



**Cherwell**

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

**Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting  
of the Executive held on Monday 4 September 2023**

1. Date of publication of this summary: 5 September 2023
2. Decisions (if any) taken as a matter of urgency under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in the Constitution (and not therefore subject to the call-in procedure): None
3. Date by which notice of call-in of any of the following decisions must be received in writing by the Chief Executive (see notes below):- Noon on Friday 8 September 2023
4. Notes:-
  - (a) For background documentation to the following decisions, please refer to the agenda and supporting papers (copies of which are available on the Council's website ([www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)) or from Democratic Services);
  - (b) Notice of call-in must be submitted in writing, by email or text to the Chief Executive by the deadline specified above, and must state the reason or reasons why "call-in" has been requested;
  - (c) Call-in can be requested by any six non-executive members of the Council.  
However, if at any point during a municipal year the total number of opposition councillors is six or less the total number of non-executive members required to call-in a decision shall be the total number of opposition councillors less two.
  - (d) Decisions not called-in by the deadline specified above will become effective immediately the deadline has expired (unless they are recommendations to the Council).
  - (e) The Council has stipulated that the call-in procedure should not be used to challenge decisions as a matter of course and should be used only when fully justified.

**Yvonne Rees  
Chief Executive**

Agenda Item and Recommendation	Decision	Reasons	Alternative Options	Conflicts of Interest Declared and Dispensations Granted by Head of Paid Service
<p><b>Agenda Item 6</b> <b>Cherwell Local Plan</b> <b>Regulation 18 Consultation</b></p> <p>Report of Assistant Director Planning and Development</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>1.1 To approve public consultation on the draft Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 (Appendices 1 and 2) subject to the changes presented at Appendix 9 in response to the resolution of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 August 2023;</p> <p>1.2 To delegate to the</p>	<p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>(1) That public consultation on the draft Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 (Appendix 1) be approved, subject to the changes presented in response to the resolution of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 August 2023 (Appendix 9 to the report).</p> <p>(2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director - Planning and Development to make any minor amendments and corrections to the draft</p>	<p>The Council has a legal requirement to review its Local Plan every five years. A new Local Plan is required to meet Cherwell's needs, protect its environment and secure sustainable development. The process for preparing a new local plan is prescribed by legislation. This current Plan is a consultation draft prepared to prompt discussion and feedback on its vision, objectives, spatial strategies, and new planning policies. When adopted, the Local Plan will guide the delivery of sustainable development across the district. The Executive is invited to approve a consultation to support further plan development.</p>	<p>Option 1: Not to progress a Cherwell Local Plan Review at this time. The Council has a legal requirement to review its Local Plan every five years, and update it if appropriate. There is therefore an expectation that most plans will need to be updated every five years. Progressing the review of the Local Plan is required to ensure a planned approach to development in Cherwell.</p> <p>Option 2: Delay progress on a Cherwell Local Plan Review. The Local Plan programme has already slipped, principally due to the decision in August 2022 to cease work on the</p>	<p>None</p>

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<p>Assistant Director - Planning and Development the authority to make any minor amendments and corrections to the draft document he considers necessary prior to formal publication and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development;</p> <p>1.3 To delegate to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development the authority to finalise and publish supporting documents in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development.</p>	<p>document he considers necessary prior to formal publication and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development.</p> <p>(3) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to finalise and publish supporting documents in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development.</p>		<p>Oxfordshire Plan which was expected to set the strategic level of growth across the County. More recently, following consideration of a previous version of the draft local plan in January 2023 the Executive resolved, “...<i>Consultation be deferred until a later date....in light of the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive to allow officers to consider these comments</i>”. Further delay would create significant uncertainty about maintaining a plan-led approach to development in Cherwell.</p> <p>Option 3: Do not consult on an emerging Plan at ‘Regulation 18’ stage</p>	

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			<p>There is no specific requirement to publish a draft Plan under Regulation 18 of the Local Plan regulations. There have been two issues and options consultations in 2020 and 2021 and the Council could wait until it publishes a proposed / pre-submission Plan under Regulation 19. However, there is time to undertake consultation now which would provide further opportunity for community engagement, benefit Plan development and ensure as many issues as possible are considered before a proposed Plan is prepared under Regulation 19.</p>	
<b>Agenda Item 7</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	An updated LDS has been	Option 1: Not to approve	None

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<p><b>Local Development Scheme</b></p> <p>Report of Assistant Director – Planning and Development</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>1.1 To approve the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) presented at Appendix 1.</p>	<p>(1) That the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Appendix 1 to the report) be approved.</p>	<p>prepared taking into account the significant change in circumstances since the last LDS was adopted in 2021. It provides a broad programme for completion of the on-going Local Plan review and a potential Community Infrastructure Levy. The Council has a statutory responsibility to prepare and maintain an LDS. The LDS will be used by officers, the public, partners and developers and other stakeholders to monitor the production of documents and to plan for associated consultations. Approval of the LDS is needed to assist project management and ensure that the Council meets its statutory responsibilities for plan-making. The LDS will be reviewed again if there is a</p>	<p>the LDS</p> <p>The Council has a statutory responsibility to maintain an LDS. If the Council did not prepare its own LDS the Secretary of State could impose one. Aside from legal duty, not to approve the LDS could undermine the confidence of the public and stakeholders about the Council’s plan-making programme. The LDS would need to be re-presented to the Executive at a future meeting.</p> <p>Option 2: To reconsider the content of the LDS</p> <p>The LDS has been prepared having regard to the Council’s statutory responsibilities and current resources. It is considered by officers to be</p>	

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		further, significant change in circumstances.	appropriate for the present and foreseeable circumstances.	
<p><b>Agenda Item 8 Tenant's Charter</b></p> <p>Report of Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>1.1 To approve the new Tenant's Charter. The Tenant's Charter sets out a new service standard that all tenants can expect to receive from the Council whilst they are living within properties the Council manages.</p>	<p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>(1) That the Tenant's Charter (Appendix 1), which sets out a new service standard that all tenants can expect to receive from the Council whilst they are living within properties the Council manages, be approved.</p> <p>(2) That the planned publicity and promotion to ensure a raising of the standards of rented properties within the District, following the motion at the Council</p>	<p>The Council is committed to improving the standards of accommodation and the experience of tenants within the District, and the new Tenants Charter and its commitments provide a framework for ensuring this is realised and also assists the Council in its leadership role in driving improvements in standards.</p>	<p>Option 1: Not to bring forward a Tenants Charter This option would be contrary to a Motion from Council and a previous Executive decision.</p>	<p>None</p>

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<p>1.2 To approve the planned publicity and promotion to ensure a raising of the standards of rented properties within the District, following the motion at the Council meeting on 17 July 2023 that called on the Executive to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reiterate the basic rights of tenants across Cherwell and the responsibilities of landlords.</li> <li>• Run a public awareness campaign of the Charter, encouraging tenants to be aware of their rights and where local sources of advice and support can be found.</li> </ul>	<p>meeting on 17 July 2023 that called on the Executive to reiterate the basic rights of tenants across Cherwell and the responsibilities of landlords and run a public awareness campaign of the Charter, encouraging tenants to be aware of their rights and where local sources of advice and support can be found, be approved.</p>			

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<p><b>Agenda Item 9</b>  <b>Increase service family accommodation for ARAP scheme members</b></p> <p>Report of Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>1.1 to delegate authority to Assistant Director Housing and Wellbeing in consultation with Portfolio Holder Housing to:</p> <p>a. agree variation to existing agreement to extend the offer of</p>	<p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>(1) That authority be delegated to Assistant Director Housing and Wellbeing in consultation with Portfolio Holder Housing to:</p> <p>a. agree variation to existing agreement to extend the offer of accommodation from 10 properties to 16 properties for the period as deemed appropriate.</p> <p>c. agree and utilise future accommodation for the same purpose.</p>	<p>The ARAP scheme offers priority relocation to eligible current or former Afghan nationals who were locally employed staff by the British military forces and who are assessed to be under serious threat to life. CDC currently leases 10 properties from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for housing Afghan refugees under the Government’s ARAP scheme. CDC has been offered a further six properties to resettle more Afghan families who worked with British forces during the war in Afghanistan.</p>	<p>Option 1: Not offer to partner the Home Office in their commitment to settle families in the UK who were part of the United Kingdom military operation in Afghanistan. Rejected because Cherwell District Council considers itself part of the UK response to supporting refugees</p> <p>Option 2: Provide accommodation through our regular housing register. Rejected By partnering with the MOD we are able to provide a resource not usually available to non-service personnel and so protect the applicants on the housing register from an increase in people seeking homes through</p>	<p>None</p>



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<p>accommodation from 10 properties to 16 properties for the period as deemed appropriate.</p> <p>b. agree and utilise future accommodation for the same purpose.</p>			that route.	
<p><b>Agenda Item 10 Bicester Garden Town Programme - Market Square Project Business Need and Next Stages</b></p> <p>Report of Assistant Director – Growth and Economy</p>	<p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>(1) That the business need for transformational public realm improvements at Bicester Market Square be confirmed.</p> <p>(2) That the expenditure (up to a level of £180k)</p>	<p>Significant resources (£4.25m) have been made available to progress this project through the Council's capital programme and officers are now seeking to bring forward more detailed plans in consultation with stakeholders and the public for members to approve.</p>	<p>Options would be evaluated as part of the consultation process</p>	<p>None</p>

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<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>1.1 to confirm the business need for transformational public realm improvements at Bicester Market Square</p> <p>1.2 to approve the expenditure (up to a level of £180k) required for consultants to undertake detailed design through to planning permission and consultation with stakeholders; to include associated studies on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the relocation of parking and wider impacts of parking within Bicester</li> </ul>	<p>required for consultants to undertake detailed design through to planning permission and consultation with stakeholders be approved and it be noted this will include associated studies on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the relocation of parking and wider impacts of parking within Bicester</li> <li>- traffic movement and flows through Market Square and around the Town Centre, including access for existing businesses/users</li> <li>- a full design of the Market Square public realm improvement</li> </ul>	<p>Therefore, officers are seeking to have the business need for delivering this project at the market square in Bicester affirmed and for authorisation to expend up to £180k of the anticipated £900k professional fees on relevant studies, consultation and detailed design (to the point of planning application submission) to enable a further report to members recommending approval for the final scheme and how it will be delivered.</p>		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- traffic movement and flows through Market Square and around the Town Centre, including access for existing businesses/users</li> <li>- a full design of the Market Square public realm improvement project with full business case for the capital expenditure and future revenue impact from changes to car parking income and any future</li> </ul>	<p>project with full business case for the capital expenditure and future revenue impact from changes to car parking income and any future costs</p> <p>(3) That it be noted the governance of the project to monitor and review development of the full business case which will return to Executive for approval prior to delivery of the project.</p>			

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<p style="text-align: center;">costs</p> <p>1.3 to note the governance of the project to monitor and review development of the full business case which will return to Executive for approval prior to delivery of the project.</p>				
<p><b>Agenda Item 11 Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report April to July 2023</b></p> <p>Report of Assistant Director – Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>(1) To note the Council's</p>	<p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>(4) That the Council's Performance, Risk and Financial report for the current financial year up to the end of July 2023 be noted.</p> <p>(5) That the inclusion of a capital budget under officer delegated authority of £0.160m to provide a grant to the</p>	<p>This report provides an update on progress made between April and July, to deliver the council's priorities, manage potential risks and remain within the agreed budget.</p>	<p>This report summarises the council's performance, risk, and financial positions up to the end of July, therefore there are no alternative options to consider. However, members may wish to request further information from officers for inclusion.</p>	<p>None</p>

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<p>Performance, Risk and Financial report for the current financial year up to the end of July 2023 and its contents.</p> <p>(2) To note the inclusion of a capital budget under officer delegated authority of £0.160m to provide a grant to the Canal &amp; River Trust funded through S106 developer contributions in recognition of our commitment to the canal as an important asset in the district.</p> <p>(3) To approve £0.112 m for the Digital Transformation Capital Project.</p>	<p>Canal &amp; River Trust funded through S106 developer contributions recognition of our commitment to the canal as an important asset in the district be noted.</p> <p>(6) That £0.112 m for the Digital Transformation Capital Project be approved.</p>			
<p><b>Agenda Item 12</b> <b>Summary of Debt Write Offs</b></p>	<p><b>Resolved</b></p>	<p>The Council's financial procedure rules require that</p>	<p>Option 1: To not write off the debt. This old and</p>	<p>None</p>

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<p>Report of Assistant Director – Finance</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The meeting is recommended:</p> <p>1.1 To review and approve the proposed bad debt write offs summarised in exempt Appendix A this contains debts recommended for write-off relating to Council Tax debts where the value exceeds £5,000.</p> <p>1.2 To review and approve the proposed bad debt write offs summarised in exempt Appendix B this contains Business Rates debts recommended for write-off where the values exceeds £10,000.</p>	<p>(1) That, having given due consideration, the proposed bad debt write offs summarised in exempt Appendix A, which details debts recommended for write-off relating to Council Tax debts where the value exceeds £5,000, be approved.</p> <p>(2) That, having given due consideration, the proposed bad debt write offs summarised in exempt Appendix B, which details Business Rates debts recommended for write-off where the values exceeds £10,000, be approved.</p> <p>(3) That the proposed</p>	<p>recommended write offs with an outstanding balance of £5,000 and above for Council Tax, Overpayment of Housing Benefit or Sundry Debtors, and £10,000 and above for Business Rates must be approved by the Executive</p>	<p>irrecoverable debt places additional administration on the team as periodically, it is required to be reviewed and pursued. By writing off the debt, more time will be able to be focussed on reviewing debt that is more likely to be recoverable.</p>	

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<p>1.3 To approve the proposed write off of debts where the value is less than £5,000.00 for Council Tax and less than £10,000. for Business Rates but all recovery methods have been exhausted. These have been reviewed by the S151 Officer and are available to be reviewed on request.</p> <p>1.4 To note that the constitution gives a delegation to the S151 Officer to write off bad debts for Business Rates up to the value of £10,000 and up to the value of £5,000 for non-business rates bad debt. Following this</p>	<p>write off of debts where the value is less than £5,000.00 for Council Tax and less than £10,000. for Business Rates but all recovery methods have been exhausted, which have been reviewed by the S151 Officer and are available to be reviewed on request, be approved.</p> <p>(4) That it be noted that the constitution gives a delegation to the S151 Officer to write off bad debts for Business Rates up to the value of £10,000 and up to the value of £5,000 for non-business rates bad debt and that following this review</p>			

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<p>review the S151 Officer will operate under this delegation and periodically update the Executive on the actions taken.</p>	<p>the S151 Officer will operate under this delegation and periodically update the Executive on the actions taken.</p>			
<p><b>Agenda Item 15 Summary of Debt Write Offs - Exempt appendices</b></p>	<p>Approved and as detailed under item 11</p>	<p>As detailed under item 11</p>	<p>As detailed under item 11</p>	<p>None</p>