

# Public Document Pack



**Cherwell**

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

**Committee: Executive**

**Date: Monday 6 June 2022**

**Time: 6.30 pm**

**Venue Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA**

## **Membership**

**Councillor Barry Wood  
(Chairman)**

Councillor Phil Chapman  
Councillor Nicholas Mawer  
Councillor Adam Nell  
Councillor Eddie Reeves

**Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman)**

Councillor Colin Clarke  
Councillor Richard Mould  
Councillor Lynn Pratt  
Councillor Dan Sames

## **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

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

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

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

**4. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2022.

**5. Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

## 6. Urgent Business

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

## 7. Executive Performance, Risk and Finance Report 2021-2022

\*\* Please note this report will follow as it is currently being reviewed and finalised \*\*

Report of Assistant Director of Finance and Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus

## 8. Oxfordshire Food Strategy (Pages 13 - 36)

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Services

### Purpose of report

To inform Members of the new Oxfordshire Food strategy and outline how Cherwell District Council will join with partners in its adoption and delivery.

### Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To endorse and commit to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy at Appendix 1.

## 9. Proposal to Introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester Town Centre (Pages 37 - 72)

Report of Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety

### Purpose of Report

A consultation was recently undertaken on a proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Bicester town centre. This report provides the Executive with the background to the proposal, a summary of the consultation undertaken and the feedback from key stakeholders and details of the potential scope of the Order. The paper provides the Executive with the opportunity to decide whether to introduce a PSPO in Bicester Town Centre.

The proposed PSPO will contribute towards the delivery of the council objective to “work with partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour” within the Healthy, Resilient and Engaged Communities priority. A reduction in anti-social behaviour in the town centre will also contribute towards the Enterprising Economy with Strong and Vibrant Local Centres priority. Tackling anti-social behaviour was also identified as one of the priorities for the council in the last residents survey.

### Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester town centre taking into consideration the outcomes of the public consultation and partner organisations' views.

## 10. **Fixed Penalty Notice Level for Cycling on the Pavement** (Pages 73 - 78)

Report of Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety

### **Purpose of report**

This report asks the Executive to agree the fixed penalty notice fine level for cycling on footpaths.

Action to prevent cycling on pavements will contribute towards the delivery of the council's objective to "work with partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour" within the Healthy, Resilient and Engaged Communities priority. It will also contribute towards the Enterprising Economy with Strong and Vibrant Local Centres priority. Tackling anti-social behaviour was also identified as one of the priorities for the council in the last residents survey.

### **Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To set the fixed penalty notice amount to be applied to the offence of cycling on a footpath at £50 to align with Thames Valley Police.

## 11. **Traffic Orders Bus Station & Cherwell Drive** (Pages 79 - 90)

Report of Assistant Director Environmental Services

### **Purpose of report**

To seek to introduce new Traffic Orders covering the Bus Station & a new car park at Cherwell Drive

### **Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the consultation on changing the traffic orders.
- 1.2 To approve changing the Traffic Orders at the Bus Station & the new Cherwell Drive car park while noting the objection from Stagecoach and response from the Council.

## 12. **Appointment of Outside Body Representatives, Member Champion and Shareholder Committee**

\*\* Please note this report will follow and it is currently being reviewed and finalised  
\*\*

**13. Notification of Urgent Action: Additional Restrictions Grants Policy - Grant payment levels** (Pages 91 - 96)

Report of the Assistant Director of Finance

**Purpose of report**

To inform the Executive of the urgent decision that was taken by the Chief Executive to finalise an additional grants policy in response to the Omicron variant in line with Government guidance.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to:

- 1.1 To note the decision that was taken by the Chief Executive on 8 March 2022 (Appendix 1).

**14. Notification of Decision taken by Chief Executive under Urgency Powers**  
(Pages 97 - 100)

Report of Assistant Director – Growth and Economy

**Purpose of report**

To inform the Executive of the decision taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive for the approval of delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and Economy, in consultation with the Council's s151 officer, to enter into new sales of leases; staircase of shared ownership leases; or resale of leases for residential properties in the Council's housing assets portfolio.

**Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive for the approval of delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and Economy, in consultation with the Council's s151 officer, to enter into new sales of leases; staircase of shared ownership leases; or resale of leases for residential properties in the Council's housing assets portfolio.

**15. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

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

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

No representations have been received from the public requesting that this item be considered in public.

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

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

**16. Notification of Decision taken by Chief Executive under Urgency Powers - Exempt Appendix (Pages 101 - 104)**

## **Information about this Agenda**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence should be notified to [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or 01295 221589 prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

### **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.

### **Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012**

This agenda constitutes the 5 day notice required by Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 in terms of the intention to consider an item of business in private.

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**Queries Regarding this Agenda**

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01295 221589

**Yvonne Rees**

**Chief Executive**

Published on Wednesday 25 May 2022

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 7 March 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair), Deputy Leader and Lead member for Customers and Transformation

Councillor Phil Chapman, Lead member for Leisure and Sport

Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning

Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Finance and Governance

Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing

Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property

Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green

Councillor Lucinda Wing, Lead Member for Housing

Present Virtually, no voting rights:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Also Present virtually:

Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive

Nathan Elvery, Chief Operating Officer

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer

David Peckford, Assistant Director: Planning and Development

Nicola Riley, Assistant Director - Wellbeing

Shahin Ismail, Interim Monitoring Officer

Robin Rogers, Programme Director COVID Response

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

## 106 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

108 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

109 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman (Vice-Chairman in the Chair) advised that Councillor Wood as Councillor Wood was joining the meeting virtually, he would not be proposing, seconding or voting on any item but could speak on items.

110 **Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Statement of Community Involvement**

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report which provided an update on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan and proposed an update to the Statement of Community Involvement. Once adopted, the Oxfordshire Plan would provide a high-level spatial framework to shape the future planning of the county up to 2050 and would sit alongside Local Plan Reviews and Neighbourhood Plans.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the adoption of the revised Oxfordshire Plan Statement of Community Involvement (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved and it be noted that the statement will be kept under regular review as the project continues.

**Reasons**

The Statement of Community Involvement outlines how the community and stakeholders will be consulted during the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan.

**Alternative options**

Option 1: Not to adopt the proposed Statement of Community Involvement. Officers consider the proposed Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to be robust and appropriate. An SCI is required to meet statutory requirements.

111 **COVID 19: Oxfordshire System Recovery and Renewal Framework**

The Chief Executive submitted a report to seek Executive support of the joint COVID Recovery and Renewal Framework.



## **Resolved**

- (1) That the Oxfordshire System Recovery and Renewal Framework (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be adopted as the key partnership document guiding joint programme planning beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic period.
- (2) That final revisions to the Oxfordshire System Recovery and Renewal Framework be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, as partnership organisations complete their engagement and decision-making processes.

## **Reasons**

Effective partnership working across Oxfordshire has been at the heart of the local system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the national and local picture improves, agreeing a joint approach for Recovery and Renewal will set overarching common ambitions for the issues and themes to be worked on together as organisations and the community learn from the pandemic. The framework aims to ensure that Cherwell and Oxfordshire are best placed to recover from the immediate impacts of the pandemic, to support the long-term renewal of communities and places, and enhance our joint impact on national and international challenges.

## **Alternative options**

Option 1: Do not adopt the joint framework. Rejected: working in partnership will support Cherwell District Council to deliver on its priorities, as set out in the Council's plan.

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## **Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing submitted a report to seek agreement to establish a new small grants scheme to enable communities across the Cherwell District to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. This would give communities in Cherwell sufficient time to get plans in place, including necessary approvals for road closures, temporary event notices and licences.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That a Platinum Jubilee budget to a maximum of £55,000 from reserves be established.
- (2) That the grant scheme and promotional measures be agreed and to authority to administer the grant scheme and enter the grant agreements be delegated as set out below:
  - Decision making: Applications will be assessed by the Healthy Communities Manager, and grant awards made by the Assistant

Director Wellbeing, in consultation with the Assistant Director Finance as the s.151 Officer, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing and Leader of the Council or his deputy.

- (3) That officers be requested work with colleagues from neighbouring authorities and the Lord Lieutenant's office to coordinate and join up support for communities planning celebrations.
- (4) That officers be requested to curate an online gallery of residents' photographs celebrating Cherwell over the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- (5) That officers be requested to promote the available local and national funding streams through a co-ordinated communications plan and dedicated webpage with links to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities information.

### **Reasons**

The proposed grant scheme will honour Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. It will encourage community cohesion and neighbourliness in Cherwell's parishes and urban communities.

### **Alternatives options**

Option 1: Consideration has been given to extending eligibility to informal neighbourhood groups. This has not been recommended because the money would be paid over to individuals rather than established, accountable organisations.

Option 2: Consideration has been given to restricting grants to events taking place on the Queen's official Jubilee weekend (02-05 June). Given the work involved in organising an event and the short lead-in times to apply for this grant, it is considered fairer to extend eligibility to events throughout the summer.

Option 3: Not to establish a grants scheme to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee has been rejected as Cherwell usually supports communities to participate in significant Royal events.

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### **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions as at the end of January 2022.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report be noted.
- (2) That the proposed changes in use of reserves as set out in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the revised fees and charge schedule as set out in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

### **Reasons**

This report provides an update on progress made during January 2022, to deliver the Council's priorities through reporting on Performance, Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the Financial Position. The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis. Executive is recommended to agree a change in the use of reserves in accordance with the Council's Reserves Policy and to agree the revised Con29 Fee for 2022/23 as set by Oxfordshire County Council.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2021-22 Business Plan. Regarding the monitoring aspects of the report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information. Regarding the recommendation to approve changes in use of reserves, members could choose not to reject the change of use, however, the request is in accordance with the Council's Reserves Policy and within existing budgets. If members chose not to agree to the changes in transfers to reserves then this would mean resource would need to be found for these projects separately in future years.

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### **Notification of Decisions taken by Chief Executive under Urgency Powers**

The Assistant Director – Growth and Economy and Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report to inform the Executive of two decisions taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive regarding (i) the approval of the adoption of the Additional Restrictions Grant policy 2022; and (ii) the defrayal of residual Additional Restrictions Grant funding to OxLEP.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive to approve the adoption of the Council's Additional Restrictions Grant policy 2022 be noted.
- (2) That the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive regarding the transfer of residual Additional Restrictions Grant funds to OxLEP be noted.

## **Reasons**

In line with the Constitution, this report is informing Executive of two decision which were taken by the Chief Executive under urgency powers.

## **Alternative options**

Option 1: Not to note the report. This is not recommended as the urgent action has been taken and it is a constitutional requirement for it to be reported to Executive

### 115 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### 116 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There being no questions on the exempt appendix, it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

### 117 **Notification of Decisions taken by Chief Executive under Urgency Powers - Exempt Appendix**

#### **Resolved**

(1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm

Chairman:

Date:

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

**6 June 2022**

## **Oxfordshire Food Strategy**

### **Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Services**

This report is public

#### **Purpose of report**

To inform Members of the new Oxfordshire Food strategy and outline how Cherwell District Council will join with partners in its adoption and delivery.

#### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To endorse and commit to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy at Appendix 1.

#### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 An Oxfordshire wide food strategy has been developed by Good Food Oxfordshire in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, City and District councils and representatives from Oxfordshire community sector groups. The strategy supports a broad range of Council priorities and strategies including wellbeing and access to healthy food, Recovery and Renewal, access to green space, addressing food poverty and tackling inequalities.
- 2.2 The strategy was commissioned during the height of the Covid pandemic as it quickly became apparent that food security and access to food became challenging. Local food banks saw a 3-4-fold increase, with a conservative estimate suggesting that around 6,000 people a week required support to access food.
- 2.3 Whilst the district community food networks have risen to this challenge, the ongoing cost of living increase means that there is still a need to build resilience into our local food systems to ensure better access to food and reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.4 The government published a National Food Strategy in July 2021 that made recommendations to government to address climate change, biodiversity loss, land use, dietary related illness, health inequalities, food security and trade. For local

government, it recommends that local authorities work with communities and partners to develop local food strategies to reduce health inequalities.

## **3.0 Report Details**

### **Developing the strategy**

- 3.1 The Oxfordshire Food Strategy has been developed by a multi-stakeholder partnership including county and district councils, community groups, local food producers and other major institutions. It has been developed to tackle the challenges of health and wellbeing; climate change and biodiversity; fair incomes and employment and a vibrant and sustainable food system. Part 1 of the strategy (attached as annex 1) seeks to identify priority areas for action, links to existing initiatives and policy and showcase examples of excellence that can be learnt from and built upon.
- 3.2 Public and stakeholder engagement led by Good Food Oxfordshire in developing the strategy initially took place during August – October 2021. This included consulting with relevant Councillors/officers and across Oxfordshire with County, District and City representation, farmers markets and producers and members of the public attending food related events. A detailed timeline of engagement events will be published on the Good Food Oxfordshire website.
- 3.3 As Cherwell District Council we will be one of the partner authorities looking to commit to the strategy working toward approving the strategy in the same democratic round as the other local authorities in the partnership.
- 3.4 To support the ambitions of the strategy, action plans will be developed in partnership in the summer of 2022 which will be tailored to meet the different needs of each city/district area and working in partnership with established community groups in each local area. Cherwell's action plan and how monies received would be spent will be prepared for approval in autumn 2022.
- 3.5 The action plan will link into a number of Cherwell's priorities, including:
  - Support and encourage active lifestyles and health and wellbeing.
  - Work with partners to address the causes of health inequality and deprivation.
  - Work towards our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.
  - Promote the green economy.
  - Support waste reduction, re-use and recycling.
  - Work with partners to support skills development and innovation.
  - Support our most vulnerable residents.
- 3.6 The Oxfordshire Food Strategy has been created in partnership because it is recognised that in order to address the challenges of food poverty, food supply, climate change and public health tipping points we need a whole system approach.
- 3.7 The strategy presents a vision which seeks to ensure that everyone in Oxfordshire can enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day through the following ambitions:

- a. Food justice: healthy and sustainable food is affordable and accessible to everyone
- b. Sustainable food economy: Local food businesses flourish, with more productions, more outlets, more employment, and better standards for workers
- c. Good food movement: more people can enjoy and engage with healthy, sustainable food and 'good food for everyone' is part of our culture
- d. Food for the planet: We waste less food and the food that we do produce, consume and waste has a less negative impact on the planet
- e. Sustainable supply chains: More locally produced, sustainable food is bought and consumed locally, and supply chains are more resilient
- f. Governance and strategy: Continue, evaluate, and strengthen existing initiatives. Build foundations for new initiatives. Establish enablers to manage and monitor progress.

### **Action Plan Development**

- 3.8 It is estimated that 8 – 10 % of all households in Oxfordshire experience food insecurity (Good Food Oxfordshire, 2021) and the ambitions within the strategy seek to address this by supporting more locally produced and sustainable food and enabling all residents the equal opportunity to access healthy food all year round, through education to minimise food waste or grow their own, and through accessing food banks or community larder schemes. There are longer term ambitions within the strategy to grow Oxfordshire's local food economy through local enterprises, local jobs, and local wealth generation.
- 3.9 As part of the strategy, an action plan is in development with responsibilities for all local councils to meet the ambitions. These actions are to be defined but will include communications and marketing, practical support such as identifying opportunities or providing access to green spaces for community gardens and to provide local business support to address food waste and explore locally sourced food options.
- 3.10 Whilst several actions will be completed as 'business as usual', there is a need to ensure that we can collectively deliver on our ambitions to address issues around cost of living and food poverty for all our residents across Cherwell. To facilitate this, the County Council will be proposing to allocate funding to all districts and city partners and to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to support delivery of our joint commitments and Cherwell's priorities.

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 Understand the benefits of an Oxfordshire food strategy, identify strategic priorities and build on what's already being done.
- 4.2 It is proposed that £65k of funding would be allocated from Oxfordshire County Council to be put towards delivery of actions that will directly impact accessibility to food that can be used internally or put towards community groups within the Cherwell district.

## 5.0 Consultation

Consultation completed August – October 2021 to develop the draft strategy as detailed in paragraph 3.2

## 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 endorse and commit to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy and continue only to be a member of the Cherwell Food Network. This however would go against the Cherwell Food Networks ambition to expand its work and impact in the district, becoming more joined up in the bigger picture of food and allowing it to grow alongside a Food Strategy for Oxfordshire. Improving food options for many residents and joining up actions with other partners to strengthen the system through reducing food waste, growing projects, and community action.

## 7.0 Implications

### Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Resources are imbedded in current plans and programmes, existing staff team will make the best use of County Council resources.

Comments checked by:

Kelly Wheeler - Finance Business Partner  
01295 221570 [Kelly.Wheeler@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:Kelly.Wheeler@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

### Legal Implications

- 7.2 No formal legal agreement will be in place to endorse and commit to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy

Comments checked by:

Shahin Ismail - Interim Monitoring Officer, [Shahin.Ismail@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Shahin.Ismail@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### Risk Implications

- 7.3 Not successfully delivering the developed action plan and ambition for Cherwell which has £65k funding attached. This could have a reputational risk if the Oxfordshire Food Strategy is not delivered.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling - Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus  
01295 221556 [Celia.Prado-Teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)



## **Equalities and Inclusion Implications**

- 7.4 The Oxfordshire strategy will be fully accessible and support all residents in Cherwell. An Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment is not required to be completed at this stage.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado–Teeling - Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus  
01295 221556 [Celia.Prado-Teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Sustainability Implications**

- 7.5 The Food Strategy will advance the council’s climate and sustainability commitments. The strategy will prioritise an action to embed healthy, sustainable local food principles and targets within institutional catering, link food to net zero targets, and promote accreditation schemes such as Food for Life, Fairtrade and Sustainable Restaurant Association.

Comments checked by:

Sandra Fisher-Martins - Programme Manager, Climate Action  
[Sandra.Fisher-Martins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.Fisher-Martins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **8.0 Decision Information**

### **Key Decision:**

**Financial Threshold Met: No**

**Community Impact Threshold Met: No**

### **Wards Affected**

All

### **Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

As outlined in paragraph 3.5

### **Lead Councillor**

N/A

## **Document Information**

### **Appendix number and title**

- Appendix 1 Draft Oxfordshire Food Strategy

### **Background papers**

None

**Reference documents**

National obesity prevention strategy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy/tackling-obesity-empowering-adults-and-children-to-live-healthier-lives>

**Report Author and contact details**

Jon Wild – Community Development Manager

01295 221716 [jon.wild@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:jon.wild@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)



**DRAFT**



# Oxfordshire Food Strategy

March 2022



Part 1



www.oxford.gov.uk



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



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# 1.

## Introduction

Building a healthy, fair and sustainable food system for Oxfordshire.



## Food is both the source of, and solution to, many of the problems we face today.



A vibrant and sustainable food system must be integral to our organisations, communities and culture in Oxfordshire so that we can tackle the challenges of health and wellbeing; climate change and biodiversity; fair incomes and employment.

Alongside environmental and health drivers, the stresses placed on our local communities and businesses through global events - COVID, Brexit, war in Ukraine, rising fuel, food and other living costs - have highlighted the fragility of our supply chains and the need to take action and re-evaluate the entire food system. This was recognised in the National Food Strategy in 2021, which also stressed the need for local areas to develop their own food strategies.

This local food strategy has been developed by a multi-stakeholder partnership including county and district councils, community groups, local food producers, retail and hospitality businesses and major institutions. It is a first step to draw together the many strands of work that are already happening across the county and to see them as a coherent whole. Part 1 of this strategy, presented here, identifies priority areas of action, links to existing initiatives and policy, and showcases some examples of excellence that we can learn from and build on. Part 2 will embed the strategy in existing programmes and plans, develop Food Action Plans for each District, initiate pilots and monitor and evaluate progress.

COP26 highlighted that 1.5 is still alive but we must act swiftly. Whilst much emphasis is placed on fossil fuels and

alternative energy sources, food systems currently account for 21-37% of total greenhouse gases and contribute to biodiversity loss (IPCC, 2019). Furthermore food poverty in Oxfordshire is real, and whilst COVID brought it to our attention it is not a new phenomenon: 9-14% of all households in Oxfordshire experience food insecurity, this equates to 62,000-96,000 people (Moretti et al 2021). Removing barriers and ensuring that everyone in Oxfordshire can access affordable, healthy food in ways that promote dignity, recognise diversity and celebrate our rich cultural heritage, are fundamental to this strategy. Alongside building vibrant, thriving communities, supporting our local food economy that provides local jobs that serve local communities' needs can be part of the solution. Oxfordshire's food economy accounts for 10% of jobs and in 2020 generated turnover of £2.2 billion or 10% of the local economy. We also know that "pound-for-pound money spent in the local food web supports three times the number of jobs as the equivalent spent in national grocery chains" (Willis, 2012).

The challenges to our environment along with diet related ill-health, food poverty and the cannot be addressed without redefining our food systems with a root and branch approach - from both a policy and a grassroots perspective. The time for action is now.



## Part 1: Developing Oxfordshire's Food Strategy

Understanding the strategic challenge of food in Oxfordshire in consultation with the Good Food Oxfordshire (GFO) network.

Defining the vision and strategic priorities, identifying the influencing factors and priority areas for action.

Building on what is already being done. How the strategy continues, evaluates and strengthens existing initiatives, and builds the foundations for new initiatives.

## Part 2: Implementing Oxfordshire's Food Strategy

Continue and strengthen existing programmes and campaigns

Embed actions to deliver these strategic priorities in existing policies and plans

Develop detailed Food Action Plans with each key stakeholder

Initiate foundation projects to build our knowledge base and inform detailed implementation plans for new initiatives



## Good Food Oxfordshire is a network of over 150 local organisations committed to a better food system for Oxfordshire.

Throughout this document we refer to "Good Food". What we mean by this is food that provides health and social benefits, contributes to thriving local economies and communities, enhances our natural resources and tackles climate change.

In other words: food that is good for people, good for community and good for the planet.



# 2.

## Oxfordshire's Food Challenge

Oxfordshire's food challenge was real, and it's got far worse.

Page 23



## Oxfordshire's food challenge was real, and now it's far worse.

Fair access to good quality, sustainably produced food is poor across Oxfordshire, and has been made worse by pressures of the last few years.

Alongside environmental and health drivers, the stresses placed on our local communities and businesses through global events - COVID, Brexit, war in Ukraine, rising fuel, food and other living costs - have highlighted the need to take

action and re-evaluate the entire food system. This was recognised in the National Food Strategy in 2021 which also stressed the need for local areas to develop their own food strategies.



# The Local Picture

Localised, sustainable food systems provide an opportunity to improve food security for vulnerable groups, meet Oxfordshire's climate and sustainability targets and improve food supply resilience.



## Food Poverty

9-14% of Oxfordshire's residents experience food insecurity. This is **62,00–96,000 people** (Moretti et al 2021\*)

In 2022, **6% cost of living rises** mean households face an average hit of **£1,200 to their incomes** forcing more people into 'heat or eat' dilemmas (Harari et al. 2022)



Cost of living rises disproportionately impacts lower income households. Fewer 'value' ranges and **price increases of up to 350%** in basic items (Monroe, 2022)

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## Health Crisis



**16.1% of children in Year 6 are obese**; children living in the most deprived areas are more than twice as likely to be obese than those living in least deprived areas.

Obesity rates in both Reception- aged and Year 6 children **increased by around 4.5% between 2019-20 and 2020-21**. Highest annual rise since the measurement programme began in 2006/7. (NCMP, 2021)

**56.3% of adults** in Oxfordshire are classified as overweight or obese\*\* (OCC & DDS, 2021)

People limited by health problems and disability are **5 x more likely** to experience food insecurity (Food Foundation, 2021)

## Climate Emergency

Food systems contribute **21-37% of greenhouse gas emissions** (IPCC, 2019)

Biodiversity of priority species **has fallen more than 70%** in the UK since 1970 (NFS, 2021)

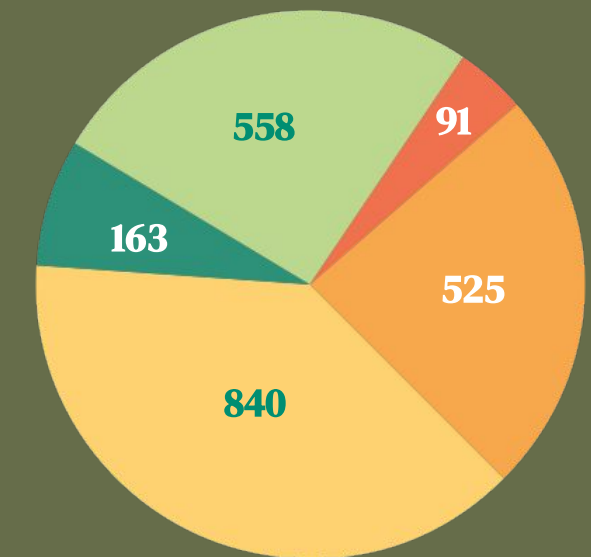


Research by GFO (2020) reported **the valuable contribution of small scale and community growing** to sustainable land management, food security, physical and mental health.

## Food Supply

**Oxfordshire's Food Economy**  
Turnover (£millions) by subsector (ONS, 2020)

- Agriculture
- Manufacture
- Wholesale
- Food Retail
- Services



In 2013, **51% of Oxford's food came from the UK, 33% came from the EU, and 15% was imported** from elsewhere in the world. Less than 1% was being sourced directly from a local source (Curtis, 2013).

**74% of Oxfordshire's land area is under agriculture**, mostly cereals, followed by livestock grazing

In 2020, Oxfordshire's local food economy contributed **£2.2 billion in turnover, supports 19,500 jobs and 2,970 enterprises** (ONS, 2022)





# Voices from Oxfordshire

We have listened to local people, groups and enterprises.



Through our Oxfordshire Community Insights Programme and through workshops, questionnaires and interviews with local residents, groups and businesses we have heard what matters to people about food and their current experiences.



## Snapshots and learnings



### Childhood Malnutrition: From Grassroots to Policy Action

Roundtable Event November 2021

#### Key Learnings:

(Nagraj et al 2022)

"Taking a whole systems approach to address the double burden of both underweight and overweight childhood malnutrition, involves recognition of the important overlap between the food system, education system and health system"

"breaking down artificial silos between sectors"

"need to trust their [grassroots organisations'] ability to understand the needs and priorities of the community"

### Interviews / survey of growers and producers

"Turnover [of workers] is very high....we need skills and mentoring programmes for apprentice growers ...places to live affordably in rural areas."

"Food margins being driven down every year....we need to value doing good and sustainability."

"Every person in the food chain doubles the price."

"Local markets build strong relationships and loyal customers."

### School Food Surveys and Workshop

May 2021

### and Workshop

March 2022

"We need to listen to children's voices -understanding why they sometimes avoid the food is powerful and can help with small changes."

Parents on school meals:"They try things they wouldn't at home then come back asking for it, it's fantastic."

"Too many chips according to my daughter."

"nobody needs meat every day, and for the price it can't be from sustainable and high welfare sources. It just destroys our planet and is irresponsible."

**Caterers** need to keep their businesses viable and struggle to balance children's preferences for unhealthy food with their ambitions to provide nutritious meals.

**Schools** have the ambition to improve school food but they lack the time, capacity and resources necessary to make a significant change.



## Key Events

September 2021  
**Good Food Procurement Webinar**  
20 attendees\*\* OSEP and GFO

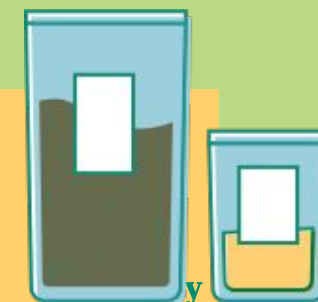
November 2021  
**Childhood Malnutrition Roundtable Event**  
33 attendees, representing community groups, schools, housing associations, councillors, council officers, academics and researchers\*

March 2022  
**Oxfordshire Schools Food Workshop**  
40+ attendees representing schools, councils, communities, caterers

April 2021 - ongoing  
**Healthy Weight Insights Programme**

To date...engaged 28 community partners Banbury Ruscote/Grimsbury, Blackbird Leys, Abingdon, Witney, Berinsfield. Conversations with children at target sites Listened to wider stakeholders at 3 workshops (146 people, 50 +organisations)

September 2021 - January 2022  
**GFO Research**  
11 locations, 100+ members of public interviewed 50+ individual stakeholder meetings held 75+ stakeholders engaged at 8 GFO events and network meetings



## Voices from Oxfordshire

### Chippy Larder

Visiting a local farm, engaging with growers and learning new skills, having your own chick and farm fresh eggs at an affordable price, makes the 'aspirational' accessible.

### Cherwell Collective

We need to return to a more symbiotic relationship between food systems and communities. By connecting people to their food, through growing and cooking, people learn the value of food and not just the price. This in turn helps to reduce food waste and improves health and wellbeing through a stronger sense of community and engagement with nature.

### Orange Bakery

"We love having a good relationship with our mill, our milk and our eggs... it makes all the difference"

### Community Insights

**Life is complex and chaotic:** "Many families tell us they have bigger issues to deal with than their child being a bit overweight"

Many people lack the **skills, capacity or resources** to cook and to change routines & habits "we don't plan, we live day to day"

Professionals can lack resources or skills to have **difficult conversations** about weight, food and wellbeing to **help people to achieve a healthy weight:** "it is easier to talk about death than to talk about their child being overweight"

### GFO Community Research

Over 90% of respondents (members of the public) emphasised the importance of buying local food - to support the local economy, reduce food miles and care for the environment.



# Workshops on food and climate identified common themes and links across health, supply, waste and poverty.



Access to land for food production in Oxfordshire - much of the UK's fruit and vegetable supply comes from a small number of growing areas in Europe.



More veg and less and better meat reduce climate emissions, support sustainable farming practices and better animal welfare.



# 3.

## Vision and Strategic Priorities



## Ambitions to help deliver a collective vision

A coherent food strategy for all those involved with food in Oxfordshire can help push back against these pressures and deliver a vision in which: everyone in Oxfordshire can enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day.



# We have identified the following priority areas for action

Addressing these priorities will deliver the following outcomes.



## Tackle food poverty and diet-related ill health

### Priorities

Expand and strengthen existing services and programmes aimed at those at risk of food poverty, including Community Food Networks (foodbanks, larders and fridges), Healthy Start Vouchers, Holiday Activities and Food, adopting Healthy Place Shaping principles and a Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight.

### Outcomes

Everyone in Oxfordshire can access healthy food 365 days/ year without shame or stigma.

More eligible people access existing schemes that tackle health and nutrition inequality.

Uptake of available central government funding is maximised.

## Build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together

### Priorities

Support communities to grow, cook, learn and enjoy food together – promote campaigns and events that enable everyone to access healthy food, reduce food waste and encourage dietary choices that are good for health and for the planet.

### Outcomes

Stronger communities through sharing and participation in food-related activities.

More people can access knowledge and skills to support growing, cooking and better nutrition.

People make food choices that are better for health and the planet.

## Grow our local food economy through local enterprises, local jobs, local wealth generation

### Priorities

Focus on local enterprises that are driven by local needs, provide local employment and keep wealth local as part of a circular economy.

Use the power of Anchor Institutions (schools, hospitals, universities, businesses, etc) to procure locally and provide access to finance, infrastructure and skills. This is called a Community Wealth Building approach.

### Outcomes

More local food enterprises flourish.

Better livelihoods, skills and opportunities for local food workers.



## Strengthen short, transparent local food supply chains

### Priorities

Detailed scoping project to define the needs, options and roadmap for local supply chain solutions for Oxfordshire.

Use public and institutional procurement to provide scale and certainty for local sustainable producers.

Establish appropriate infrastructure to support the supply chain –e.g., local food processing hubs and dynamic procurement systems.

Work with landholders, existing producers and new farm entrants to increase access to land, infrastructure & skills to increase local production to meet local consumption patterns.

### Outcomes

Clear and robust understanding of the best solutions for Oxfordshire

More sustainable food is produced and processed locally for local consumption

Net zero goals are supported through sustainable food production and fewer food miles.

Consumers are more engaged and connected to the provenance of their food reinforcing healthier and more sustainable habits.



## Improve the health and sustainability of institutional catering

### Priorities

Embed healthy, sustainable local food principles and targets within institutional catering.

Link food to net zero targets and promote accreditation schemes such as Food for Life, Fairtrade, and Sustainable Restaurant Association.

### Outcomes

More people have access to healthy and sustainable food via local institutions.

The local food economy is supported by institutional procurement.

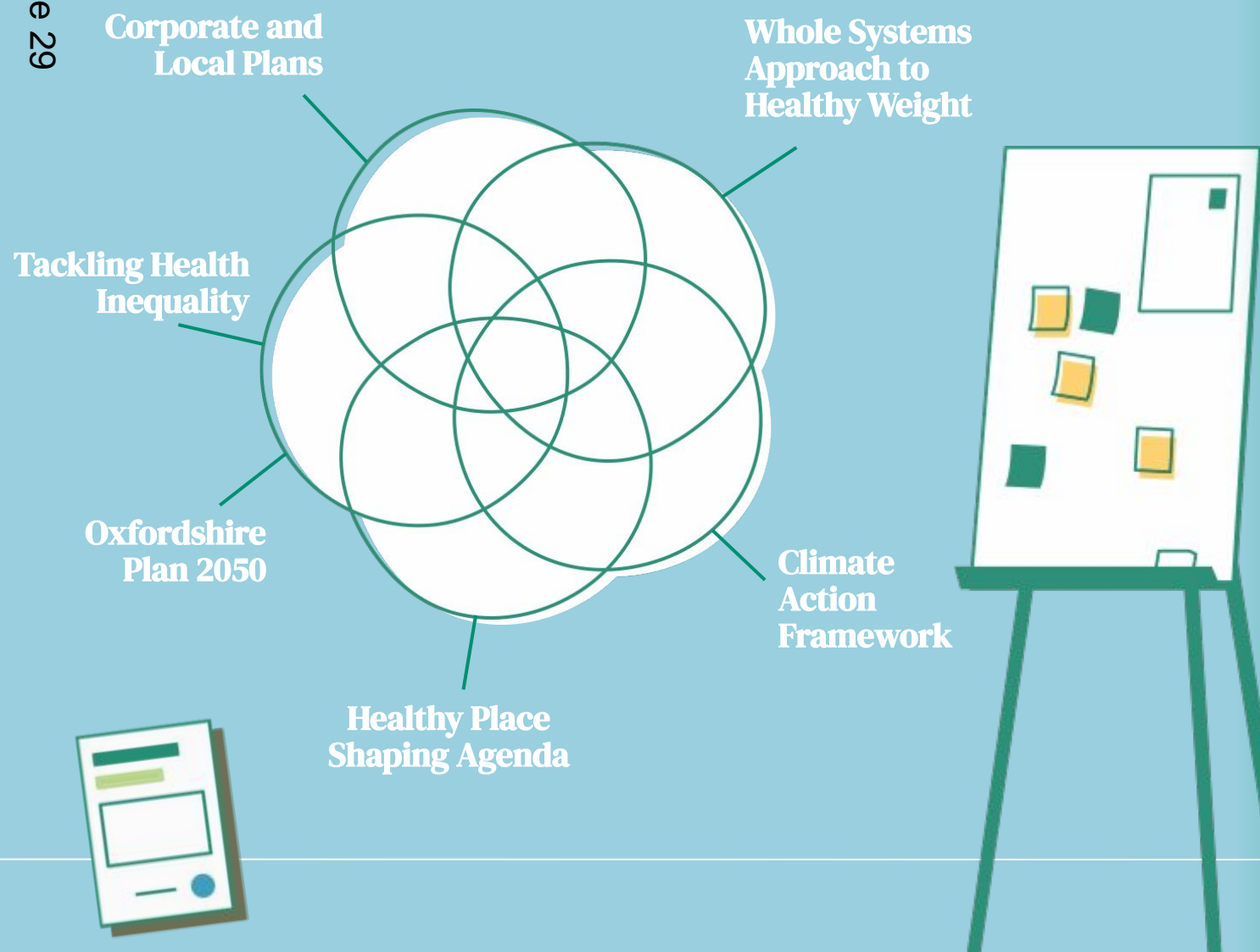
Institutions' scope 3 climate and sustainability targets are supported through better food practices.



# 4.

## Delivering the Outcomes

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**To achieve these ambitions we need to ensure that food is integrated within existing policy and programmes.**

Policy/ Programme	Synergies with Food Strategy
<b>Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to healthy food</li> <li>Awareness and promotion of a healthy diet</li> <li>A healthy start for families</li> <li>Planning healthy weight environments</li> <li>Tackling health inequalities</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy Place Shaping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20 minute neighbourhoods- access to healthy food</li> <li>Planning healthy weight environments</li> <li>Food systems central to healthy places – growing, buying, cooking, sharing</li> </ul>
<b>Tackling Health Inequality</b>	<p>Director of Public Health Report 2019/20: focus on areas of inequality where access to food and health outcomes such as higher rates of obesity in children, and life expectancy gaps, are usually worse than the Oxfordshire average.</p>
<b>Climate Action Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emissions and biodiversity: Food choices, production, handling and waste</li> <li>Scope 3 emissions – short, local supply chains</li> </ul>
<b>Oxfordshire Plan 2050</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Action Planning and Infrastructure</li> <li>Healthy Place Shaping to guide housing growth</li> <li>Land-use – local food production to support short, local supply chains</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate and local plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role of farming in climate, nature and economy</li> <li>Sustainable food businesses as part of Green Economy</li> <li>Inclusive communities – food as connector growing, cooking and sharing together</li> <li>Community health and wellbeing – access to affordable nutritious food</li> <li>Community action and engagement</li> <li>Access to spaces and infrastructure</li> </ul>



And ensure that flourishing campaigns and initiatives across Oxfordshire are supported and strengthened.

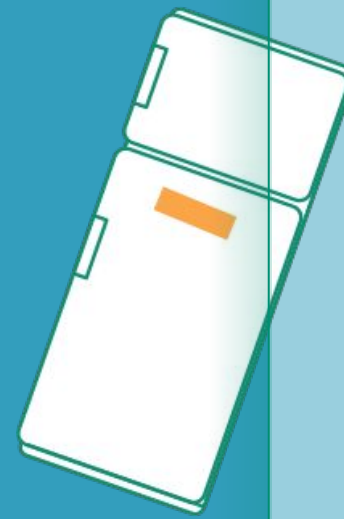
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Better Health Let's do this



# By showcasing examples of excellence we aim to celebrate success and show what is possible...



# ...as well as building foundations and developing new initiatives.



## Priority new areas to develop



**Work with schools, caterers and children to better understand the challenges of school food.** Work collaboratively on solutions to improve the health and sustainability of school food, that are impactful but achievable. This approach can also benefit the local food economy through institutional commitment to buying local, ethically and sustainably produced food. The learnings from the schools pilot can then be applied to other institutional settings – hospitals, social care.



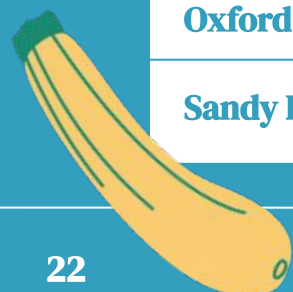
**Strengthen short transparent local food supply chains that improve resilience to external shocks and build our local food economy.** Work with local institutional buyers – including schools, universities, hospitals – to commit to increase local procurement. Work with local producers to increase local production to meet local demand. Establish the technology, infrastructure, processes and relationships to facilitate this.



**Support Community Wealth Building approaches to preventing food poverty, building resilient communities, developing skills, jobs and enterprises that retain wealth locally.** Councils and major institutions commit to being anchor organisations – increasing local procurement, making local assets available to local enterprises, championing local enterprise.



Case Study	Great example of...
<b>Chippy Larder and Bruern Farm</b>	Communities growing and sharing food together
<b>Salt Cross Garden Village</b>	Ambition to create better food environments in new development, navigating complex planning challenges
<b>Oxford City Council – Healthy Start</b>	Partnership working to increasing the uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers
<b>Swan School</b>	Improving the health and sustainability of school food
<b>Play:Full</b>	Community-led approaches to tackling holiday hunger
<b>Cherwell Collective</b>	Building solutions to food poverty and the climate crisis through community growing, cooking, sharing
<b>OX4 Food Crew</b>	Community Wealth Building – tackling food poverty, supporting resilience and community-led enterprise
<b>Abingdon Community Fridge</b>	Building community, tackling food poverty, reducing food waste
<b>The Wonky Food Company</b>	Sustainable Food Enterprise preventing food waste
<b>The Orange Bakery, Watlington</b>	Supporting local producers and providing employment for disadvantaged groups
<b>Oxford City Farm</b>	Community education and engagement in growing
<b>Sandy Lane Farm</b>	Organic and regenerative agriculture



# Examples of excellence from Oxfordshire

## Chippy Larder and Bruern Farm

Promoting dignity, affordable access to good food and community growing.



the chippy larder

I set up The Chippy Larder to redress the imbalance in my community. We support families who are not only in food, fuel and educational deprivation but also at high risk of poor physical and mental health. To be surrounded by businesses offering high quality, nutritionally dense, locally produced food, that was and still is financially inaccessible to many is not acceptable.

The first step was to set up a hub that didn't stigmatise those in need, the key was to be inclusive so the whole community could benefit. The Community Larder model was a perfect fit - Chippy Larder is open to everyone providing access to affordable food and reducing food waste. Partnering with Bruern Farm we have set up the Chicky Larder - getting members outdoors and involved with growing. Visiting a local farm, engaging with growers and learning new skills, having your own chick and farm fresh eggs at an affordable price, makes the 'aspirational' accessible.

## Wonky Food Company

Reducing food waste - flourishing with support from OxLEP



The Wonky Food Company makes relishes from imperfect and surplus fruit and vegetables. Started in Oxfordshire in 2018, the business sells via the Midcounties Co-op and Ocado, as well as through a growing network of independent delis, farm shops and artisan food stores.

In 2022, it was accepted on to the Co-op's first national incubator scheme, focusing on small sustainable food and drink brands. The Wonky Food Company has benefited from local business support since its inception. It received start-up support via OxLEP and is now part of OxLEP's eScalate programme, a three-year European funded initiative supporting social enterprises, charities and purposeful businesses in Oxfordshire. "It's been such a fantastic programme to be part of", says founder Ashley Cavers. "We have benefitted from some great peer group and networking opportunities. It has also enabled us to build our knowledge in important areas such as impact measurement and raising investment.

## Community Wealth Building

From food poverty, to resilience and prevention

## OX4 FOOD CREW

OX4 Food Crew OX4 Food Crew (OX4FC) is a partnership of 9 organisations based in OX4 working with and for people experiencing food poverty which has been exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic. Founded in April 2020, we quickly responded to local needs by delivering nutritious cooked meals to people experiencing food insecurity in the local area. We are now developing the partnership to move beyond the emergency pandemic driven response, to include services which help to build community food resilience. These include free cooking for health and wellbeing courses for parents, well as 'Pay as you feel' community meals and incubator support for food social enterprises including Damascus Rose Kitchen and No Vice Ice. As a coalition of organisations, our aim is to work with our local communities to co-investigate and design flexible community led support and innovations that will help build food resilience in the local area, alongside ongoing emergency food support.

## The Swan School Oxford

Improving school food



Family dining enables all students and teachers to share a delicious hot lunch together every day. No packed lunches are allowed.

We recreate a 'family' atmosphere where everyone is encouraged to engage in conversation and take responsibility for different aspects of the service, for example laying the table, serving food, or tidying the table at the end of the meal.

Lunches at The Swan are vegetarian (meat is available at other times) for three main reasons:

- Quality –vegetarian meals allow us to provide better quality for the same price.
- Environment – reducing our meat consumption decreases our carbon footprint.
- Community – all our students are able to sit together, regardless of their dietary preferences or religious requirements.



# Examples of excellence from Oxfordshire

## Cherwell Collective

**Stronger communities, reducing waste, alleviating poverty by growing, cooking, learning and sharing together.**

Started during COVID lock-down, Cherwell Collective was a response to food poverty, hardship and isolation. We have developed our ambitions to empower our community, to increase well-being, to support the vulnerable, and to reduce waste and environmental impact in daily lives. We have over 5,000 users, hundreds of whom are supported weekly.

Our food services include three main groups: Cherwell Larder: Friends feeding friends - alleviating food poverty, reducing food waste and a community hub for distributing surplus of all kinds.

Harvest at Home: Food security from the ground up - supporting people to get growing at home and in the community. Providing home-growing kits, skills training, support and access to resources. We have helped over 900 start growing food for the first time.

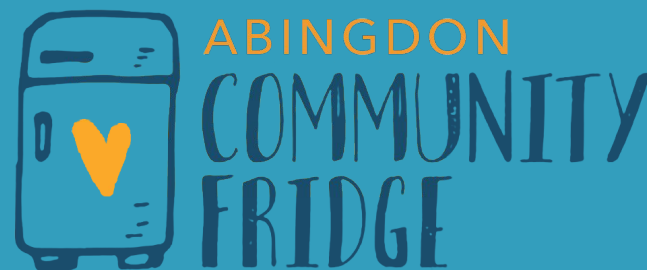
Climatarian Kitchen: Eat to save the earth!: At our food surplus cafe we enjoy climate-friendly meals together, using surplus and locally grown food. Pay what you can meals have suggested donations according to the carbon footprint of the dish. We also offer freshly made ready meals, meal kits, flexi recipes, shared equipment (via Oxford Party Library) and cooking courses.



## Abingdon Community Fridge

**Fighting food waste and building community**

Kerry to add text



## Orange Bakery, Watlington (South)

**Embedded in local community, supporting mental health, local producers, employment and training**

We started in our kitchen during lockdown to support mental health and help young people with focus, purpose and an opportunity for creativity. Initially we baked for ourselves, then our neighbours who were isolating and then through crowd-funding we were able to fund a shop front on the high street in Watlington.

We bake from the Scout Hut and now employ an apprentice from the local prison. We have learnt so much, from the basics of baking through to running a business. Being embedded in our local community has been vital to this journey - we have benefitted from the generosity of other bakers who offered their time, expertise and equipment as well as those who crowd-funded us. More formal start-up support from small local enterprise schemes for mission-driven businesses via OSEP's Escalate scheme has been invaluable, particularly the opportunity to connect with peers and networks of like-minded organisations.



## Play:Full

**A local response to holiday hunger**

Play:Full is a response to tackle holiday hunger experienced by many children who rely on Free School Meals during term-time. The evidence suggests that this group of children start the new term several weeks, if not months intellectually behind their more fortunate peers who have enjoyed a more wholesome diet and lots of activity during the school holiday.

Play:Full was initiated in Banbury as part of the Brighter Futures project and has since been trialled in the City and South and Vale. Healthy, nourishing food is embedded alongside enrichment activities and positive food experiences - from trying new foods, preparing simple snacks and meals and enjoying shared meal-times with friends. Sessions are open-to-all to avoid stigmatisation, but focused on the most deprived wards to target children most in need. The impacts of the programme are clear: children try new foods, less social isolation; children have fun, learning through enrichment; help with extra holiday food bills, connecting vulnerable families to a wider network of support.



# Examples of excellence from Oxfordshire

## Oxford City Farm

Growing Food and Growing Community



At Oxford City Farm we provide valued opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with farming and food production, animals, nature and each other. The food we grow is shared with volunteers and distributed within our local community, enabling us to get fresh produce onto the plates of people who might otherwise have limited access to it.

We work with a range of local organisations to deliver engaging hands-on land and kitchen based social and educational opportunities related to food and farming and the environment. Participants include children, vulnerable adults, and people experiencing loneliness and mental health challenges. Not only can participants learn growing and cooking skills in our new on-site teaching kitchen, but also experience an increased sense of well-being and connectedness, greater confidence, team-working and life skills.

## Oxford City Council - Healthy Start Vouchers

Partnership working to increase the uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers in Oxford



Healthy Start Vouchers support eligible pregnant women and young children to buy fruit, vegetables and dairy and are funded centrally via the NHS. In January 2022 in Oxford City, around 240 eligible families were missing out on Healthy Start Vouchers equivalent to £9,000/ week of unclaimed vouchers.

Through joined up working across housing, health and locality teams, the City Council has supported an additional XX families to access the scheme. Providing a dedicated contact point within the council to liaise with other teams and provide training, and communications materials has been pivotal to making this change happen.



## Sandy Lane Farm

Organic and regenerative agriculture

We are a traditional, family run farm in the South Oxfordshire countryside, passionate about growing organic veg. The team produces a wide diversity of vegetables in the farm's sandy soil. This is partly to spread the risk that is inherent when you farm without pesticides, partly to keep the soil healthy and also, to champion locally grown veg and prove that eating with the seasons can be varied and interesting!



The Bennett's commitment to organic growing is both a passion and a mission and they utilise traditional farming methods - firmly backed by modern science. Biodiversity (above and below ground) is at the heart of organic farming and George's approach is try to keep 'nature in balance' every step of the way. Each year the farm's fields are bordered by beautiful 'beetle banks' - areas of wildflowers and grasses, sown to encourage pollinators and 'nature's pest controllers' to the crops. Early in 2020 he also planted nearly 1000 trees on the farm, a mini-agroforestry project which should improve irrigation, provide a habitat for birds and other wildlife as well as providing valuable aerial cover for his 400 organic egg laying hens.

## Salt Cross Garden Village

Ambition to create better food environments in new developments, navigating complex planning challenges.

West Oxfordshire's Salt Cross Garden Village is a landscape led ambition. Tackling climate change, seeking a zero-carbon community and 25% biodiversity net gain. 2,200 homes, 50% affordable within walkable neighbourhoods. A park and ride 6 minute connection to Oxford City. Hanborough Station, to Oxford and London.



'a place to grow, a space to breathe'

West Oxfordshire's edible Garden Community embedding sustainable food systems; maximising food growing opportunities. Connecting people to growing, production, consumption; contributing to local fresh food supply.

Private and community food growing gardens, doorstep allotments and community orchards. People coming together to cook, learn and celebrate changing seasons. Dedicated growing spaces, careful species selections, hedgerows, woodland edges providing foraging grounds. Edible trees and plants along walkways, places for residents of Salt Cross to engage with growing food and nature.

Planning, delivery and stewardship challenges are being carefully considered with committed leadership, vision and ambition. Salt Cross; an edible Garden Community will contribute to Good Food Oxfordshire's sustainable food network, providing healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food for all.



# We all need to act now to make this vision a reality

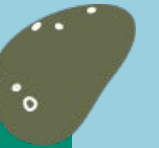
## Ideas for Local Councils

- Adopt a whole systems approach to food
- Embed healthy and sustainable food and healthy weight environments within existing policies, plans and targets
- Develop a specific Food Policy that encapsulates key themes and recommendations defined in the strategy
- Champion the development of **District Level** Food Action Plans to agree specific council commitments and measure progress against these
- Promote and support community groups and businesses working for a better food system through public procurement, access to infrastructure, assets and funding
- Support vibrant, healthy food communities through access to skills and spaces for growing, cooking and sharing food
- Lobby national government using local evidence and action
- Appoint Food Champions at cabinet level to be a conduit for food issues and action



## Ideas for Institutions and businesses

- Commit to buying more sustainably produced local food for institutional catering
- Participate in initiatives to scope and develop short, local supply chain solutions
- Ensure food policies and reporting reflect health and sustainability targets and link into net zero ambitions
- Participate in development of Food Action Plans for local areas, agree specific commitments and measure progress against these
- Adopt accreditation and measurement schemes that support these targets
- Engage employees around healthy, sustainable local food – support campaigns and events



ACT  
NOW

## Ideas for Community Groups

- Sign the Oxfordshire Good Food Charter and join a movement of Collective Action for a better food system for everyone in Oxfordshire
- Connect with a range of partners in your local food system to work together to solve local food problems – community food services, cooking and growing groups, councils, farms and food businesses – together we can do more [<link to CFN sign up and CAG>](#)
- Participate in the development of Food Action Plans for local areas, agree specific commitments and measure progress against these
- Join campaigns and events that bring communities together to grow, cook and share food



## Ideas for Individuals

- Support local organisations working to tackle food poverty and food waste
- Join local growing schemes
- Help with cooking and nutrition programmes
- Use local sustainable food businesses and markets where possible
- Support campaigns and events that promote good food
- Participate in the development of Food Action Plans for local areas



End of Part 1



## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

**6 June 2022**

## **Proposal to Introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester Town Centre**

### **Report of Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety**

This report is public

#### **Purpose of Report**

A consultation was recently undertaken on a proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Bicester town centre. This report provides the Executive with the background to the proposal, a summary of the consultation undertaken and the feedback from key stakeholders and details of the potential scope of the Order. The paper provides the Executive with the opportunity to decide whether to introduce a PSPO in Bicester Town Centre.

The proposed PSPO will contribute towards the delivery of the council objective to “work with partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour” within the Healthy, Resilient and Engaged Communities priority. A reduction in anti-social behaviour in the town centre will also contribute towards the Enterprising Economy with Strong and Vibrant Local Centres priority. Tackling anti-social behaviour was also identified as one of the priorities for the council in the last residents survey.

#### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester town centre taking into consideration the outcomes of the public consultation and partner organisations' views.

#### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The Council's Community Safety Team have been working extensively with Thames Valley Police on problems of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in and around Bicester town centre for several years. However, all approaches that have been taken have so far failed to fully resolve this problem.
- 2.2 The view of our community safety team is that the ASB mainly stems from the town centre being used as a gathering point for teenagers in the town. Whilst the

individuals involved has changed over time, the general problem has persisted of groups of teenagers gathering and behaving in a manner that is detrimental to the businesses in the town and the feelings of safety of visitors to the town centre.

- 2.3 In discussion with Thames Valley Police, officers agreed to develop proposals for a PSPO for the areas mainly impacted by this anti-social behaviour. A map showing the exact geographic coverage of the proposed PSPO is included in appendix 1. A list of the roads to be included in the PSPO area is included in appendix 2.

### 3.0 Background

- 3.1 PSPOs are intended to provide a means of preventing individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in a public space where the behaviour is having, or is likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, is persistent or continuing in nature, and is unreasonable. The PSPO imposes conditions on the use of the area which apply to everyone.
- 3.2 A PSPO restricts what people can do in an area and how they behave. As such it is important to ensure that any such restrictions are focussed on problem behaviours, are proportionate to the detrimental impact that the behaviour is having or could cause and are considered necessary to prevent it continuing, occurring or reoccurring. The restrictions and requirements included in a PSPO may be comprehensive or targeted on specific behaviours by particular groups and/or at specified times.
- 3.3 A PSPO can be in force for any period up to a maximum of three years and can be extended for a further period of up to 3 years at any time before expiry. Before introducing a PSPO the council is required to conduct consultation with relevant parties on the scope of the PSPO.

#### Anti-Social Behaviour in Bicester Town Centre

- 3.4 Footfall and use of town centres has been significantly impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. The impact of those restrictions needs to be considered when looking at data relating to ASB.
- 3.5 The table below shows Police recorded offences for ASB, alcohol related public order/ drunk and disorderly and offences against the person in and around the town centre in Bicester prior to the lockdown restrictions introduced in March 2020 (including Sheep Street, Pioneer Square, Market Square, Manorsfield Road, Launton Road (Garth Park), Crown Walk, Victoria Road, Causeway, North Street, Deans Court, and St Edburg's Church/Cemetery) –

Month	No. of Offences Recorded
March 2019	20
April 2019	24
May 2019	12
June 2019	35
July 2019	17

August 2019	25
September 2019	27
October 2019	17
November 2019	15
December 2019	20
January 2020	17
February 2020	18

3.6 Recorded incidents for ASB alone for May 2021 to March 2022 are shown in the table below.

Month	No. of incidents reported to TVP involving ASB
May 2021	6
June 2021	9
July 2021	3
August 2021	11
September 2021	15
October 2021	19
November 2021	11
December 2021	6
January 2022	16
February 2022	34
March 2022	15

3.7 Thames Valley Police were asked whether it is possible to compare this data against other similar towns to understand whether the data supports the belief that ASB in Bicester town centre is more of a problem than in other areas. However, Thames Valley Police commented that comparisons are affected by too many variables to draw any robust conclusions. The view of the Neighbourhood Team and the Council's Community Safety Team is that anti-social behaviour in Bicester Town Centre is a **prevalent** and **persistent** problem that places continued demands on the resources of both organisations to minimise the impact.

3.8 Over the last two years, in an attempt to tackle youth related ASB in the town centre Thames Valley Police and the Council's community safety team have undertaken a number of specific operations. This has included increasing our presence in the town centre and engaging the parents of young people seen to be engaged in ASB in the area. Those involved in ASB have been offered Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. These have had some effect on the behaviour of certain individuals but limited impact on the overall problem of ASB in the town centre.

3.9 During 2018 and 2019 the Council's Community Safety Team was also involved in dealing with problems caused by a group of adults who congregated on Sheep Street to drink. There were also reports of problematic begging linked to this group. This problem was eventually resolved after the Community Safety Team issued Community Protection Warnings to the individuals to warn them that formal legal action would follow if the behaviour did not cease. As a result, it is intended to include begging in the scope of any PSPO

## **Benefits of Public Spaces Protection Order**

- 3.10 A significant proportion of the ASB reported or witnessed in the town centre relates to teenagers. Activity to address this has mainly relied on the Police working with the individual and their parents/ guardian to reduce the harmful behaviour. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts can only be issued on a voluntary basis and community protection notices cannot be issued to anyone under 16 years of age. Therefore, non-criminal options for tackling the problematic behaviour of young people are limited.
- 3.11 A PSPO would provide the council and the Police with further legal options to tackle the behaviour of individuals which is causing concern in Bicester town centre. In particular it would permit the service of **fixed penalty notices** for behaviours which would not meet the thresholds or legal requirements for other formal action. In addition, it would provide opportunity for us to promote the restrictions through warning signs providing a deterrence and raising public awareness of the actions that we are taking to improve the town centre.
- 3.12 If a PSPO is introduced the Community Safety Team would continue with the existing approach to engage and advise first, but it would provide an option for an immediate and non-criminal escalation should this be necessary.
- 3.13 The proposed PSPO would prohibit -
- a) Loitering in the restricted area either as an individual or in a group in a way which causes, or is likely to cause, anti-social behaviour.
  - b) Begging or asking members of the public for money in the restricted area.
  - c) Consuming alcohol in the restricted area in a manner which causes nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the locality.
- In addition, the proposed PSPO would require persons to cease to consume alcohol in the restricted area when directed to do so by an officer and to surrender alcohol to officers if requested.
- The draft PSPO is included in appendix 3 of this report.

## **The Legal Framework for a PSPO**

- 3.14 Local authorities have the power to create PSPOs under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ('the Act'). In deciding to make a PSPO, the Act requires that the local authority must have regard to the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 3.15 The two issues which must be addressed for every proposed restriction in the PSPO are whether the statutory criteria are met and whether the restrictions proposed are proportionate having regard to the legitimate aim of preserving the quality of life for everyone who lives or works in, or who visits, the town centre.
- 3.16 A local authority can make a PSPO in respect of any public space within its administrative boundary. The definition of public space is wide and includes any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission.
- 3.17 Section 59 of the Act sets out the basis on which local authorities may make a PSPO. It provides as follows –



- (1) A local authority may make a public spaces protection order if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met.
- (2) The first condition is that:
  - (a) activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or
  - (b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.
- (3) The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities:
  - (a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,
  - (b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
  - (c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.
- (4) A PSPO is an order that identifies the public place referred to in subsection (2) ("the restricted area") and
  - (a) prohibits specified things being done in the restricted area,
  - (b) requires specified things to be done by persons carrying on specified activities in that area, or
  - (c) does both of those things.
- (5) The only prohibitions or requirements that may be imposed are ones that are reasonable to impose in order:
  - (a) to prevent the detrimental effect referred to in subsection (2) from continuing, occurring or recurring, or
  - (b) to reduce that detrimental effect or to reduce the risk of its continuance, occurrence or recurrence.

3.18 In establishing a PSPO, appropriate signage must be displayed in accordance with the requirements of the Act and details of the PSPO must be published.

3.19 A breach of the PSPO can be dealt with through the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100, a level 3 fine of up to £1000 on conviction, or £500 upon conviction for consuming alcohol in breach of the Order.

3.20 An equalities impact assessment has been prepared in support of the decision whether to implement a PSPO in Bicester and is included in appendix 4.

### **Consultation**

3.21 Before introducing, extending, varying or discharging a PSPO local authorities are obliged to consult with the local chief officer of police; the Police and Crime Commissioner; owners or occupiers of land within the affected area where reasonably practicable, and appropriate community representatives.

3.22 A **3-week public consultation** on the proposed PSPO for Bicester town centre was undertaken in March 2022. This consultation included an online survey promoted by a press release and on the council's social media platforms, face-to-face engagement with visitors to the town centre, visits to the main town centre businesses and direct communication with key stakeholders including all district and county councillors for Bicester.

3.23 An analysis of the responses to this consultation is included in appendix 5. There were 407 responses to this consultation. The main outcomes are shown in the table below.

Question	Response – ‘Yes’	Response – ‘No’	Response – ‘Don’t know’
“Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit anti-social behaviour in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders?”	375 (93%)	12 (3%)	16 (4%)
“Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit street drinking in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders?”	350 (86%)	24 (6%)	31 (8%)
“Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit begging in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders?”	244 (60%)	80 (20%)	82 (20%)

3.24 Thames Valley Police formally responded to the consultation in support of the proposed PSPO. Bicester Town Council also formally responded in support of the proposal but asked that the Order did not prohibit the drinking of alcohol in Garth Park. The draft Order prohibits continuing to consume alcohol in a public place when requested to stop by an authorised officer so this will not create a general prohibition on drinking alcohol in Garth Park.

3.25 During the consultation we were approached by a representative of the Bicester Bike Users Group to ask if the general prohibition on cycling on Sheep Street could be removed if a prohibition on dangerous cycling was included in the PSPO. This proposal has been raised with the County Council since they have responsibility for the cycling restriction on Sheep Street. A previous proposal to remove this restriction was rejected by the County Council Cabinet Member in 2016. It is suggested that Cherwell DC should proceed with the proposed PSPO for Bicester and could seek to amend the PSPO should the County Council agree to amend the traffic restriction order on Sheep Street to allow cycling.

### **Evaluation of the Order**

3.27 If the PSPO is introduced it will remain in force for **3 years**. During the third year it will be evaluated through reviewing the use of the powers introduced through the Order and by reference to the data relating to ASB in the area over the years preceding the introduction of the PSPO and during the time it is in force. The impacts of the PSPO on other areas outside the geographic scope of the Order will be monitored during this period to ensure that we identify if the Order has simply moved the problem to other areas. A further consultation will be required if it is intended to renew the Order.

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 The results of the consultation show overwhelming support for the introduction of a PSPO in Bicester Town Centre from the public and stakeholder organisations. The responses support including all three prohibitions that were included in the consultation. Crime and incident data from the Police evidence supports the conclusion that prevalent and persistent problem of anti-social behaviour in and around Bicester town centre and that the legal requirements for the introduction of a PSPO are met. Therefore, the Executive is recommended to approve the introduction of the PSPO included in appendix 3 (subject to any minor amendments advised by the council's solicitors to ensure the order will be effective).

## **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 As set out in paragraphs 3.21 to 3.25

## **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 introduce a PSPO.

This option is not recommended. Crime and incident data from the Police evidence supports the conclusion that prevalent and persistent problem relating to anti-social behaviour in and around Bicester town centre. The consultation outcomes show strong support for the introduction of a PSPO to tackle this problem and stakeholders, including Thames Valley Police, also support the proposal.

Option 2: Introduce a PSPO of more limited scope.

This option is not recommended. The consultation outcomes show support for all aspects of the proposal PSPO and there is data and evidence which justifies the inclusion of all the proposed prohibitions if a PSPO is to be introduced.

## **7.0 Implications**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:

Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 01295 221570

[Kelly.wheeler@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Kelly.wheeler@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Legal Implications**

- 7.2 The legal implications are outlined in the report.

Comments checked by:  
Syma Akhtar, Solicitor, 01295 753 701, [Syma.Akhtar@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:Syma.Akhtar@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

### **Risk Implications**

- 7.3 There are currently no risk implications arising from this report. If any risks are identified they will be managed through the service Operational Risk and escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when needed.

Comments checked by:  
Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus, 01295 221556  
[Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Equalities and Inclusion Implications**

- 7.4 An Equality and Community Impact Assessment has been prepared and is included in appendix 4.

Comments checked by:  
Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus, 01295 221556  
[Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Sustainability Implications**

- 7.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:  
Sandra Fisher-Martins, Programme Manager Climate Action.  
[Sandra.fisher-martins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.fisher-martins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **8.0 Decision Information**

### **Key Decision**

**Financial Threshold Met:** N/A

**Community Impact Threshold Met:** N/A

### **Wards Affected**

Bicester East  
Bicester North and Caversfield  
Bicester South and Ambrosden  
Bicester West

### **Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

As outlined in the purpose section in the main report.

## **Lead Councillor**

Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities

## **Document Information**

### **Appendix number and title**

- Appendix 1: Map of area to be covered by proposed PSPO
- Appendix 2: List of roads fully or partially within PSPO area
- Appendix 3: Draft Order
- Appendix 4: Equality and Community Impact Assessment
- Appendix 5: Consultation report

### **Background papers**

None

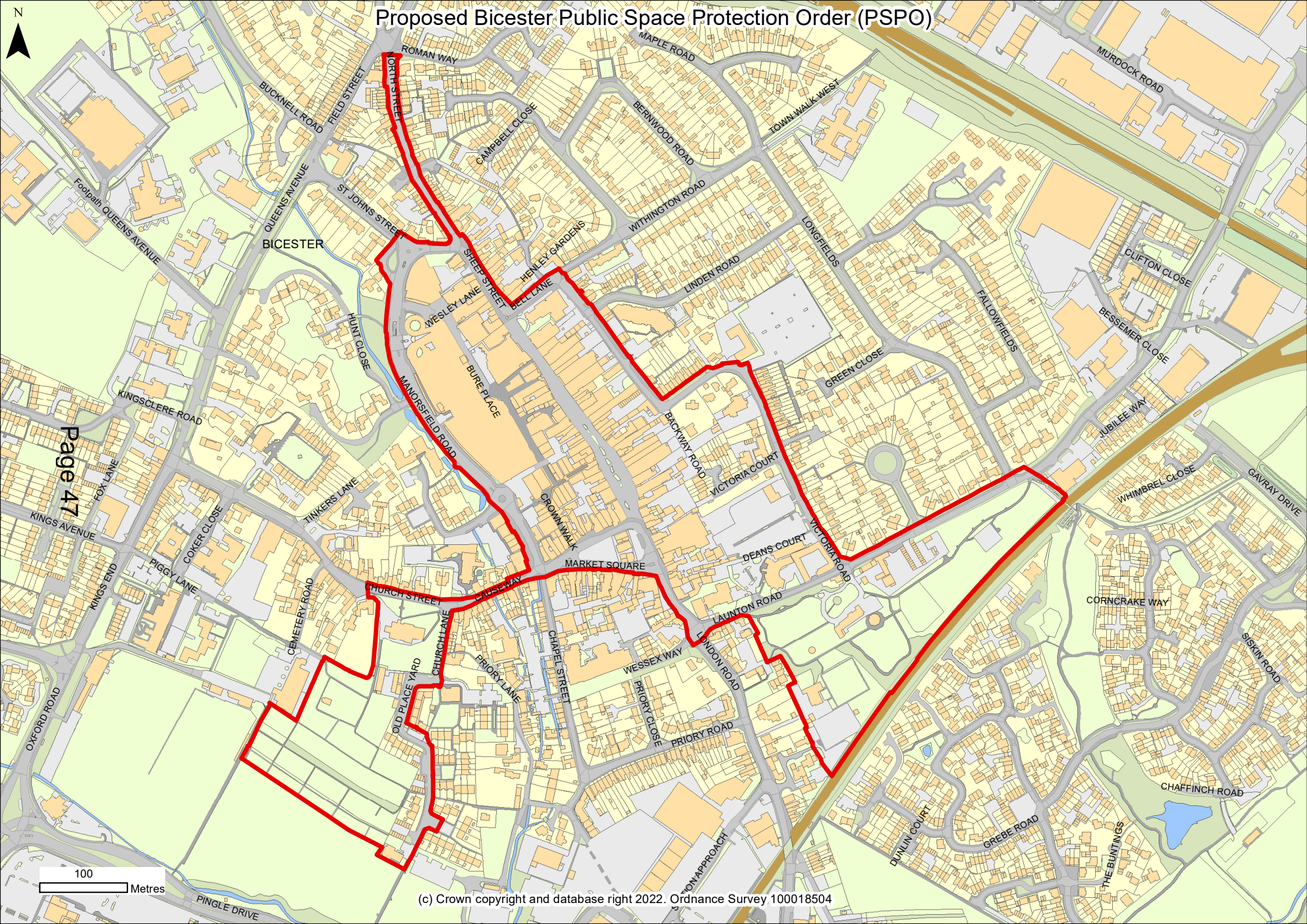
### **Report Author and contact details**

Richard Webb; Assistant Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety

[Richard.webb@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.webb@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01865 815791

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# Proposed Bicester Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)



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## Appendix 2

### Geographic coverage of the proposed PSPO

The proposal is for the PSPO to include all or part of the following areas and roads-

- Garth Park
- Launton Road
- Victoria Road
- Bell Lane
- Sheep Street
- Saint John's Street
- Manorsfield Road
- Causeway
- St Edburg Church and Cemetery
- Market Square
- London Road
- Deans Court
- Crown Walk
- Wesley Lane
- Pioneer Square
- Bure Place
- Evans Yard

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**CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014**  
**PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER No1 of 2022 (the “ORDER”)**

This Order may be cited the as Bicester Town Public Spaces Protection Order No 1 of 2022.

Cherwell District Council in the exercise of their powers under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act (“the Act”) and under all the enabling powers hereby make the Order as follows:

1. Order shall come into force on XXXXXX and shall have effect for 3 years from that date unless extended by any further order made pursuant to the Council’s statutory powers.
2. The Order relates to area shown edged red and attached to the plan (restricted area)
3. The Council are satisfied that the condition set out in Section 59(2) of the Act has been met namely, that activities have been carried out in the restricted area which have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality.
4. The Council are satisfied that the condition set out in Section 59(3) of the Act has been met namely that the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature and that these activities are unreasonable and justify the prohibitions imposed in this Order.
5. The effect of the Order is to impose the prohibitions specified below on the use of restricted area

**PROHIBITIONS**

- a) No person shall loiter in the restricted area either as an individual or in a group if they are causing or likely to cause anti-social behaviour. If asked to disperse by a Police Constable, PCSO, or an authorised officer of the Council that person must not return to the restricted area for a period of 24 hours.
- b) No person shall beg (using either active or passive methods of obtaining alms) or ask members of the public for money in the restricted area.
- c) No person shall consume alcohol in the restricted area (other than premises specified in Section 62(1) of the Act) in a manner which causes nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the locality.
- d) No person shall continue to consume alcohol when directed by an officer to stop in the restricted area.

- e) No person shall fail to surrender alcohol or a container for alcohol when requested to do so by an officer in the restricted area.

Save as to;

The prohibition obtained in paragraph d of this Order does not apply to any place specified in Section 62 of the Act as a place where a prohibition in a Public Spaces Protection Order on consuming alcohol does not apply.

**OFFENCES**

- 1. In accordance with Section 63 of the Act a person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with a requirement imposed on him/her under Section 63(2) of the Act, namely;
  - a) Consuming alcohol in breach of the Order; or
  - b) Failing to surrender alcohol or a container of alcohol when required to do so by a Police Constable or a person authorised for the purposes of Section 63 of the Act commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding Level 2 on the standard scale.
- 2. In accordance with Section 67 of the Act a person who breaches the Order (other than consuming alcohol in breach of the Order or failing to surrender alcohol to Constable or authorised person) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding Level 3 on the standard scale.
- 3. In accordance with Section 68 of the Act a Police Constable or authorised officer may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

THE COMMON SEAL OF  
CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Was hereunto affixed

In the presence of:

Authorised Officer:

Authorised Officer:

Date:

**Appendix 4**

**Cherwell District Council**

**Equality and Climate Impact Assessment**

Proposed Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester Town Centre

May 2022

## Contents

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## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Commercial Development, Assets and Investment Regulatory Services and Community Safety
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	The impact of introducing a Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester Town Centre
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	New policy
<b>Summary of assessment</b> Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?  (following completion of the assessment).	
<b>Completed By</b>	Richard Webb
<b>Authorised By</b>	
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2022

## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The Council’s Community Safety Team have been working extensively with Thames Valley Police on problems of anti-social behaviour in and around Bicester town centre for several years. However, all approaches that have been taken have so far failed to fully resolve this problem.</p> <p>The view of our community safety team is that the ASB mainly stems from the town centre being used as a gathering point for teenagers in the town. Whilst the individuals involved has changed over time, the general problem has persisted of groups of teenagers gathering and behaving in a manner that is detrimental to the businesses in the town and the feelings of safety of visitors to the town centre.</p> <p>In discussion with Thames Valley Police, officers have developed proposals for a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for the areas mainly impacted by this anti-social behaviour. A public consultation was undertaken on a proposal to introduce this PSPO. This impact assessment takes into consideration the outcome of this consultation in order to provide a final assessment on the equality impacts of introducing the PSPO as proposed.</p>
<p><b>Proposals</b></p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The Executive of the Council will be asked to decide whether to introduce a PSPO in Bicester Town Centre at their June 2022 meeting. It is likely that any PSPO that is introduced will reflect the issues that were included in the public consultation as the potential scope of the Order. The potential PSPO therefore includes prohibitions against –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- behaving in a way that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress or concern for safety to another person in a public place;</li> <li>- acting in a manner that is perceived to be that of begging;</li> <li>- continuing to consume alcohol when required to stop doing so by any Authorised Officer.</li> </ul> <p>The proposal to introduce a PSPO for Bicester Town Centre was developed as a consequence of persistent problems with anti-social behaviour (ASB) in and around the town centre. Over a period of several years the Council and the Police have taken steps to address that ASB through a range of different approaches. Despite this continued effort reports of ASB continue to be received by the Police and council officers continue to respond to concerns about the behaviour of young people gathering in the town centre. The Council’s community wardens and the Police believe that the introduction of a PSPO would provide better options to tackle and deter this ASB,</p>



	<p>particularly where it involves young people. It would enable a change in approach to this ASB, providing the ability to issue fixed penalty notices for behaviour impacting on the town centre and therefore provide simpler and quicker enforcement options to tackle the problems being reported and observed. Without this change in approach it is likely that the town centre will continue to be negatively impacted by this behaviour.</p> <p>The Order, if introduced, will affect only those that breach the prohibitions contained within the Order in the defined geographic area. This order is relevant to the community as a whole.</p>																
<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Evidence supporting the proposed PSPO comes from Police incident data, a public consultation undertaken in April 2022 and media reports.</p> <p>The table below shows Police recorded offences for ASB, alcohol related public order/ drunk and disorderly and offences against the person in and around the town centre in Bicester prior to the lockdown restrictions introduced in March 2020</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="864 748 1619 1351"> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>No. of Offences Recorded</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>March 2019</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2019</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 2019</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2019</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 2019</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August 2019</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September 2019</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	No. of Offences Recorded	March 2019	20	April 2019	24	May 2019	12	June 2019	35	July 2019	17	August 2019	25	September 2019	27
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October 2019	17
November 2019	15
December 2019	20
January 2020	17
February 2020	18

The table below shows data on recorded ASB in Bicester Town Centre.

Month	No. of incidents reported to TVP involving ASB
May 2021	6
June 2021	9
July 2021	3
August 2021	11
September 2021	15
October 2021	19
November 2021	11
December 2021	6

A 3-week public consultation on the proposed PSPO for Bicester town centre was undertaken in March 2022. This consultation included an online survey promoted by a press release and on the council's social media platforms, face-to-face engagement with visitors to the town centre, visits to the main town centre businesses and direct communication with key stakeholders including all district and county councillors for Bicester.

An analysis of the responses to this consultation is to be included with the formal decision paper supporting the proposal. In summary, there were 407 responses to this consultation and the main outcomes are shown in the table below.

Question	Response – 'Yes'	Response – 'No'	Response – 'Don't know'
"Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit anti-social behaviour in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders?"	375 (93%)	12 (3%)	16 (4%)
"Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit street drinking in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders?"	350 (86%)	24 (6%)	31 (8%)
"Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit begging in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders?"	244 (60%)	80 (20%)	82 (20%)

The consultation responses did not identify any adverse implications in relation to any of the protected characteristics. However, some respondents commented on the impact on some people who may be

	<p>considered vulnerable due to homelessness.</p> <p>In recent months there have also been reports in the media concerning specific ASB incidents in the town centre. These do not provide evidence either in support of the proposal or against it, but do highlight the experiences of some of the businesses in the town centre.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>This proposal is in response to a problem that the council and its partners have been involved in addressing for several years. It is considered to offer an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of our response. The only alternative considered was to not seek to introduce the PSPO and to continue to work to tackle the reported problems through the existing powers available to the council and its Police.</p>

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

<b>Additional Wider Impacts</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Description of Impact</b>	<b>Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts</b>	<b>Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)</b>	<b>Timescale and monitoring arrangements</b>
<b>Other Council Services</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Providers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Social Value <sup>1</sup></b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

<sup>1</sup> If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts

OCC and CDC aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. How will your proposal affect our ability to reduce carbon emissions related to

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (* Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Energy use in our buildings or highways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				



We are also committed to enable Cherwell to become carbon neutral by 2030 and Oxfordshire by 2050. How will your proposal affect our ability to:

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Enable carbon emissions reduction at district/county level?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

<b>Review Date</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	Richard Webb
<b>Authorised By</b>	

## Consultation Report – Public Spaces Protection Order, Bicester Town Centre

### Consultation Approach

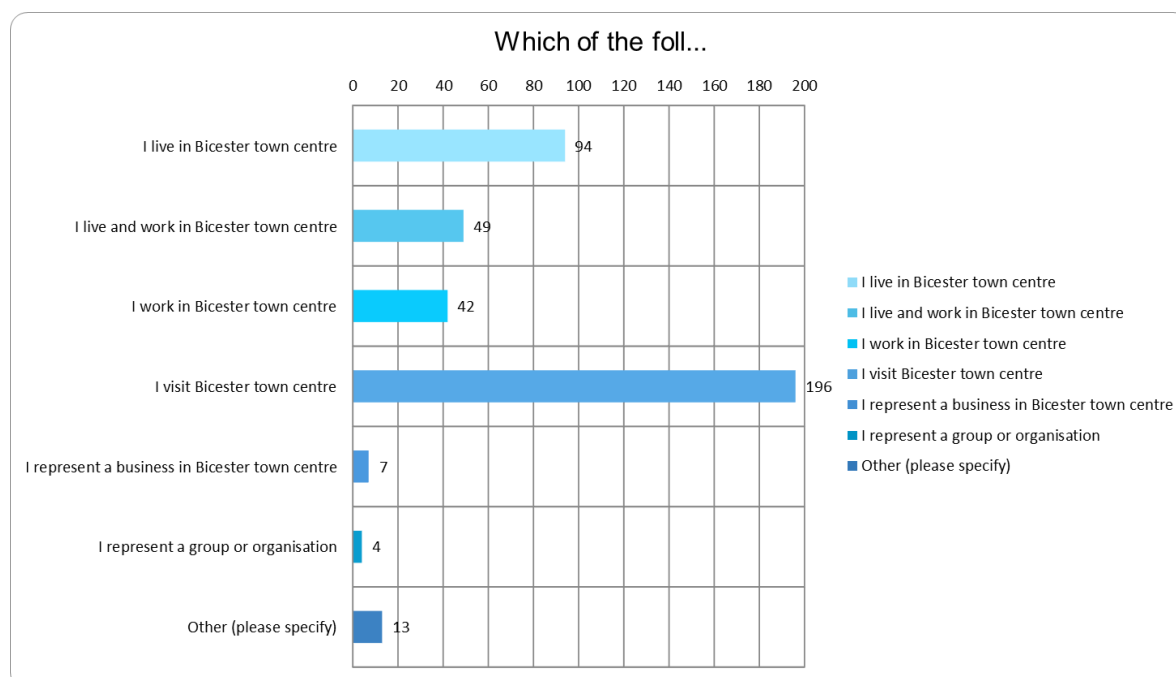
The public consultation on the proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester Town Centre was opened on 18 March 2022 and ran for 3 weeks, closing on Friday 8 April 2022.

The consultation sought views on perceptions of anti-social behaviour (ASB), street drinking and begging in and around the town centre and on the impact of these behaviours. It sought specific responses on whether respondents thought that Cherwell District Council should seek to prohibit ASB, street drinking and begging in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Order.

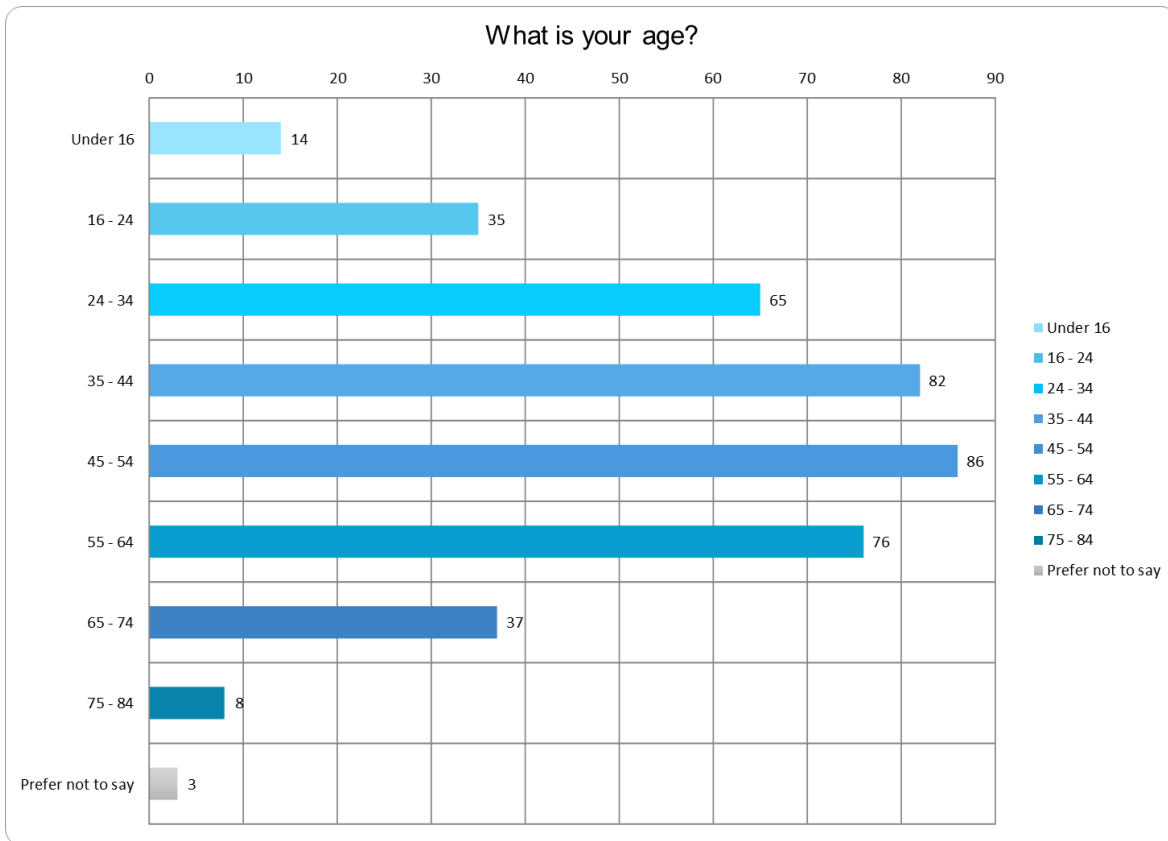
Respondents were able to complete an on-line survey or respond in writing. The survey was promoted on the council's website, via its social media channels and through face-to-face engagement in the town centre with visitors and businesses. Direct contact was made with a number of stakeholders to make them aware of the consultation, including Bicester Town Centre, Thames Valley Police, local elected members, Bicester Chamber of Commerce and Bicester Vision.

### Response data

There were 1041 visits to the consultation page on the council's website and 407 responses in total. The table below shows how the respondents described their relationship to Bicester town centre. (Note- not all the respondents replied to all the questions and therefore the total number of responses varies by question).

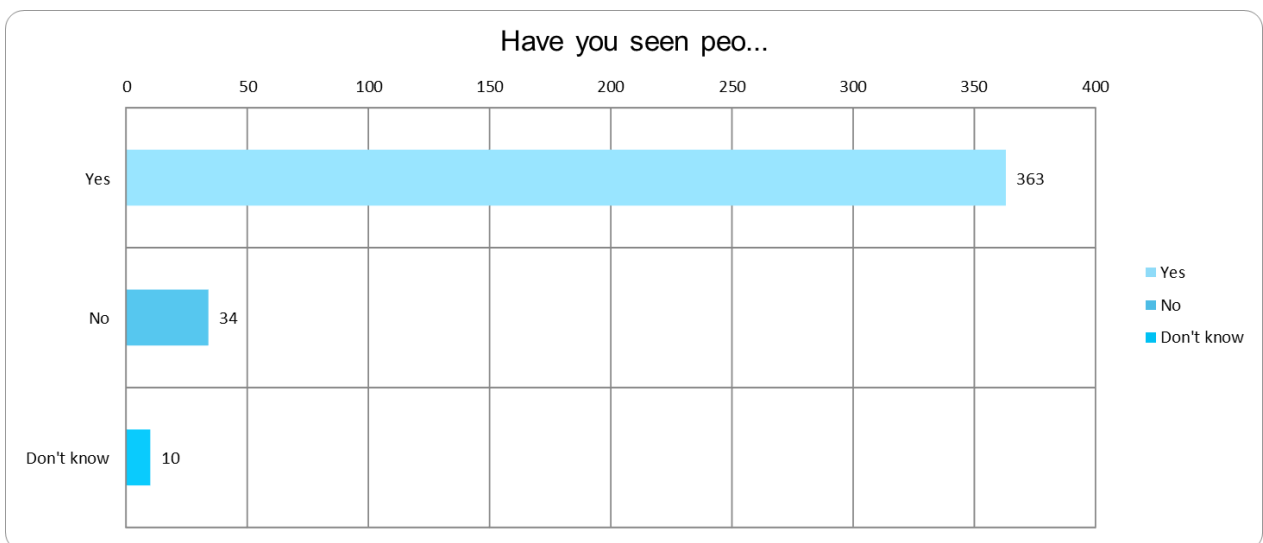


Age Profile of Respondents:

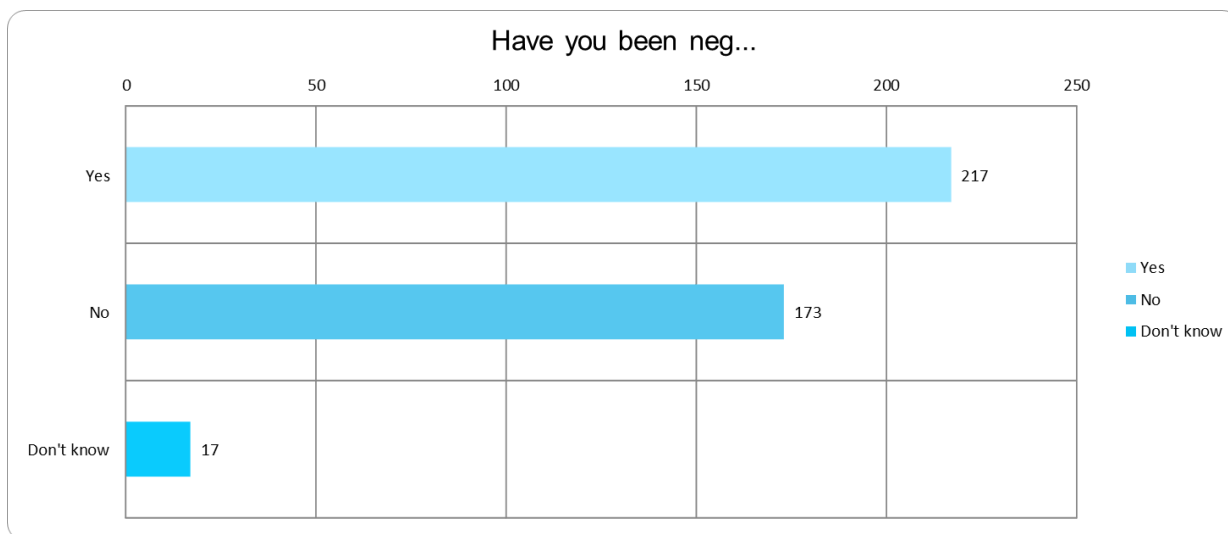


Analysis of Responses to Survey Questions on ASB

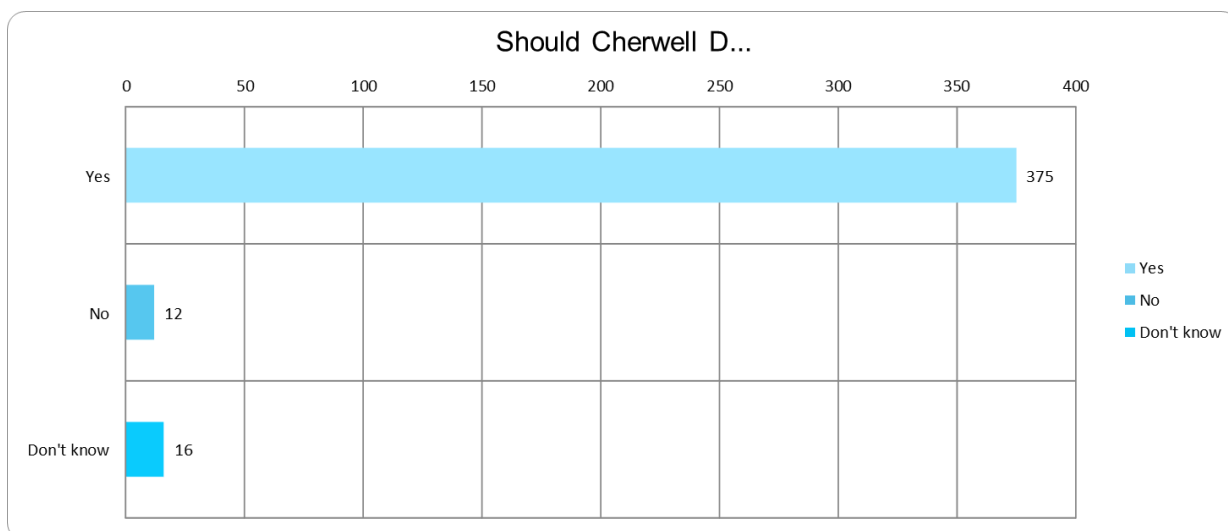
Have you seen people (individual or groups) in Bicester town centre behaving in such a way that is likely to cause alarm or distress or concern for safety in the last 12 months?



Have you been negatively affected by this issue in the last 12 months?



Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit anti-social behaviour in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)?



Summary of Negative Responses:

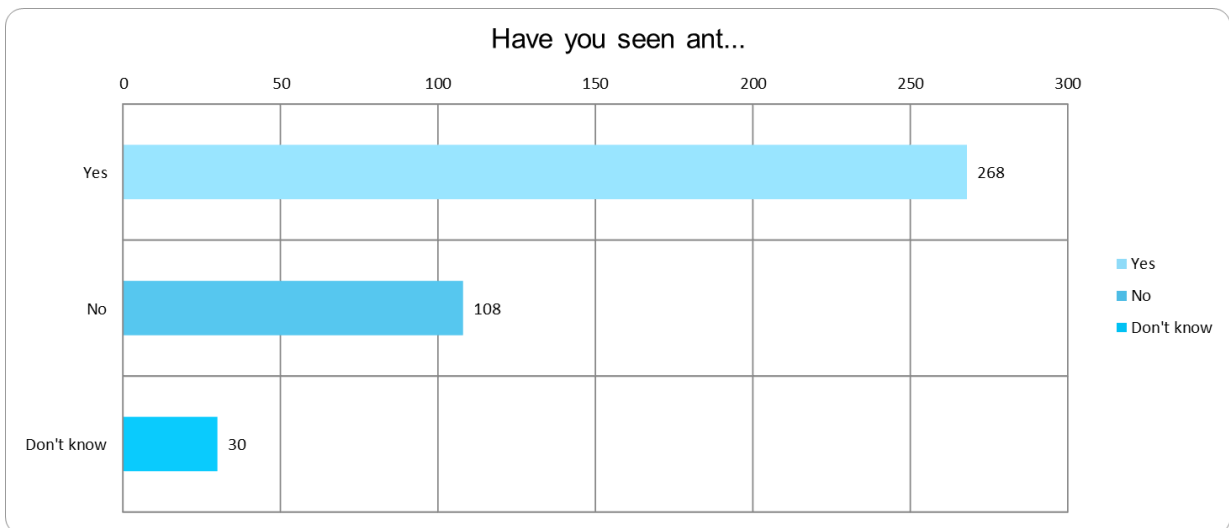
There were 12 responses that disagreed that the council should introduce a PSPO prohibiting ASB in the town centre. Reasons given in the free text comments section of the survey for these responses are summarised below-

- Several respondents commented that further community or youth centres are needed to provide better facilities for young people or the homeless.
- 1 respondent commented on the need to improve the town centre.
- 1 respondent commented that a PSPO would be 'unnecessary overkill' and that it could impact in beggars and the homeless, making their lives more difficult.
- 1 respondent advocated doing more to investigate the cause of the issues and adopting a hybrid approach.
- 1 respondent commented that a PSPO will just move the problem elsewhere

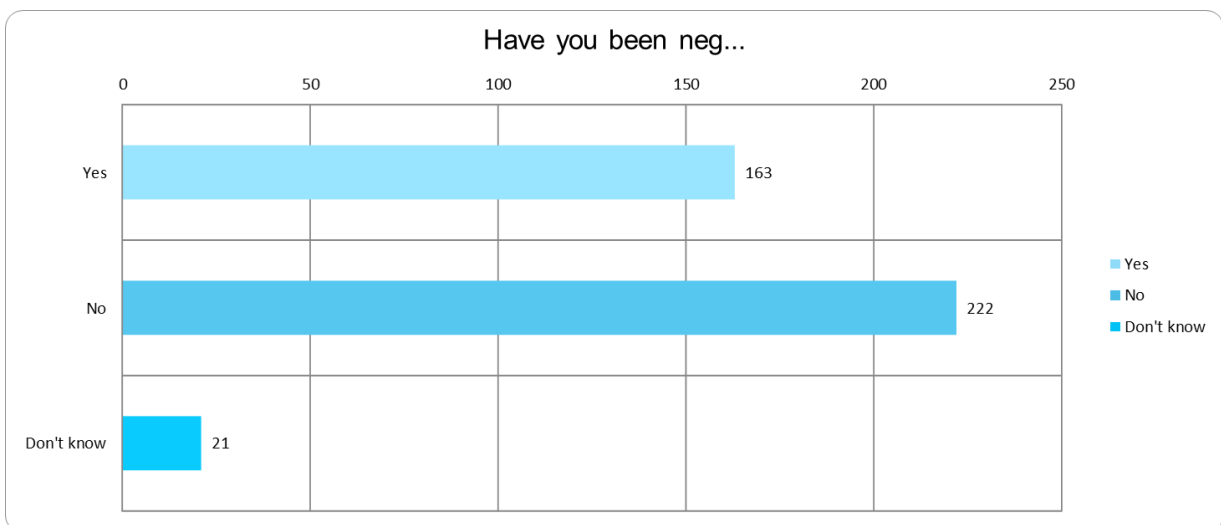
- 1 respondent comment that a PSPO will give people a very negative view of Bicester Town Centre and that the PSPO would be a 'sledge hammer to crack a nut'.
- 1 respondent commented that there are no longer enough Police to carry out low level enforcement effectively, despite their best efforts and that there are already laws to prevent the behaviour subject to the proposed PSPO.
- 4 respondents commented that the Police and council should tackle the individuals causing the problem and not create general restrictions applying to everyone.
- 2 respondents commented on concerns about the potential for abuse of power or over-zealous enforcement.

**Street Drinking**

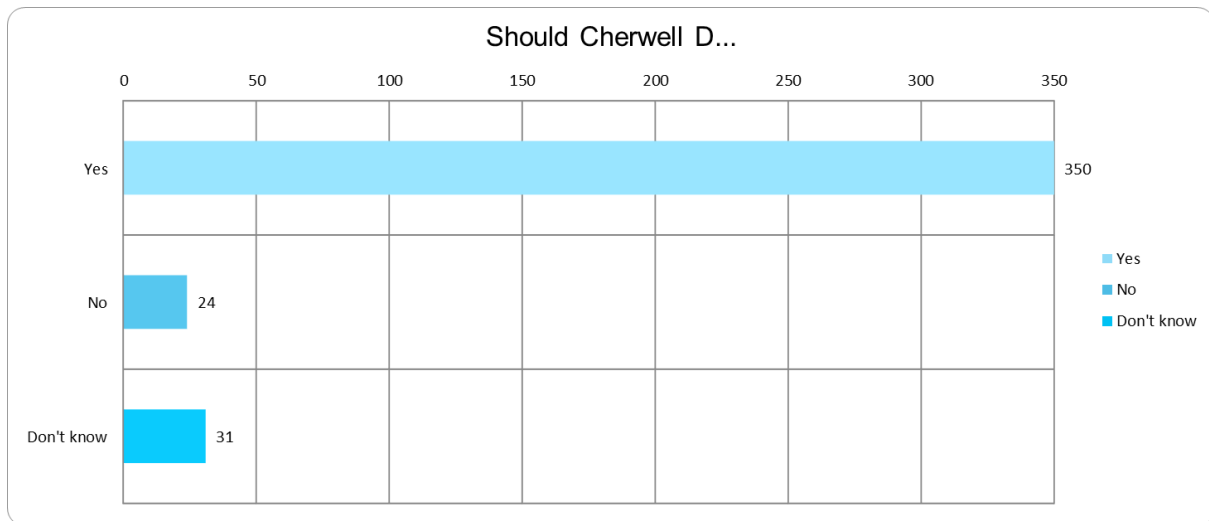
Have you seen anti-social behaviour associated specifically with street drinking in the last 12 months in Bicester town centre?



Have you been negatively affected by this issue in the last 12 months?



Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit street drinking in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)?

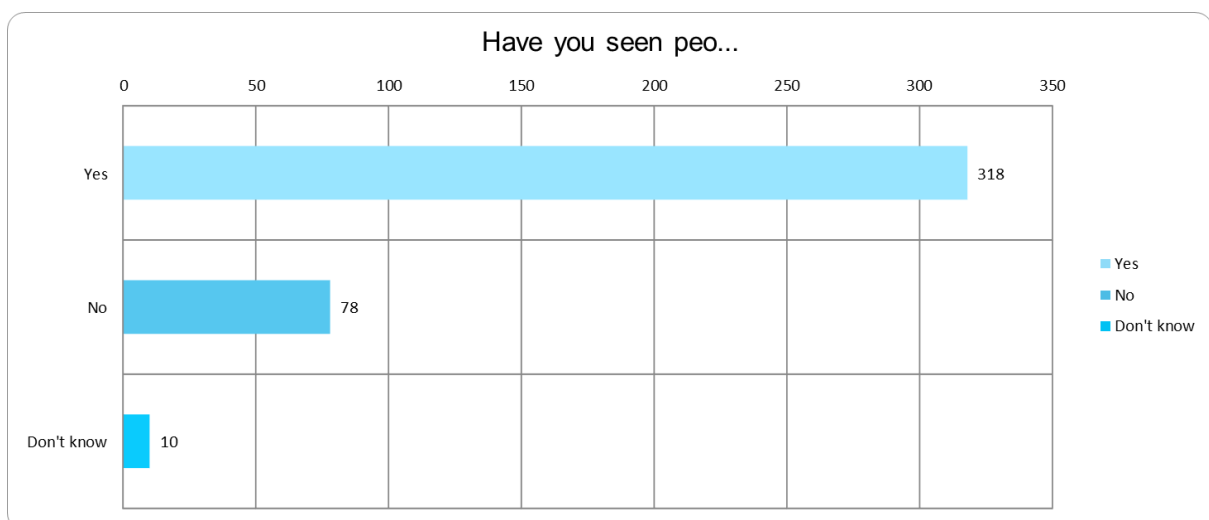


There were fewer comments in support of negative responses to the question of whether the council should introduce a prohibition on street drinking. Some of the comments duplicated the objections to the proposal to introduce a prohibition on ASB (e.g. that the individuals responsible for the behaviour should be targeted and a general prohibition was not necessary or fair on the wider population). The comments which specifically supported a negative response to the proposal to prohibit street drinking were:

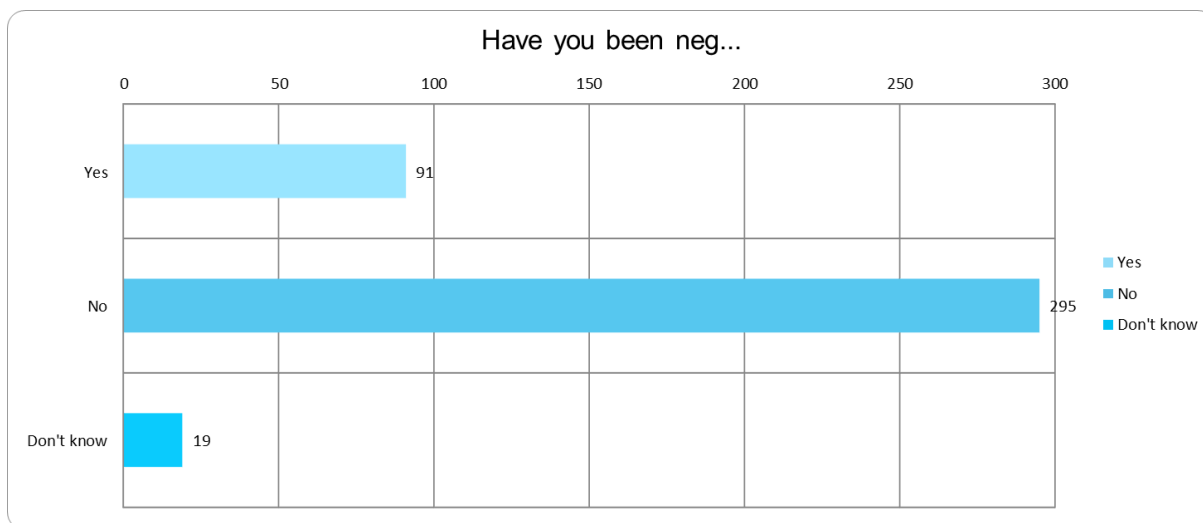
- That 'Street Drinking' itself is not the issue, it is people coming out of Licensed Premises having been allowed to consume too much alcohol.
- That the Police have all the necessary powers already but do not have the resources to tackle the problems.
- That a PSPO would affect events in Garth park.

### Begging

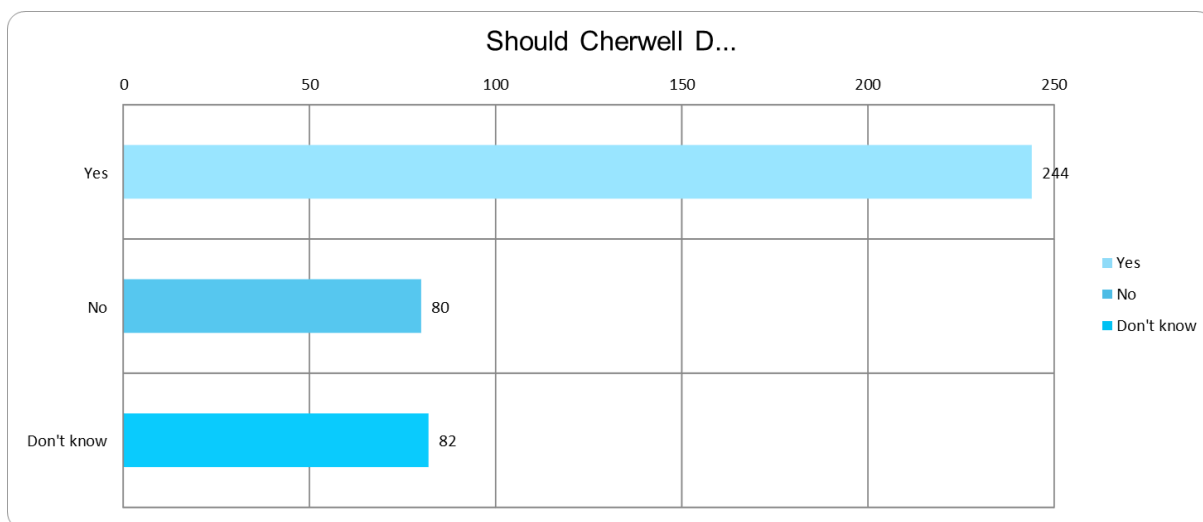
Have you seen people begging in Bicester town centre in the last 12 months?



Have you been negatively affected by this issue in the last 12 months?



Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit begging in Bicester town centre through a Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)?



There were more negative responses to the proposal to prohibit begging. Comments supporting the opposition to this proposal included:

- That punitive action against beggars and the homeless is not appropriate.
- That more help and support is required for the homeless rather than banning begging.
- There are already laws that enable the Police to deal with begging.
- That busking should not be prohibited.
- That the sale of the Big Issue should be allowed to continue.
- That genuine destitute people need sign posting to support agencies rather than being fined.
- That the proposal is a gross misuse of powers. A PSPO would blanket everyone whereas discretion can be applied to our existing laws.
- That individuals can make their own decisions as to whether to donate to beggars, who may or may not be in genuine need.
- That any begging in the area does not affect the respondent.
- Begging doesn't seem to be a large problem in Bicester, so action is not necessary.



## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

**6 June 2022**

### **Fixed Penalty Notice level for Cycling on the Pavement**

### **Report of Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety**

This report is public

#### **Purpose of report**

This report asks the Executive to agree the fixed penalty notice fine level for cycling on footpaths.

Action to prevent cycling on pavements will contribute towards the delivery of the council's objective to "work with partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour" within the Healthy, Resilient and Engaged Communities priority. It will also contribute towards the Enterprising Economy with Strong and Vibrant Local Centres priority. Tackling anti-social behaviour was also identified as one of the priorities for the council in the last residents survey.

#### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To set the fixed penalty notice amount to be applied to the offence of cycling on a footpath at £50 to align with Thames Valley Police.

#### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The Council's Community Wardens and Community Safety Officer are accredited by Thames Valley Police under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. This accreditation provides the Community Wardens and Community Safety Officer with certain powers normally only provided to police officers.
- 2.2 Following a recent review of the powers provided to the Community Wardens and Community Safety Officer the Police have also accredited those officers with the power to issue a fixed penalty notice for the existing offence of cycling on a footpath. The relevant legislation does not specify the amount of this fixed penalty notice and therefore a policy decision is required to set the amount of this penalty.

### **3.0 Report Details**

- 3.1 The offence for riding on a footpath is included in section 72 of the Highway Act 1835 along with other similar offences. The Police have accredited our Community Safety Team officers with the power to issue fixed penalty notices to persons identified as committing this offence normally only available to Police Constables under section 54 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.
- 3.2 The penalty for an offence under section 72 of the Highway Act 1835 is stated as “any sum not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale”. Therefore, the council can determine the level of fine to apply. Level 2 on the standard scale is £500. Thames Valley Police have set the level of fine they apply for this offence at £50.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the council applies the same level of fine for this offence as Thames Valley Police. To do so would minimise the chance of challenge on the basis that similar offences in the same location attract different penalties depending on which organisation is issuing the notice.
- 3.4 The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme is monitored by Thames Valley Police. Officers who are accredited under the scheme must undergo vetting and training for the role and be deemed suitable for accreditation by the Police. The accreditation is reviewed annually and the council required to provide information to the Police on the exercise of powers under the accreditation.
- 3.5 The accreditation of named Community Safety Team members to issue fixed penalty notices for cycling on footpaths is not in response to any specific problems. Our community wardens occasionally witness dangerous or reckless cycling on pavements and it is felt this power could be useful in some instances. The use of the power will not be targeted at any specific groups or localities. Determining the level of fine that the council will apply for this offence does not change the circumstances when the offence is committed but will enable the Community Safety Team members to take formal action when they witness inappropriate cycling on a footpath.
- 3.6 The council's normal enforcement policy will apply when officers believe they have sufficient evidence of an offence to consider issuing a fixed penalty notice. The principles of the policy include that enforcement action is unlikely when the person concerned has shown a willingness to resolve the non-compliance and that we are committed to taking a proportionate response to any breach of legislation. Therefore, our approach is intended to be that fixed penalty notices will only be issued when the officers witness deliberate dangerous or reckless cycling on pavements or if someone is deliberately cycling in a way that could cause another person concern for their safety. We would also consider issuing fixed penalty notices to individuals who have previously been warned but continue to cycle on the pavement.

### **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Executive agree to set the amount for the penalty notice for cycling on the footpath at £50.

## **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 It is not appropriate to consult on the level of a fine to be applied for specific offences.

## **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: Set an alternative level of penalty to apply for this offence. Since this is a new power available to the accredited officers there is no data or information available to the council at this time to support setting the fine level at a different level to that determined appropriate by Thames Valley Police.

Option 2: To not set a fine level for this offence. This would result in the council being unable to issue fixed penalty notices for cycling on the footpath despite council officers being accredited to do so by Thames Valley Police.

## **7.0 Implications**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:

Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 01295 221570

[Kelly.wheeler@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Kelly.wheeler@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Legal Implications**

- 7.2 It is appropriate to set the fixed penalty for cycling on a foot path to £50 to coincide with the police. The offence would arise out of the same circumstances and it would be unfair if different prosecuting authorities (councils, police) have a different fixed penalty structure. The offence would be committed within the same geographical area. It is necessary for the council to be fair, open and transparent in its enforcement decisions. Furthermore, to set the fine at a different level could open-up challenges, appeals and even judicial review, which would be costly.

Comments checked by:

Syma Akhtar, Solicitor 01295 753 701, [Syma.Akhtar@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:Syma.Akhtar@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

### **Risk Implications**

- 7.3 There are no risk implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director Customer

Focus, 01295 221556 [Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Equalities and Inclusion Implications**

- 7.4 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. The council's Enforcement Policy explains how decisions on the use of enforcement powers available to the council will be made, which states that the council will carry out enforcement in a fair and considered manner, and that the council will make sure that it treats everyone equally regardless of disability, race, age, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director Customer

Focus, 01295 221556, [Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Sustainability Implications**

- 7.5 The council is committed to active travel as a way of decarbonising transport and continues to work to put in place cycle paths to increase cyclist confidence so they won't feel the need to cycle on pavements to avoid cars.

Comments checked by:

Sandra Fisher-Martins, Programme Director Climate Change.

[Sandra.fisher-martins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.fisher-martins@oxfordshire.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**

As outlined in the purpose section in the main report.

### **Lead Councillor**

Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities

### **Document Information**

#### **Appendix number and title**

- None

**Background papers**

None

**Report Author and contact details**

Richard Webb; Assistant Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety

[Richard.webb@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.webb@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01865 815791

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## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

**6 June 2022**

### **Traffic Orders Bus Station & Cherwell Drive**

### **Report of Assistant Director Environmental Services**

This report is public

### **Purpose of report**

To seek to introduce new Traffic Orders covering the Bus Station & a new car park at Cherwell Drive

### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the consultation on changing the traffic orders.
- 1.2 To approve changing the Traffic Orders at the Bus Station & the new Cherwell Drive car park while noting the objection from Stagecoach and response from the Council.

### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The coach parking waiting area off Cherwell Drive Banbury has low usage. The Bus Station is also underutilised with the main user being Stagecoach.
- 2.2 A project was developed to convert the existing coach park area into a long stay car park and move any displaced coaches into the bays within the bus station which are rarely used and also use additional coach parking available at Horsefair East.
- 2.3 Usage studies on the coach park were carried out and a planning application was made to convert the coach parking area into a long stay car park. The planning application was approved and a contractor appointed to carry out the necessary small civil work to convert the car park. In addition, the new car park will have up to 40 spaces with the opportunity for charging points for electric vehicles in the future and will be a pay on exit car park.
- 2.4 Consultation on changing the traffic orders for the two sites were carried out. There has been only one objection to the proposed change, from Stagecoach.

- 2.5 A meeting was held with Stagecoach regarding their objection. The objection seemed to centre on Stagecoach's dissatisfaction with council support for bus travel and access into and out of the town centre. There seemed to be no objection from changing the use of the coach park and only some dissatisfaction with potentially coaches waiting in the bus station.
- 2.6 Several meetings have been held between this Council's Planning team & Oxfordshire's transport team to listen to the views & concerns of Stagecoach. To withdraw their objection Stagecoach requested a plan/roadmap be put in place to agree changes via a Memorandum of Understanding. A template for such a roadmap was put forward by Oxfordshire County Council on the 14 January 2022. To date Stagecoach have not removed their letter of objection although staff have talked through their objections in some detail.

### **3.0 Report Details**

- 3.1 This Council operates a piece of land next to Hurrans garden centre and close to Castle Quay. The piece of land operates as a coach parking waiting area and generates no income for the Council. Current business rates for the site are charged at over £5000/ annum
- 3.2 The coach park is only be used during school term by a small number of coaches associated with school travel including transporting school children to the Sports Centre.
- 3.3 The Car Parking action plan which forms part of the Car Parking Strategy approved in 2020 looks to increase capacity in Banbury including the development of a new car park at Cherwell Drive. This increase in 40 spaces, partly offsets 90 spaces lost in this Council's car parks as a result of the Castle Quay development.
- 3.4 The development of a new pay on exit, long stay car park with electric charge points in the future will bring benefits to users of Castle Quay & the town centre. In addition, the opening of this car park will allow Bolton Road to become a short stay car park helping to increase the turnover of visitors into the town centre and the overall footfall in the town centre.
- 3.5 The bus station has nine bus bays. Three are not used and several of the other bays are underutilised. The main users of the bus station are Johnsons, National Express and Stagecoach. Stagecoach only operates bus services from the bus station which do not serve Banbury town. These buses serve villages and further afield locations such as Oxford & Brackley. In total Stagecoach have some 20,000 – 25,000 departures a year or 400-500 per week from the bus station. National Express have not used the bus station since the start of the pandemic and Johnsons are relatively low users of the bus station utilising only one bay.
- 3.6 Overall the bus station has significant under used capacity. Consequently, it was proposed to use the empty bays in the bus station for coach waiting purposes.
- 3.7 Following gaining planning permission for the conversion of the coach waiting area to a long stay car park, work to carry out small civil work and the installation of car parking equipment was procured. During the Summer, consultation on the changes



were made as part of the changes to the traffic orders for the two sites. Only one objection has been received, from Stagecoach.

3.8 Following the objection a meeting was held with Stagecoach to clarify the objection. The objection seemed not to relate to the proposed changes but more to their frustration at the access points to the town centre and their perception at a lack of support from this Council and the County Council towards bus services.

3.9 No other objections have been received. The concerns regarding access to the town centre have been passed onto Planning team and onto the County Council transport team to try and address Stagecoach's wider concerns. To date there has been no indication from Stagecoach that there is a willingness to withdraw their objection. A reply has been sent to Stagecoach addressing the points they have raised in Appendix 1. The overall project has been delayed for almost twelve months as a result of this objection to explore Stagecoach's concerns.

3.10 Stagecoach does not use the current coach stopover point. The bus station is used by Stagecoach only for services which run beyond Banbury. Consequently, there are three empty bays and at least two bays with spare capacity.

3.11 Once Cherwell Drive opens as a car park, any displaced coaches are likely to use two spaces at Horsefair, their own existing depots in Banbury with only a small number expected to use the spare spaces at the bus station. None of the other current users have objected to the moving of the coach area from Cherwell Drive.

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

4.1 The Traffic orders need the approval of the Executive if they are to proceed.

4.2 If the orders are not changed then the project cannot proceed.

## **5.0 Consultation**

5.1 Consultation took place Summer 2021. No objections received other than from Stagecoach.

5.2 Several meetings have now been held with Stagecoach to listen to their concerns regarding these changes but, it appears that their concerns are more around their perceptions of lack of local authority support for bus operations.

## **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 adopt the recommendations.

Option 2: To reject the recommendations and ask officers to reconsider the overall project

## **7.0 Implications**

### **7.1 Financial and Resource Implications**

The capital budget for this scheme is already in place (CAP031).

The financial implications of moving the coach park and introducing a new long-stay car park have been factored into the 2022/23 budget. Not proceeding would leave the service with a budget pressure and it would have to find savings elsewhere in its budget to address this.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845

[michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Legal Implications**

- 7.2 Traffic orders are governed by the Road Traffic Act, and the Council must follow the appropriate procedure established by that legislation. Here, as the Council has appointed an external company to conduct the process to amend the traffic orders, officers are confident that the statutory process has been followed as appropriate, and the necessary consultation periods have elapsed allowing the Council to proceed with the orders as proposed in the body of this report. The outstanding objection from Stagecoach does not prohibit the Council from proceeding, but it does present a potential risk that any decision of the Council to amend the Traffic Orders as set out in the body of the report could result in a formal challenge being issued by Stagecoach. If such a challenge were issued, then the Council's legal service would need to source external support to provide advice and assistance to the service team in defending that claim. The legal service will also provide any advice and assistance required in entering into any works agreements to undertake the civil work required to change the use of the site to a car park, should that be required.

Comments checked by (prior to leaving the council):

Chris Mace, Solicitor, [legal@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:legal@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Risk Implications**

- 7.3 The Council has followed the legal process in consulting users to the changes in this project. The only objection has been received is from Stagecoach.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, 01295 221786,

[Louise.Tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.Tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Equalities & Climate Implications**

- 7.4 There are no equalities issues associated with this project as the repurposing of the existing coach car park will not have any direct impact on bus service users. The new car park should look to include disabled parking spaces and electric vehicle charging points to ensure the new provision is accessible for all users.

Comments checked by:  
Emily Schofield Acting Head of Strategy  
07881 311707 [emily.schofield@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:emily.schofield@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## 8.0 Decision Information

### Key Decision

**Financial Threshold Met:** No

**Community Impact Threshold Met:** No

### Wards Affected

All

### Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

An enterprising economy with strong & vibrant local centres

### Lead Councillor

Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities

### Document Information

#### Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 - Stagecoach's objection

#### Background papers

None

#### Report Author and contact details

Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services 0300 003 0105  
[ed.potter@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:ed.potter@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

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Dear Nick Small

I am writing to formally respond to your letter of objection (dated 4 June 2021). As you know when making a change to our Traffic Orders we have a legal obligation to consult and to carefully consider any objections before deciding whether to proceed. The Council consulted on changing these traffic orders with stakeholders and has received one objection to the proposed changes. That objection was from Stagecoach.

Your objection has been carefully considered and we held a meeting with you on Friday 18 June with myself and our car parking manager Colum Nooney. At that meeting we explored your objection and sort clarification on statements you made in your letter of objection. We considered all your concerns and set up a meeting on 19 November for you to discuss your concerns with our Planning team & the County Council transport planners.

As you know we have considered the points you made in Stagecoach's objection to changing the following Traffic Orders

1. **Proposed Revocation of Cherwell District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Compton Road, Banbury) (Coach Park) Order 2000**
2. **Proposed Cherwell District Council Banbury Bus Station (Amendment) Order:**

We have set out our response in a number of meetings we have held with yourselves to discuss your objections but, I felt it would be helpful to formally respond to your letter of objection.

I shall answer your objections point by point:

*However, we have to stress that we have long been frustrated at the studied indifference of public sector stakeholders to the role bus has and should expect to play in meeting the mobility needs of the town and its extensive retail and service catchment in a more sustainable way. To the extent that the District and County Council has actively intervened in transport matters it has more often than not been with a clear and often explicit rationale to further favour motorists and facilitate the most convenient possible journeys by private car, to parking facilities provided as cheaply and as close to the destination as possible. The current proposals are, obviously, entirely consistent with this rationale*

The Council disagrees with your viewpoint. The proposed change does not actively increase car usage. The proposal offsets some of the reductions in the Council's car parking spaces which have been lost from the Castle Quay development. The proposal accommodates the existing capacity for parking PCVs as currently exists but at alternative locations. Survey work we have carried out shows the number of spaces being used by PCVs rarely exceeds six. The users are associated with school transport and the number of users outside school term is usually zero. The use of Horsefair will be for 2 PCV spaces and up to four spaces within the bus station. It is however expected that the number of coaches using the bus station will be low, occasional in nature and will only be during school terms. Car Parking facilities are not 'provided as cheaply and as close to the destination as possible'. Charges

rose by 25% in August 2021, with a further 10% rise in summer 2022. The parking charges are not cheap and are compatible with other nearby town.

*Were this to be achievable in the context of practically unlimited highways capacity offering free-flowing safe travelling conditions to all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and bus users, that might be justifiable. However, this is evidently far from being the case. Demand for finite highways capacity in and around Banbury town centre, and on its wider approaches, has consistently exceeded capacity such that parts of the town have air quality problems that are amongst the worst in the UK, especially around Hennef Way/Southam Road; quite apart from the effects of chronic delay and severance on individuals and businesses. These delays affect our business probably more than any other single stakeholder.*

*Any measure that has, at its heart, the facilitation of large numbers of extra car journeys causes us great concern if only for that reason*

The proposal does not facilitate large number of additional car journeys. The proposal increases car parking spaces by 35-40 which is less than the 80-90 lost as a result of the Castle Quay development. There is no evidence that the proposed changes will facilitate additional car journeys.

However, it seems particularly perverse that the Council should be seeking to reduce facilities for PCVs in Banbury town centre – the only place in the entire District where public transport can provide a relevant offer to a large number of visitors, and maximise the agglomeration effects demanded by town centre uses without having serious environmental and amenity impacts. We explain later in more detail how the proposals to close Compton Street Coach Park and move longer term bus and coach parking to Banbury Bus Station and Horsefair serve to materially reduce the level of infrastructure available to support the operation of regular bus service, and seriously truncate any possibility of seeing any expansion of local bus and longer-distance services in the future.

As previously explained the Council has not reduced facilities for PCVs. The Coach park is rarely used by coaches outside school term time. Those coaches which use the facility are largely associated with school travel often travelling to use sports facilities at Spiceball. Some of the firms which use this facility have a depot located in the town. Stagecoach does not use the Compton Road facility and no objections have been received from the coach companies which use the current facilities. The alternative facilities will match the current usage and will provide drivers with a better facility for waiting, by being closer to the Town Centre facilities.

### **1. Stagecoach Objection, and its basis**

*The proposed Revocation of Cherwell District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Compton Road, Banbury) (Coach Park) Order 2000 (1.) serves to remove Compton Road as a Bus and Coach Park, to allow its use as a public car park. The proposed Cherwell District Council Banbury Bus Station (Amendment) Order (2.) serves to re-provide longer-term bus and coach parking facilities by setting aside space in the existing operational bus station of this purpose.*

*In so doing, facilities that support the operation of public passenger-carrying vehicles serving Banbury and its environs are proposed to be substantially curtailed. These facilities support the rational and efficient operation of a wide variety of bus and coach services and operations, ranging from registered local bus services offered on a scheduled basis to the public, express coach services, private hires and charters, contract coaches and buses to serve statutory and non-statutory home-to-school requirements, rail replacement services, demand-responsive bus/minibus services, community transport services and coach tours*

We do not believe this will be the case. The bus station has nine bays, only four bays are regularly used. Three bays are not used at all and the two bays used by National Express are rarely used especially since National Express has ceased services since the pandemic.

We have carried out extensive monitoring of the current coach waiting facility and it is hardly used during school holidays and used to varying degrees during school term times. We strongly believe there is sufficient capacity at Horsefair & the Bus Station for coaches to wait.

### **2. Further Contextual Representations and Observations**

*We note your observations regarding the bus station but do not necessarily agree with them.*

*By consolidating all bus and coach waiting and parking in a single already under-sized and seriously compromised facility, this is likely to greatly reduce the space available to efficiently support current local bus services, with the added difficulty that ad-hoc long-term coach parking in particular, by its nature is peaky and quite unpredictable. This is likely to lead to unforeseen clashes where insufficient stand space is available*

As previous highlighted there are empty bays in the bus station. The usage of the current coach facility has been monitored and there is virtually no usage outside school term time. During school term time there is usage from mid-morning until early afternoon and there is sufficient capacity at Horsefair and the Bus Station. We do not agree with your observation.

At least 5 bays are required for local bus services today, which leaves a maximum of four that could address other PCV parking requirements. It has to be stressed at during the Banbury Fair town bus services are also obliged to use the bus station, meaning that it is full. This is exactly the kind of event that also attracts touring coaches and charters. While the Council suggests that Horsefair could serve these purposes, it is entirely unclear how the management of the very limited space available would be undertaken by the Council or any other party. In fact, the proposals seriously hinder the ability of the town to best capitalise on special events and festivals, for which accommodating peak visitor volumes will never be possible in car parks.

During the Banbury Fair we will ensure suitable arrangements are in place as we do each year. We do not agree with your comments regarding special events & festivals. At such events we ensure sufficient plans are in place to deal with changes and we ensure users of the bus station are aware of changes that have to be made for that limited period.

*Additional pressure on the Bus Station for longer periods will certainly require the presence of a banksman for a longer period and on more days, to allow the bus station to operate safely. This represents a significant additional cost that will need to be borne, and we are not clear that the Council is intending to do this aside from further lifting charges to operators. This further erodes the ability of all operators to sustain their business. It can be added to the ever-increasing costs arising from a number of sources, principal among which congestion in the local network which demands additional vehicle resource to compensate for declining vehicle productivity. In Banbury much of this congestion is the direct result of motorists circulating around the town centre to find the most advantageously-sited surface parking spaces, and avoid using the multi-storeys.*

The departure charges made at the bus station are competitive with other bus stations and they do not fully cover the costs of the banksman. Improvements in vehicle technology including camera systems and radar systems means that these technologies are low cost & effective to reduce the risk of collision. The banksman is present to try and stop pedestrians entering the reversing area despite the signage warning pedestrians of the potential danger and to assist drivers when reversing their vehicles. With the departure of Debenhams there are limited delivery vehicles entering this area.

The Council is unaware of any evidence which supports your assessment of vehicles circulating Banbury looking for car parks. Cherwell District Council has car parks located at a large number of points around the town centre so there would appear to be no need for cars circulating looking for a car park.

*At least as important, what limited "surplus capacity" might putatively be considered to exist at the Bus Station is likely to be required for significant operational growth by this and potentially by other bus operators, such as Johnsons or Stagecoach Midlands.*

We would not agree with your assessment of there being limited surplus capacity at the bus station. Less than 50% of the capacity of the bus station is used. The Council would welcome significant growth in bus services and would support releasing capacity to meet any significant growth in demand

*Cherwell and all the adjoining local authorities represent areas of recent, continuing and future levels of employment and demographic growth that are among the greatest in England. This is reflected in the Cherwell District Council Local Plan Part 1 Adopted in 2015. At least one entirely new bus service is anticipated serving the Salt Way Allocation BAN16. Frequency uplift is anticipated for the 488 to 2 buses/hour in the reasonably near term. Likewise the S4 route group is also likely to see a frequency increase within the next 4 years, and this might be associated with a new supplementary rural route serving off-line villages. The proposed measures will serve to seriously hinder, and potentially all but remove the potential to see these and other potential new and improved services delivered*



We would happily work with Stagecoach and other bus providers if a greater use of the bus station is needed. We would ensure that we work collaboratively to accommodate such expansion. However, currently and for several years the bus station has had significant spare capacity and we wish to use that spare capacity for coaches to wait for short periods.

*With regard to the use of an existing bus stop on Horsefair to accommodate coach set down and pick up, Stagecoach has no great objection. The site is reasonably advantageously sited on the other, western side of the town centre core, and pedestrian permeability into the town is good. The area benefits from a high quality of townscape and the facility will present a strong sense of arrival. It must be stressed though, that the capacity this offers for coach operators is very limited indeed, whatever the nature of their operation. At busy times it is, again entirely unclear how demand for this stop can practically be managed as this is an on-street facility and is not liable to control by the District Council. In fact this aspect, in common with the whole proposal appears to be scantily thought-through, and the evidence has not been presented as to what the demand for coach facilities might be, especially at busy times.*

We have thoroughly researched our proposal as we do before we embark on new projects. We carried out usage survey in Compton Road to help support our planning application regarding change to a car park. We have been able to use that information to help plan the overall project. We welcome your acceptance of use of the Horsefair bus stop. We have a high degree of confidence that the usage of some of the spare capacity at the bus station will provide better access for drivers to take a break in the town centre. We also believe a relatively small number of coaches will use this new location.

*Finally, the benefit to motorists and the Council itself as proprietor of the new car park, cannot be considered to be great. It is not clear what the capacity of the car park will be but it is highly unlikely to exceed 50 spaces. The space does not lend itself well to being set out as a car park, thus the capacity may be rather lesser. It is severed by Castle Way from the main leisure and retail venue. This turns its back to the road, which is elevated on a substantial embankment, making walking routes to the Castle Quay development and the rest of the main central venue relatively convoluted and unattractive. Set against the disbenefits to public transport other PCV operations and coach-based tourism this gain seems entirely insufficient to justify the proposals*

We note your comments about the car park. The car park will be for around 35-40 spaces, it will be long stay car parking and allow Bolton Road car park to move to short stay. The change is important to our strategy. We have listened to your comments and believe the change is positive and will have no adverse impact on bus & coach facilities. Once again, we have received no objections other than this one from Stagecoach.

*Accordingly we can be expected to make vigorous formal objections to the proposed Amendment to the Banbury Bus Station Order 1999, the Revocation of Cherwell District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Compton Road, Banbury) (Coach Park) Order 2000, and such other associated legal instruments that may be published in due course, should the Council elect to proceed as proposed.*

*We nevertheless trust that these and further specific comments we might make in future, will be given due weight in the consideration given to the making/revoking of the Orders by the Council*

We have listened to your comments and arranged meetings with yourself. We have put you in contact through meetings with Oxfordshire County Council Transport Planners. We have considered your comments and have delayed our projects whilst we sort solutions to satisfy the issues mentioned in your letter of objection.

After giving full consideration to your letter of objection and having set out our reason for rejecting your arguments, it is our decision that we intend to amend the traffic orders as planned. We will fully engage with all stakeholders during this period of change which will commence once the proposal has been considered by our Council Executive.

Yours sincerely

## Cherwell District Council

### Executive

6 June 2022

## Notification of Urgent Action - Additional Restrictions Grant Omicron Business - Grant Payment Levels

### Report of Assistant Director of Finance

This report is public

### Purpose of report

To inform the Executive of the urgent decision that was taken by the Chief Executive to finalise an additional grants policy in response to the Omicron variant in line with Government guidance.

### 1.0 Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- 1.1 To note the decision that was taken by the Chief Executive on 8 March 2022 (Appendix 1).

### 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Constitution sets out that the Chief Executive may take an urgent decision in relation to an Executive function (in consultation with the Leader of the Council) if it is in the best interests of the Council and/or residents.
- 2.2 The Chief Executive took an urgent decision in January 2022 (reported to 7 March Executive, [Minute 114 refers](#)) to adopt an Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) Policy in response to the Omicron variant in line with Government guidance. The policy did not include the level of grant payments that would be made to businesses as the council needed to know how many applications there were in advance so as not to have a bill that exceeded the level of grant remaining.
- 2.2 Based on the number of applications received, it is now possible to set the grant levels for this element of the council's ARG scheme on a basis that mirrors the mandatory omicron grants, which is consistent with the approach the council has taken throughout with ARG rounds.

- 2.3 An urgent decision needed to be taken by the Chief Executive because the grants must be paid by 31 March 2022 or the money must be returned to the Government.

### **3.0 Report Details**

- 3.1 The urgent decision notice is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The following grant levels for the Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) Policy were agreed by the Chief Executive 8 March 2022 in relation to business grants payable in March 2022. The proposed levels are in line with the mandatory scheme.

Rateable Value	ARG Omicron Grant
No RV	£2,667
Up to £15,000	£2,667
>£15,000 - <£51,000	£4,000
£51,000 or over	£6,000

- 3.3 The total grant payments made under this phase of the ARG policy was £0.440m.

### **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 In line with the Constitution, this report is informing Executive of two decisions which were taken by the Chief Executive under urgency powers.

### **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 None in relation to this report.

### **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 note the report. this is not recommended as the urgent action has been taken and it is a constitutional requirement for it to be reported to Executive.

### **7.0 Implications**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report as the decision has already been taken. However, all business grant payments were funded by Government grants.

Comments checked by:  
Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845,  
[Michael.Furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.Furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Legal Implications**

- 7.2 There are no legal implications directly associated with this report as the decision has already been taken.

Comments checked by:  
Chris Mace, Solicitor, 07702 917916, [christopher.mace@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:christopher.mace@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Risk Implications**

- 7.3 There are no risk implications directly associated with this report as the decision has already been taken.

Comments checked by:  
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes,  
[louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01295 221786

### **Equality and Inclusion Implications**

- 7.4 There are no equality and inclusion implications directly associated with this report as the decision has already been taken and an Equality Impact Assessment for the scheme was completed at the time of the original proposal.

Comments checked by:  
Emily Schofield, Acting Head of Strategy, Tel: 07881 311707, Email:  
[Emily.schofield@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Emily.schofield@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### **Sustainability Implications**

- 7.6 There are no sustainability implications directly associated with this report as the decision has already been taken.

Sandra Fisher-Martins, Programme Manager, Climate Action, Tel 07584 174682  
Email: [sandra.fisher-martins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.fisher-martins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **8.0 Decision Information**

### **Key Decision**

**Financial Threshold Met:** No

**Community Impact Threshold Met:** No

### **Wards Affected**

All

## **Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

All

## **Lead Councillor**

Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance

## **Document Information**

### **Appendix number and title**

- Appendix 1 – Urgent Decision Notice

## **Background papers**

None

## **Report Author and contact details**

Leanne Lock, Strategic Business Partner, 01295 227098,  
[Leanne.lock@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Leanne.lock@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)



## Special Urgent Decision Taken by Chief Executive

Published on 17 March 2022

**Decision:** Additional Restrictions Grants Policy – grant payment levels

**Decision taker:** Chief Executive

**Decision Date:** 8 March 2022

**Is decision subject to Call-in?** No (urgent decision, call-in waived)

**Deadline for Call-in:** N/A

**Is decision exempt?** No

**Is decision urgent?** Yes

### Summary

The Chief Executive took an urgent decision in January 2022 (reported to 7 March Executive) to adopt an Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) Policy in response to the Omicron variant in line with Government guidance. The policy did not include the level of grant payments that would be made to businesses as the council needed to know how many applications there were in advance so as not to have a bill that exceeded the level of grant remaining.

Based on the number of applications received, it is now possible to set the grant levels for this element of the council's ARG scheme on a basis that mirrors the mandatory omicron grants, which is consistent with the approach the council has taken throughout with ARG rounds.

An urgent decision needs to be taken by the Chief Executive because the grants must be paid by 31 March 2022 or the money must be returned to the Government. A report notifying Executive of the urgent decision will be submitted to the 4 April meeting.

### Decision

#### Resolved

- (1) That the following grant levels for the Additional Restrictions Grants Policy be agreed:

Rateable Value	ARG Omicron Grant
No RV	£2,667
Up to £15,000	£2,667

>£15,000 - <£51,000	£4,000
£51,000 or over	£6,000

### **Reasons for Decision**

Following adoption of an Additional Restrictions Grants Policy in January 2022, as the total number of applications is now known, a decision on grant levels can be taken. The proposed levels are in line with the mandatory scheme.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

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

Option 1: Not to agree the grant payment levels. This is not recommended as the proposed grants are in line with the mandatory scheme.

### **Conflicts of Interest Declared and Dispensations Granted by Head of Paid Service**

None

### **Attachments**

None

Yvonne Rees  
Chief Executive



## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

**6 June 2022**

### **Notification of Decision taken by Chief Executive under Urgency Powers**

#### **Report of Assistant Director – Growth and Economy**

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

#### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Executive of the decision taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive for the approval of delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and Economy, in consultation with the Council's s151 officer, to enter into new sales of leases; staircase of shared ownership leases; or resale of leases for residential properties in the Council's housing assets portfolio.

#### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive for the approval of delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and Economy, in consultation with the Council's s151 officer, to enter into new sales of leases; staircase of shared ownership leases; or resale of leases for residential properties in the Council's housing assets portfolio.

#### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The Constitution states that the Chief Executive may take an urgent decision in relation to an Executive function (in consultation with the Leader of the Council) if it is in the best interests of the Council and/or residents.
- 2.2 The decisions taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive regarding the approval of delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and Economy, in consultation with the Council's s151 officer, to enter into new sales of leases; staircase of shared ownership leases; or resale of leases for residential properties in the Council's housing assets portfolio, was necessitated because there was hitherto no such delegated authority and five

properties in the Council's housing assets portfolio required urgent completion or legal progression.

### **3.0 Report Details**

- 3.1 The possible consequences of not taking an urgent decision to delegate the necessary powers would have meant that the transactions relating to new sales of leases, staircasing and resale of leases would not be completed in a timely manner.
- 3.2 The details of the properties involved are set out in the attached (exempt) Appendix One.

### **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 In line with the Constitution, this report is informing Executive of a decision which was taken by the Chief Executive under urgency powers.

### **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 Given that this urgent decision was related to commercial transactions, no outside consultation was undertaken in relation to this urgent decision.

### **6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 6.1 The following alternative option has been identified and rejected for the reason as set out below.

Option 1: Not to note the report. This is not recommended as the urgent action has been taken and it is a constitutional requirement for it to be reported to Executive.

### **7.0 Implications**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report as it is reporting an urgent decision which has already been taken.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance  
01295 221845 [michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Legal Implications**

- 7.2 The noting of the urgent decision taken ensures compliance with the Council's constitution.

Comments checked by:

Helen Lolas, Team Leader and Solicitor, Legal Services  
07801 400 941, [helen.lolas@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.lolas@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Risk Implications**

- 7.3 The noting of the urgent decision taken ensures compliance with the Council's constitution.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus  
01295 221556, [celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Equalities and Inclusion Implications**

- 7.4 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report as it is reporting on an urgent decision which has already been taken. Every time we must take a decision, we make sure it is in line with our equalities and inclusion framework.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus  
01295 221556, [celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## **Sustainability Implications**

- 7.5 There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report because it is reporting on an urgent decision which has already been taken.

Comments checked by:

Sandra Fischer-Martins, Climate Action Mobilisation Manager  
07584 174682, [sandra.fischer-martins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.fischer-martins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **8.0 Decision Information**

### **Key Decision**

**Financial Threshold Met: No**

**Community Impact Threshold Met: No**

**Wards Affected**

Banbury Ruscote  
Bicester South and Ambrosden

**Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

The reporting of urgent decisions is pursuant to a Constitutional requirement.

**Lead Councillor**

Councillor Lynn Pratt, Portfolio Holder for Property

**Document Information****Appendix number and title**

- Appendix One – EXEMPT urgent decision notice

**Background papers**

None

**Report Author and contact details**

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