. Induction

- 4.1. Induction will be provided for all new Councillors soon after the elections and attendance is mandatory for all new Councillors.
- 4.2. Induction will provide:

- the opportunity to meet with the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and key officers who will explain their roles within the Council
- an introduction to the Council's key strategies and priorities
- an outline of the policies and procedures of the Council
- information on the support and facilities available for Councillors
- an introduction to the Members' Code of Conduct and protocols

5. IT and mod.gov

- 5.1. Electronic communication, specifically through e-mail and the Council's website, is an essential medium for the efficient and effective delivery of services by the Council. Consequently, there is an increasing expectation that councillors will be proficient and confident in its use.
- 5.2. All councillors will be provided with laptops for use when conducting council business. Mobile phones are available on request for council business.
- 5.3. Dependent on their level of proficiency, councillors are expected to take advantage of the range of IT skills development courses provided by the Council.
- 5.4. The IT team will provide bespoke IT training to Councillors in small groups on request.
- 5.5. Specific training will be given to all councillors on using the mod.gov app, in order to limit the need for printed paper agendas and reports.

6. Regulatory and specialist learning

- 6.1. Members of those Committees with a regulatory role, such as Planning, Licensing and Standards, will be required to attend specialist training in these disciplines.
- 6.2. It is essential and mandatory that Councillors participate in these learning events in order to contribute to effective and lawful decision-making in these areas.

7. Councillor Briefings

- 7.1. The Council will continue to provide a comprehensive programme of briefings for all councillors covering a broad range of topics from policy issues through to specific service matters. These form an integral part of the Councillor development programme and all councillors will be expected to attend.
- 7.2. Priority will be given to subjects directly relevant to the Council's strategic themes.

- 7.3. Briefings will generally be undertaken by Council officers but partners and representatives of other organisations may be invited to address councillors from time to time.

8. External conferences and learning and development events

- 8.1. Attendance will normally be restricted to councillors with special responsibilities, requiring other specialist knowledge or skills which it is not cost-effective to provide in-house.
- 8.2. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, joint development events will be held with neighbouring authorities.

9. Resources

- 9.1 Each year the Council sets a budget and member training is included within that budget.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

- 10.1. The Councillor Development Framework will be reviewed and the outcome of learning and development events will be used to inform the future learning and development programme and the format and content of future events.

Member Development Programme 2023/2024

For the period May 2023 – August 2023

Topic and content	Date, time and venue / virtual / hybrid	Delivered by
Mandatory Sessions for New Members		
Welcome to Cherwell District Council Introduction to Local Government Introduction to Cherwell District Council Practical Information for newly elected councils Overview of departments and services The bigger picture - partnerships The CDC workforce and the assistance you can expect.	4pm – 5.30pm, Wednesday 17 May In person	Chief Executive CLT/ ELT
Surviving the first three months – what Members really need to know Part 1 – Constitution Basics Constitution Overview by section The Council's decision making structure – what each Committee does and how it operates Overview of meetings and what to expect at meetings The roles of back benchers and Executive Members Access to information (public and exempt/restricted papers)	4pm - 6pm, Monday 15 May Virtual	Monitoring Officer / Governance & Elections Manager
Surviving the first three months – what Members really need to know Part 2 – Meeting Procedures	6.30pm - 8.30pm, Monday 12 June Virtual	Monitoring Officer / Governance & Elections Manager

Topic and content	Date, time and venue / virtual / hybrid	Delivered by
Meeting and Council procedure rules Rules of debate Motions and amendments Questions at Full Council		
Introduction to Local Government Finance How the Council is funded and how performance is reported The Investment and Borrowing Strategy The Medium Term Financial Strategy The Capital Strategy The Revenue Budget	6.30pm - 8.30pm, Tuesday 6 June Virtual	S151 Officer
Introduction to the Council's Policy Framework This session will be led by the Performance and Insight Team and provide an overview of the council's key policies and strategies	To be scheduled	Performance and Insight Team
Mandatory Training for all Members		
IT Training session for all Members Training to be provided to all Members before collecting their IT equipment	By appointment	IT
Security and registration with the Information Commissioner An explanation of Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Information Security issues	To be scheduled	Data Protection Officer / Information Governance Manager
The Rules of Conduct and Standards Decision making and the law The Council's Constitution	6.30pm - 8.30pm, Monday 22 May Virtual	Monitoring Officer / Governance & Elections Manager

Topic and content	Date, time and venue / virtual / hybrid	Delivered by
The Code of Conduct including Social Media Protocol Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality		
Safeguarding - Everybody's business. Safeguarding for adults and children	6.30pm - 7.30pm, Thursday 20 July	Assistant Director Housing & Wellbeing
Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion	To be scheduled	Assistant Director Customer Focus
Committee Specific Training		
Mandatory Session for all Planning Committee Members and named subs (All Members welcome) (NB. It is mandatory for Planning Committee members and named subs to have attended Planning Committee training before attending a meeting)		
An introduction to the Planning Process The planning process and legislation Planning policy at the national level The role of Members and Officers The role of Ward Members and Executive Members How planning applications are dealt with Committee meetings, call ins, site visits Planning Appeals	10am – 12noon, Thursday 18 May Hybrid (Held after Annual Council on 17 May when Committee appointed and before 18 May Planning Committee meeting)	Planning and Legal
Mandatory Session for all Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Members (All Members Welcome) (NB. It is mandatory for Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee members to have attended Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee training before attending a meeting)		
The role and functions of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committees	6.30pm - 8.30pm, Tuesday 30 May Virtual	S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Chief Internal Auditor
Additional sessions on committee specific areas, e.g. Treasury Management will be scheduled after committee meetings	As per AARC meeting schedule	Topic dependent

Topic and content	Date, time and venue / virtual / hybrid	Delivered by
Overview and Scrutiny – mandatory session for Overview & Scrutiny Committee members (All Members welcome)		
The role and functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5.30pm - 7.15pm, Tuesday 23 May (the training is scheduled ahead of the first Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting at 7.30pm on 23 May) Hybrid	External trainer - CfGS
Effective Scrutiny and Challenge (Overview & Scrutiny Committee members only)	To be scheduled	External trainer - CfGS
Personnel Committee – mandatory session for Personnel Committee members (All Members welcome)		
The role and functions of the Personnel Committee	6.30pm - 7.15pm, Tuesday 13 June (the training is scheduled ahead of the first Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting at 7.30pm on 13 June) Hybrid	Assistant Director Human Resources
Licensing Committee - Mandatory Session for all Licensing Committee Members (All Members welcome) (NB. Licensing Sub-Committee membership is drawn from the membership of the parent company. Members must have attended Licensing Committee training to sit on a sub-committee)		
An introduction to the Licensing Process Overview of the Licensing Act 2003 Overview of the Gambling Act 2005 The Members' role and how Sub-Committees operate	To be scheduled	TBC - Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety / External
Appeals Panel - Mandatory Session for all Appeals Panel Members (All Members welcome)		
A guide to: HR disciplinary appeals (dismissal of employees) Statutory Officer disciplinary process	To be scheduled	Assistant Director Human Resources

Topic and content	Date, time and venue / virtual / hybrid	Delivered by
Chairing Skills – Mandatory Session for all Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs		
An effective meeting needs an effective Chair. This session will cover the key roles of the Chair, handling the meeting and handling conflict.	To be scheduled	TBC – external trainer
Non-Mandatory Session for all Members		
Bitesize briefings (all 45 mins and virtual)		
Waste Collection	6.30pm, Thursday 8 June	Assistant Director Environmental Services
Customer Services	6.30pm, Tuesday 20 June	Assistant Director Customer Focus & Customer Services Manager
Fleet Management	6.30pm, Thursday 22 June	Assistant Director Environmental Services
Landscape and Street Scene	6.30pm, Thursday 29 June	Assistant Environmental Services
Street Cleansing bitesize briefing	6.30pm, Thursday 29 June	Assistant Director Environmental Services
Revenues and Benefits	6.30pm, Monday 10 July	Assistant Director Finance & Revenues & Benefits Manager
Emergency Planning	6.30pm, Wednesday 12 July	Paul Mann, Emergency Planning Officer, Oxfordshire County Council
Wellbeing	6.30pm, Wednesday 19 July	Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
Housing	6.30pm, Thursday 20 July	Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing

Topic and content	Date, time and venue / virtual / hybrid	Delivered by
Digital training (making best use of ICT and accessing information)	TBC	IT
Procurement Rules	TBC	Monitoring Officer / Procurement Manager
Legal, Democratic & Elections	TBC	Monitoring Officer, Governance & Elections Manager, Head of Legal Services
LGA training		
<p>LGA Councillor workbooks www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbooks</p> <p>The LGA has produced various workbooks on different topics, including “Being an effective ward councillors”, “Handling Casework”, “Neighbourhood and community engagement”, “Stress management and personal resilience”, “Supporting residents with complex issues” and “Working with town and parish councils”.</p> <p>Members can access the workbooks at the link above and read / complete as they wish.</p>		
<p>LGA Webinars</p> <p>Members to visit www.local.gov.uk/events to access upcoming events. Details of free webinars that may be of interest to Members will be included in the Chief Executive’s weekly Member Update email.</p>		

Cherwell District Council

Council

17 May 2023

Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23

Report of Assistant Director of Finance

This report is public

Purpose of report

This report presents the annual report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the contents of the Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Annual Report contains information relating to the work of Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee during 2022/23.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Within recommended practice for Audit Committees (CIPFA, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – Audit Committees Practical Guidance 2022), the committee should report on an annual basis to Council on how the committee has discharged its responsibilities.
- 3.2 The Annual Report 2022/23 was approved at the March Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Council is invited to note the content of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23.

5.0 Consultation

None.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: No alternative options have been identified as this report is for information only.

7. Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845
michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director – Law, Governance & Democratic Services
shiraz.sheikh@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

There are no risk management issues arising directly from this report. Any arising risks will be managed through the service Operational Risk and escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when necessary.

Comments checked by:

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 01295 221556
Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

There are no equalities and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 01295 221556

Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Sustainability Implications

There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Jo Miskin, Climate Action Manager, 01295 221748,

jo.miskin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All wards are affected

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All corporate plan themes.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Donna Ford, Chair of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1: Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2022/23

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report

Report of the work of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee during 2022-23

Contents

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Role of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee	4
Key Activities	5

Annex

1. Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Functions (terms of reference)

Chair's Introduction

As the Chair I am very pleased to present this annual report which sets out the role of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee and summarises the work we have undertaken during the financial year 2022/23.

The Committee is a key component of the council's governance framework, providing independent support to ensure good governance and strong public financial management.

The Committee continues to be well supported by Officers, providing a high standard of reports and presentations. I would like to thank the Finance Team, Risk & Performance Team, Internal Audit and External Audit for their input.

I should like to take this opportunity to give my personal thanks to all the officers, my Vice Chairman Cllr Hugo Brown and without exception, all fellow Committee members who have contributed and supported the work of the Committee in such a meaningful and positive way throughout the past year.

COUNCILLOR DONNA FORD

Chair, Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

Role of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee operates in accordance with the “Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities” produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in 2022. The Committee complies with the CIPFA’s position statement. The Guidance defines the purpose of an Audit Committee as follows:

Audit committees are a key component of an authority’s governance framework. Their purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements. The committee’s role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance risk and control gives greater confidence to all those charged with governance that those arrangements are effective.

The committee has oversight of both internal and external audit together with the financial and governance reports, helping to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

The key functions of the Account’s Audit & Risk Committee are defined within its terms of reference, which is included within the council’s constitution.

How the Committee has discharged its responsibilities during 2022/23

Key AARC Activities	May 22	July 22	Sept 22	Nov 22	Jan 23	March 23
Financial Reporting						
2022/23 Accounting Policies						
Treasury Management update						
Capital and Investment Strategy 2023/24						
Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24						
Treasury Management Training						
Review of Support to Subsidiaries						
Internal Audit						
Annual Report of the Chief Internal Auditor 2021/22						
Internal Audit Strategy and Plan 2022/23						
Review of Internal Audit Reports and monitor of in-year progress						
Review of Internal Audit Charter and Quality Assurance Programme						
External Audit						
External Audit – Planning Report 2021/22						
External audit progress updates						
Governance & Risk Management						
Risk Management Report						
Approval of Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2021/22						
Annual Governance Statement – review of actions						
AARC – draft annual report						
Local Code of Corporate Governance						
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual report						
Regulatory Compliance Report						
Counter-Fraud						
Approval of Counter-Fraud Strategy and plan for 2022/23						
Counter-Fraud Plan update						
Counter-Fraud Training						

Our work in 2022/23

The key activities of the Committee are captured in the table above. In summary:

Financial Reporting

The Committee reviewed the proposed accounting policies for the 2022/23

statement of accounts and considered the external auditors progress update report on the audit of the accounts.

The Committee receives reports on Treasury Management throughout the year, exercising its stewardship role, including the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2021/22 and quarterly Treasury Management monitoring reports for 2022/23. Additionally, the Committee considered the draft Capital and Investment Strategy and the draft Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24. The Committee have provided effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies through receiving regular reports of activity, reviewing the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management. The Committee received Treasury Management training from its external treasury advisers.

The Committee was also kept updated on the support the Council provides to its subsidiary companies.

Internal Audit

The Committee approved the Internal Audit Strategy for 2022/23, including the annual audit plan.

The Committee receives regular progress reports from the Chief Internal Auditor, including summaries of the outcomes from Internal Audit work.

The Committee has continued to review, and monitor material weaknesses identified from the internal audit reports with Senior Managers attending to provide assurance on how the issues were being addressed. This has supported the implementation of the actions plans to deliver the required improvements in key areas for the Council.

The completion of the Internal Audit Plan and the annual statement of the Chief Internal Auditor is produced for the Committee at the end of the financial year. Based on the evidence of the reports presented to the Committee, the internal audit team continues to provide an effective challenge and therefore assurance on the key risk activities.

The Committee also met with the Chief Internal Auditor in a private session during November 2022 and are satisfied Internal Audit are free to carry out their duties without restrictions.

The Committee approves the Internal Audit Charter on an annual basis, this was approved at the July 2022 meeting.

External Audit

The Council's external auditors, Ernst and Young, attended some of the committee meetings during 2022/23, providing their work plan for the 2021/22 audit and a progress update in March 2023, along with any matters arising.

The Committee met with the external auditors in a private session in January 2023.

The Committee is satisfied that they are free to carry out their duties without restrictions. We are also assured that if identified they would bring any material issues to the attention of the Committee.

Governance & Risk Management

The Committee approved the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2021/22 to sit alongside the Council's 2021/22 accounts.

The Committee receives quarterly updates on risk management, considering the Leadership Risk Register element of the Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report.

Counter-Fraud

The Committee receives regular updates from the Counter Fraud Team on outcomes of investigations. The Committee plays a key role in monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's counter fraud arrangements.

Overall, the Council has a strong system of internal control, so as expected, there is very little fraud identified; however nationally statistics show that fraud is on the increase, so it is important that the Council remains vigilant.

Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee self-assessment 2023

At the end of 2022, CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy), issued updated guidelines and position statement to local authority audit committees. As part of those guidelines it is recommended that the committee undertake a regular self-assessment exercise against the recommended standards set out in the CIPFA 2022 guidelines. The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee met in February 2023 and completed the self-assessment of good practice, which included review of core knowledge and skills.

The self-assessment exercise concluded that the committee has a high degree of performance against good practice principles, that it is soundly based and has in place knowledge membership. The committee complies with the CIPFA position statement 2022 and has fulfilled its terms of reference and the key issues escalated during the year.

Where matters for improvement were identified, these have been captured within an action plan. The Chair of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee and the Assistant Director of Finance are overseeing the completion of the planned actions.

One of the key recommendations of the CIPFA 2022 guidance is that all audit committees within local authorities have two independent members. The Accounts,

Audit & Risk Committee had already identified this as a required action and reported to Council at the 27 February 2023 meeting that those two independent members have been appointed. The two new independent members attended their first meeting in March 2023.