

Public Document Pack



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday 28 November 2023

Time: 6.30 pm

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

Membership

Councillor John Broad (Chairman)

Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Douglas Webb

Councillor Dr Isabel Creed (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitutes **Any member of the relevant political group, excluding Executive members**

AGENDA

Overview and Scrutiny Members should not normally be subject to the party whip. Where a member is subject to a party whip they must declare this at the beginning of the meeting and it should be recorded in the minutes.

1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2023.

4. Chairman's Announcements

To receive communications from the Chairman.

5. Urgent Business

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

6. Future Oxfordshire Partnerships Update

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel will meet on 21 November. The agenda is publicly available via the [Vale of White Horse website](#).

The Cherwell District Council appointed representatives to the Scrutiny Panel – Councillors John Broad, Lynn Pratt and Sean Woodcock – will give a verbal update to the Committee on the outcome of the meeting.

7. October 2023 Performance Monitoring Report (Pages 13 - 20)

Report of Assistant Director - Customer Focus

Purpose of report

To give the committee an update on how the council has performed against its performance indicators for October 2023.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommend:

- 1.1 To review the Council's performance report for October 2023 and considers what, if any recommendations it would like the Executive to consider.

8. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Pages 21 - 76)

Report of Assistant Director - Wellbeing and Housing

Purpose of report

To present to the Committee a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the new drafted Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and recommend adoption by the Executive.

9. Cost of Living Crisis - Action Plan update (Pages 77 - 78)

Verbal update by Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing

At its meeting in October, Executive considered a report that detailed a Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan (Appendix 1) to cover Winter 2023, that had been drafted following a motion to Full Council in July 2023.

Executive approved the development of an evaluation framework to track progress of the action plan, to form the basis of detailed updates to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing will present the update on progress of the action plan.

10. Cherwell District Council Safeguarding Self-Assessment 2023 (Pages 79 - 126)

Report of Assistant Director - Wellbeing and Housing

Purpose of report

To update the committee on how well the council is performing in delivering its safeguarding duties.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider self-assessment and actions
- 1.2 Consider actions for future safeguarding briefings for Members

11. Working Group Updates (Pages 127 - 128)

An update on work undertaken since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 October 2023 by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Food Insecurity and Climate Action working groups, including revised Terms of Reference for the Climate Action working group (Appendix 2 – to follow).

Recommendation

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the work undertaken since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 October 2023.
- 1.2 To approve the amended Climate Action Terms of Reference (Appendix 2 – to follow)

12. **Work Programme 2023-24** (Pages 129 - 132)

An update on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24.

Recommendation

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To consider and agree the indicative work programme 2023/24

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

Information about this Meeting

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

Evacuation Procedure

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

Access to Meetings

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

Mobile Phones

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

Webcasting and Broadcasting Notice

The meeting will be recorded by the council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the council's website. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except when confidential or exempt items are being considered. The webcast will be retained on the website for 6 months.

If you make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed by the council to have

consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber, you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those images for and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

The council is obliged, by law, to allow members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record, and report on proceedings. The council will only seek to prevent this should it be undertaken in a disruptive or otherwise inappropriate manner.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

Published on Monday 20 November 2023

This page is intentionally left blank

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 24 October 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor John Broad (Chairman)
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitute Members:

Councillor George Reynolds (In place of Councillor Ian Harwood)

Also Present:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor Simon Holland

Officers:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Patrick Davis, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Tony Brummell, Building Control and Flood Risk Manager
Tim Hughes, Head of Regulatory Services & Community Safety
Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management
Richard Smith, Head of Housing
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead

33 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

34 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 September 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

35 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

36 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

37 **Sanctuary Housing**

The Chairman welcomed the following officers from Sanctuary Housing: Regional Director, Katie Poole; Head of Neighbourhood Operations, Yvonne Crinean; Head of Development, Sophie Bell; Head of Property Services, Joanne Stringer; Neighbourhood Partnerships Manager, Charlie Heritage; and, Regional Customer Service Manager, Ranjit Sall, who would be giving a presentation regarding the association's work in the Cherwell area.

The Head of Neighbourhood Operations gave an overview of the range of services offered by Sanctuary Housing within the Cherwell district and a summary of the work currently being undertaken by the association. The Head of Neighbourhood Operations explained the various communication methods available for tenants to contact the association and the metrics that were used to measure performance in communication..

In response to Members' comments regarding direct communication between elected members on behalf of residents and Sanctuary Housing, the Regional

Director explained that a Regional Customer Service Manager role had been established in recognition of the need to improve contact. The Regional Director confirmed that Sanctuary Housing officer roles and contact details would be circulated.

The Head of Development provided the Committee with an update on the approach taken by Sanctuary Housing in relation to new housing schemes, with a particular focus on sites that were currently under development within the Cherwell area.

In response to Members' questions, the Head of Development explained that more information on the specification of houses would be circulated. Builders and contractors were required to sign up to Sanctuary standards.

The Head of Property Services provided an overview of Sanctuary Housing's strategy regarding investments to the existing housing stock and explained the approach taken to prioritising improvements to properties. Information was also shared on the management of empty homes and Sanctuary Housing's approach to dealing with reported damp and mould in its properties.

The Regional Director reported on Sanctuary Housing's approach to sustainability. A Sustainability Report has been published in the summer and would be circulated to Committee members. The Regional Director advised that currently just over 50% of the Sanctuary social homes within the Cherwell District Council area required some form of retrofit works to ensure that they met the target Sanctuary Housing had set itself to achieve an EPC rating of A-C in all Sanctuary social homes by 2030.

The Neighbourhood Partnerships Manager gave an overview regarding Community Investment in Cherwell. The Committee was advised that Sanctuary's strategic focus was on building connection and resilience for its customers and communities. This generally involved working alongside organisations including Cherwell District Council and other local charities and partners.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from Sanctuary Housing for their attendance.

Resolved

- (1) That the presentation from Sanctuary Housing be noted.

38

Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2023-24

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director, Customer Focus, that detailed the quarter two performance for 2023/2024.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Assistant Director Customer Focus gave an overview of the processes for setting and changing the key performance indicators during the financial year.

The Committee was advised that all 26 performance indicators had been achieved or were within tolerance and most of the milestones had been met. It was anticipated that the milestones that had not been achieved by quarter two should be met by the end of the financial year.

Members of the Committee had submitted questions in advance of the meeting which duly responded to.

In response to a question on indicator BP1.2.01, an increase in the number of homeless households, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Wellbeing advised that unfortunately this was not just a local issue but part of a wider national trend. The Committee was advised that the aim was to relocate families that were housed in temporary accommodation in to self-contained housing options as soon as possible. The intention was to then move these households in to a permanent home within the prescribed three month target. However, the shortage of affordable housing with the Cherwell area presented a significant challenge to achieving this objective. The Head of Housing outlined the actions being taken to alleviate the lack of supply of affordable housing in relation to demand for such properties. An update on the number of properties becoming available was also provided to the Committee.

The Assistant Director of Finance, responded to the question regarding indicator BP1.2.07, as to whether the targets for housing benefit and council tax event changes should be more challenging, explaining that the goals set by the Council were already much higher than those set nationally by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Committee was also advised that forthcoming changes regarding Universal Credits may potentially impact on the current claim processing timescales and, as such, the existing performance indicators would be sufficiently challenging.

In response to the question regarding six-week mental health activity programmes for 14 to 16 years olds with behavioural difficulties, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, advised that the course was not designed to be a clinical intervention and that the students were able to refer themselves with the aim of improving their mental health. The current measurement of success was comparing the outcome of surveys undertaken at both the beginning and end of the six-week period. The Committee was advised that additional performance measures were being considered.

The Chairman raised a question regarding the process of deciding the performance indicators and associated target measures that the Council had implemented for the current year. The Assistant Director, Customer Focus explained that the Executive agreed the measures at the start of the fiscal year and as had been outlined, there were mechanisms in place for revising the measures if necessary.

In response to a question regarding indicator BP1.2.08, the percentage of Major Planning Applications determined within the National Indicator, the Head of Development Management advised that metric was set at national level and that the Council had repeatedly exceeded the target in recent years.

In response to a question on indicator BP1.2.13, Net Additional Housing Completions, the Assistant Director of Planning and Development explained that the targets had a 20% margin built in to allow for market fluctuations. The Committee was advised that the quarter two target was within the margin but the year-to-date figure was a red indicator.

Councillor Okeke In response to a request for clarification on the format of the EDI Quarter 2 update, particularly regarding how the in-progress status was shown on the report, the Assistant Director, Customer Focus explained that these were milestone actions and as such were under constant review. They were due to be discussed at the next EDI working group meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Council's Quarter 2 2023-24 performance be noted and no recommendations be submitted for Executive consideration.

39

12-Month Climate Action Plan 2023 - 2024

The Climate Action Manager and Corporate Director Communities submitted a report which set out the background and content of the newly produced 12-month Action Plan for climate change, which was based on the council's 2020 Climate Change Framework.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities commended the Climate Action Manager for his hard work progressing the Action Plan and thanked the Climate Action Working Group for their ongoing valuable contribution. The Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities reminded the Committee that the Action Plan was a baseline and would be an iterative process. It therefore distinguished between actions which were already planned and those which were aspirational.

The Assistant Director for Environmental Services explained that the specialist external consultants BioRegional, had carried out a detailed review, including a gap analysis and an assessment of the actions in terms of those which were most impactful and those over which the council had the most influence.

In response to a question regarding an increase in emissions in 2021/2022 the Assistant Director Environmental Services, explained that figures for 2020/2021 had been lower than usual due to Covid related closures of leisure centres and reduced vehicle usage. The increase coincided with the re-opening of leisure centres and people returning to work. Councillor Middleton referred to a list of questions he had submitted in advance of the meeting and confirmed he was happy to receive responses after the meeting.

The Committee echoed the comments of the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities and thanked the Climate Action Manager for his work in producing the Action Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Council's 12-month Climate Action Plan 2023-24 be noted and no recommendations be submitted for Executive consideration.
- (2) That having given due consideration, the potential resource implications relating to the implementation of the Council's 12-month Climate Action Plan be noted and no recommendations be submitted to Executive for consideration.

40

Working Group Updates

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead gave an update on the work of the Climate Action, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Food Insecurity working groups.

The Committee was advised that following the adoption of the Motion regarding Retrofitting of properties at the meeting of full Council on the 16 November 2023, there may be a requirement for the Committee to review the terms of reference of the Climate Action working group. Officers would have detailed discussions with the Climate Action working group and report back to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the working group updates be noted.

41

Work Programme 2023-24

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for 2023/24.

Resolved

- (1) That the indicative work programme be approved.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 November 2023

Performance Monitoring Report October 2023-24

Report of: Assistant Director Customer Focus

This report is public.

Purpose of report

To give the committee an update on how the council has performed against its performance indicators for October 2023.

1.0 Recommendations

Officers recommend the committee:

- 1.1 Reviews the Council's performance report for October 2023 and considers what, if any recommendations it would like the Executive to consider.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council actively and regularly monitors its performance to ensure it delivers its priorities for the year ahead, which are set out in its Outcome Framework as agreed by the Executive on 3 April 2023.
- 2.2 The Council does this monitoring monthly, so it can identify potential issues at the earliest opportunity and put measures in place for mitigating and addressing them.
- 2.3 This report provides a summary of the council's performance for October.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 This is a report on the council's key performance indicators (KPIs) for October 2023.

4.0 Performance Summary

- 4.1 The council has performed well against its 7 objectives for October, having achieved all of its targets. **See appendix 1 for the full list of targeted measures.**

5.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

The council has achieved 100% of its October 2023 performance objectives. The committee is asked to review this performance and make recommendations for Executive consideration.

6.0 Consultation

This report sets out the performance position for the seventh month of this financial year, therefore no formal consultation or engagement is required.

7.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

7.1 There are no alternative options to consider. However, members may wish to request further information from officers.

8.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

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

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance / Section 151, Tel: 01295 221845

Michael.Furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

8.2 There are no legal implications arising as a consequence of this report.

Comments checked by:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance,

Shiraz.Sheikh@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

8.3 The Risk Implications are detailed within the Executive and AARC Report for October 2023.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance and Insight Team Leader, Tel: 01295 221556,

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

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

8.4 There are no direct equalities and inclusion implications as a consequence of this report.

Comments checked by:
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance and Insight Team Leader, Tel: 01295 221556,
Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

9.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected:

All

Lead Councillor

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Business Plan Performance October 23

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance and Insight Team Leader, Tel: 01295 221556,
Celia.prado-teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Shona Ware, Assistant Director – Customer Focus
Shona.Ware@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Housing that meets your needs

Ref	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Actual	Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	End of Year target	YTD R.A.G
BP1.2.01 Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	Cllr N Mawer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nicola Riley ■ Yvonne Rees 	38	40	★	35	40	★
<p>Commentary We continue to work hard to prevent homelessness, negating the need for temporary accommodation wherever possible; acting also to minimise the length of stay in temporary accommodation while an offer of settled accommodation is secured.</p>								
BP1.2.06 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit New Claims and council tax reduction (Days)	Cllr A Nell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michael Furness ■ Stephen Hinds 	17.4 days	18.0 days	★	16.6 days	18.0 days	★
<p>Commentary We continue to achieve a turnaround time for applications that is below our target, remaining on track to meet our target for the year.</p>								
BP1.2.07 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit Change Events & council tax reduction (Days)	Cllr A Nell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michael Furness ■ Stephen Hinds 	4.9 days	8.0 days	★	3.6 days	8.0 days	★
<p>Commentary We continue to achieve a turnaround time for applications that is well below our target for the month and the year.</p>								

Page 17

An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Ref	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Actual	End of year Target	R.A.G
BP3.2.01 % of Council Tax collected, increase Council Tax Base	Cllr A Nell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michael Furness ■ Stephen Hinds 	65.68%	97%	★
<p>Commentary We have collected over 65% of council tax for the year, remaining on track to meet the year-end target</p>					
BP3.2.02 % of Business Rates collected, increasing NNDR Base	Cllr A Nell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michael Furness ■ Stephen Hinds 	68.4%	97%	★
<p>Commentary We have collected over 68% of business rates for the year, remaining on track to meet the year-end target</p>					

Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

Ref	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Actual	Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	End of Year Target	YTD R.A.G
BP4.2.01 Number of Visits/Usage of contracted & directly managed sports facilities	Cllr N Simpson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nicola Riley ■ Yvonne Rees 	116,453	115,030	★	809,123	1,348,666	★
<p>Commentary Usage figures across all our leisure centres continues to rise steadily against the same period last year. We are reporting ahead of our monthly target, and we are on track to deliver our year-end target.</p>								

2018

Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

Ref	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Actual	YTD Target	R.A.G
BP4.1.02 Support Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Prevention Activities	Cllr P Chapman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★

Commentary

- Enforcement activity intended to address and reduce ASB included: serving 5 warning letters linked to the Public spaces protection orders (PSPO) in Bicester and 4 Community Protection Warnings for other ASB.
- We continue working with Thames Valley Police on serving a Community Behaviour Order for an individual involved in persistent ASB.
- We undertook additional patrols in Banbury from the 18 to 21 October at the Banbury Fair to prevent ASB, and provided support to the lost child unit during the event.
- The Grimsbury Play Day took place in October half term (25th Oct) at the Bridge St Community garden, providing free activities for young people and families, and promoting opportunities to engage young people with positive activities, whilst reinforcing messages around community safety.
- Twenty Community Connection grants have been distributed to local organisations to support work across the Brighter Futures areas in Banbury, which will contribute to reduce ASB by providing positive diversionary activity.
- The Active Leaders Course was delivered during October half-term. The course was directed at 16 to 18 year olds, aiming to up-skill young people, and also offer them a pathway to paid work.

Page 19

This page is intentionally left blank

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28th November 2023

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Report of Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing

This report is public

Purpose of report

To present to the Committee a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the new drafted Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and recommend adoption by the Executive.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 As part of the Council's statutory duties regarding homelessness, the Council must review homelessness in the district area and produce a strategy to tackle the issue and support those affected every 5 years. The review shows homeless pressures and trends within Cherwell and the findings inform the strategy and action plan objectives. The new draft strategy, action plan and review of homelessness in Cherwell is within the appendices.
- 2.2 A public and stakeholder consultation is currently taking place on the new draft strategy and action plan. This is due to close in January, ahead of the Executive meeting in February.
- 2.3 The current strategy reflects a context where the Council and the Housing team was in a close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Social Care Commissioning in particular. A new Cherwell District Council focused strategy has therefore been produced.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Appendix 1 of the report shows the draft strategy and action plan. The strategy outlines local and national contextual factors that influence homelessness and the Council's ability to prevent it. The strategy is split into 4 priority themes that structure the action plan in turn. The priorities are:
- 1) Identify the causes of homelessness, facilitating early interventions to ensure a pathway and reducing rough sleeping.
 - 2) Ensure that our service is accessible to all; engaging and assisting households who have difficulty receiving our services.
 - 3) Deliver long term housing solutions and help sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable, creating resilience.
 - 4) Improve access to quality and affordable accommodation across all sectors for homeless households.
- 3.2 Appendix 2 shows the Review of Homelessness within Cherwell. The review analyses trends and pressures on the service, both current and that have occurred in recent years, and helps shape the action plan objectives. This covers the types of homelessness approaches we receive, their household circumstances and what housing outcomes they receive. The review also looks at wider factors that can influence homelessness and our ability to prevent it, such as the affordability of housing.
- 3.3 Appendix 3 shows an Equality and Climate Impact Assessment that was undertaken in conjunction with the production of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 3.4 Upon implementation of the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, an annual update report will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny to monitor progress on the approved action plan.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is committed to providing a quality housing options, advice and homelessness service in accordance with our statutory duties. The new drafted homelessness and rough sleeping strategy will provide a strategic framework to do this.
- 4.2 Having an up to date and reviewed homelessness strategy is part of the Council's statutory duties.

5.0 Consultation

Public and stakeholder consultation is a necessary part of implementation of the new strategy.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not applicable

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications – Mandatory paragraph

- 7.1 The development and delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is done within existing budgets and resources. This report indicates no new pressures.

Comments checked by: Michael Furness, Assistant Director – Finance (Section 151 Officer), michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221845

Legal Implications – Mandatory paragraph

- 7.2 Having a regularly reviewed Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is a statutory requirement within legislation.

Comments checked by:

Risk Implications - Mandatory paragraph

- 7.3 All risks are managed as part of the operational risk register associated with the Housing Service and escalated as and when necessary.

Comments checked by: Shona Ware, Assistant Director – Customer Focus, shona.ware@cherwell.gov.uk, 01295 221652

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 An Equality and Climate Change Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is provided within Appendix 3 of this report.

Comments checked by: Shona Ware, Assistant Director – Customer Focus, shona.ware@cherwell.gov.uk, 01295 221652

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy links to Business Plan priorities of

- Housing that meets your needs
- Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

Lead Councillor

Councillor Nicholas Mawer

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029
- Appendix 2 – Review of Homelessness
- Appendix 3 – Equality and Climate Change Impact Assessment

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Richard Smith – Head of Housing

Richard.Smith@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Tel: 01295 221640



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029

Forward

Councillor Nicholas Mawer. Portfolio Holder for Housing

I am pleased to introduce the new Cherwell District Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Cherwell and our partners working within Oxford and Oxfordshire are committed to improving the lives of those who are experiencing homelessness or are threatened with homelessness, to help them stay in their current home or transition to new suitable accommodation.

Housing and preventing homelessness is important to Cherwell District Council and “Housing that meets your needs” is one of the four Council’s Business Plan key objectives.

Partnership working across Oxfordshire is strong, and we are proud of the outcomes that we are able to achieve through working together with other housing authorities and providers assisting us with the challenges we face. There is however, still much to do. We need to continue in our collective endeavours to make best use of the resources and pathways available and continue to provide an evolving range of services that can appropriately meet the changing needs and challenges that we and our clients face.

Intervening early to prevent homelessness has been a principal objective for us and it will continue to be in our new strategy. Intervening early to prevent homelessness consistently yields positive results and enables us to focus our resources in the areas of most acute need.

Ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of affordable and diverse accommodation options is also crucial. Ensuring therefore that there are wide-ranging homelessness pathway options and improved access to accommodation for homeless people, both in the social and private sector, is important.

Homelessness and health are closely linked and homelessness can be a result or a symptom of a wider vulnerability and these circumstances are often outside of the control of the individual. To help prevent homelessness and rough sleeping and support individuals to transition into stable accommodation, we need to understand vulnerability and provide support avenues that help address these wider health and social factors.

We would like to thank our partners who continue to work positively with us to achieve our collective goals, ensuring a safe and suitable place to call home is central to our wellbeing and Cherwell District Council will strive to make this a reality for all.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Key Achievements
3. Our Vision and Priorities
4. Background, Local Context and Challenges
 - 4a – National Challenges
 - 4b – Local Challenges
5. Delivering the Strategy
6. Action Plan

1. Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 required all Local Authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their area every 5 years and consequently produce a Homelessness Strategy which must set out our plans for:

- Preventing homelessness in our District.
- Securing sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in our district who are or may become homeless.
- Securing satisfactory provision of support for people in our district for those who are or may become homeless; or
- who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our commitment to preventing homelessness and rough sleeping in our District over the next 5 years. We recognise that continuing to build strong partnerships is vital to address the underlying causes of homelessness that affect people in our community and provide them with timely and appropriate solutions.

This strategy aims to address the issues that have a direct impact on homelessness, whether these relate to the wider societal environment or relate to the individual vulnerabilities of the client group. Our strategy recognises the important role that the Council, its partners, and stakeholders have in delivering holistic solutions to reduce homelessness and end rough sleeping.

When people are at risk of homelessness we will work proactively to help find them long term and sustainable housing solutions, taking into account their housing, health, care and support needs.

2. Key Achievements

Since our last strategy was published in 2021, the Council has made some significant strides in improving homelessness services in partnership.

1. A successful review of the Allocations Scheme. The bandings have been amended to ensure that all homeless households are seen as a significant priority.
2. Cherwell have been successful in achieving funding via the Rough Sleeping Assistance Programme to deliver 9 units of supported accommodation at Oxford House in Bicester.
3. In April 2022 the services for single homeless people across the County transitioned to a new service delivered by the Oxfordshire Homeless Alliance. Cherwell are joint commissioners of the service. The ambition is to move towards a housing led approach to end rough sleeping, to move away from large congregate style supported accommodation and find solutions such as 'Housing First' to provide rapid rehousing, settled solutions in the long term to end repeat homelessness.
4. Cherwell District Council Housing Team were successful in achieving grant funding via the Oxfordshire application to the Rough Sleeping Initiative. We secured over £1m of funding over a 3-year period to support delivery by the Alliance for the Single Homeless Service, including: Supported Housing, Emergency Accommodation, Outreach Services, and complex needs support.
5. We established the Single Homeless Team, to work directly with clients, offering a full Housing Options package, reaching out into the community to where clients are most likely to engage.
6. We have used grant funding to assist the survivors of domestic abuse. We have provided a specialist unit of temporary accommodation for vulnerable women, to work alongside and in addition to existing services such as refuge.
7. We have successfully reviewed and recommissioned the Citizens Advice North Oxfordshire (CANO) to deliver a debt and money advice services, with a specialist giving advice and support to those with housing issues.
8. We have established a dedicated Resettlement Team to support people fleeing conflict in countries such as Afghanistan and Ukraine. Now in the UK with settled status we are working with partners to provide help, support and access to housing. This has included the provision of additional accommodation in partnership with the Ministry of Defence to specifically house Afghan families.
9. The Housing Standards Team have continued their proactive work in investigating and intervening to ensure Housing Standards and tenants' rights are maintained.
10. The Council has updated its structure and how it provides homelessness and housing options services. This has recognised the new challenges after the decoupling with Oxfordshire County Council and the vital role housing will continue play in supporting the residents of Cherwell and in delivery of this strategy. New resources have been secured via grant funding to put in place a structure which will meet the challenges ahead.

3. Our Vision

Working in partnerships to prevent homelessness and create new pathways that focus on customer needs to ensure a decent and affordable home for all.

The four strategic priorities for our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-29 are:

Priority 1

Identify the causes of homelessness, facilitating early interventions to ensure a pathway to housing and reducing rough sleeping.

Priority 2

Ensure that our service is accessible to all; engaging and assisting households who have difficulty receiving our services.

Priority 3

Deliver long term housing solutions and help sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable, creating resilience.

Priority 4

Improve access to quality and affordable accommodation across all sectors for homeless households.

4. Background, Local Context & Challenges

Since the publication of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-26 Strategy there has been significant changes across which have impacted on Housing.

4a National Challenges

The challenges posed to the sector as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic were significant. The 'Everyone In' initiative did play a role in refocussing the sector and how we can work more effectively with single people who are not normally owed statutory accommodation duties.

The Renters (Reform) Bill, currently progressing through Parliament, will change the legislation relating to renting homes in the private sector and is already influencing the private rented sector even in advance of it becoming law. The aim is to protect the rights of tenants and ensure private rented properties offer the suitable and stable homes that tenants need. Some changes within the Bill, such as the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions, will lead to a practice change in the private rented sector in the coming years.

Affordability of housing is an issue both nationally and locally. Economic factors in 2022-23 have created financial pressures on households, with higher interest rates and inflation causing a squeeze on incomes and benefits. The pressure throughout the system creates pressure at all levels, but it is acutely felt by those on lower incomes. Obtaining a private rented sector tenancy for instance is as difficult now as it ever has been for someone on a lower income because of competition and rising rents as landlords look to cover costs.

There have been several government strategies launched over recent years regarding homelessness and rough sleeping. The most recent strategy, "Ending Rough Sleeping for Good",

confirmed new funding arrangements through an expanded £500m Rough Sleeping Initiative and a new £200m Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP) to deliver up to 2400 homes and wrap around support by March 2025.

Resettlement schemes, such as for those fleeing Afghanistan and Ukraine, that have been established over recent years are starting to have an impact on housing options and homelessness services and may have a greater impact through the duration of this strategy. The move on from these support schemes into more settled accommodation is an emerging challenge in the local and national context.

The government has provided additional funding to assist with the potential pressures on services that are linked to resettlement and has launched the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) The purpose of this fund is to boost supply of affordable rented housing in local authority areas by providing capital grant contributions linked to property purchase or supply.

Legislation has been passed regarding additional duties to those who have experienced Domestic Abuse within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This has seen duties automatically extended to any victim who must be deemed in priority need. Since COVID 19, there has been a national increase in domestic abuse prevalence and this impacts on housing options services.

4b Local Challenges

In 2022, Cherwell District Council ended the shared service relationship with Oxfordshire County Council. Retaining strong partnerships with statutory bodies and wider support providers remains a key objective for Cherwell.

Single homeless services in Oxfordshire have been commissioned in a joint exercise with the District Councils, City Council and County Council. The Oxfordshire Homeless Alliance began providing this service on the Council's behalf in April 2022. This represents a change in commissioning and monitoring of services and decision to establish was influenced by a report conducted by Crisis and Imogen Blood Associates into homelessness services on Oxford. The rationale is that closer partnership working and central coordination across the system should lead to better and fairer outcomes for clients. The service monitoring, mechanisms of engagement and measurement of outcomes are still to be properly established across the system.

A Countywide Homelessness Strategy, led by Oxfordshire County Council, was agreed in 2022 and this review reflects the shared priorities of Oxfordshire Council's and District partners. It is intended to link the various strategies and work streams across the County system that are involved in homeless service provision.

The priorities identified in the Countywide strategy are:

- Transform the way we respond
- Proactively prevent homelessness
- Rapid response to rough sleeping
- Focus on the person not the problem
- Timely move-on
- The right home in the right place

As part of producing the new Cherwell Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, the Council has aligned these priorities with its own where possible and appropriate.

As is the case across the Country, the private rented sector is challenging in Cherwell for anyone on a low income or in receipt of benefits. The housing costs in Oxford City have pushed up prices in neighbouring districts generally. In Cherwell this has a significant impact on the housing market particularly in areas closer to Oxford, such as Kidlington and Bicester. Competition is also high across the County for properties in the private rented sector. The assistance households can

receive via housing benefits or the Housing element of Universal Credit, is fixed at the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Cherwell has two different LHA rates, Oxford and Cherwell Valley. The Cherwell Valley rate, which includes Banbury and Bicester, is lower than the Oxford City rate, which areas such as Kidlington are within. Bicester is an area of higher prices in comparison to Banbury and is more aligned to the Oxford rental market. But this is not reflected in the LHA rate determination.

Given the reduced opportunity and increased challenge in finding suitable forms of accommodation, more people are looking to secure Social Housing. Over the last 4 years the number of active applications on the Housing Register has almost doubled to around 2000 households. The number of properties which become available to let through the housing register have reduced in recent years, in line with a reduction of new build social housing being delivered. Therefore, there is pressure on the housing register to be able to deliver social housing in a timely manner for those in need. Many facing homelessness are single people, and this is a particularly acute pressure on the housing register in Cherwell. Nearly 50% of the waiting list are people who require 1 bedroom accommodation.

There are competing needs for 1 bedroom accommodation, along with those approaching us for assistance as homeless. These include from care leavers, from supported accommodation pathways and move-on, from urgent hospital discharge cases and from people wishing to downsize to reduce housing costs. As a rapid response to homelessness and rough sleeping therefore is difficult to achieve through the Housing Register and an offer of social housing for all client groups, but especially those that require 1 bedroom accommodation.

Cherwell have been committed to the delivery of new build affordable homes within the social housing stock. The number of affordable homes in the district has been increased from 8525 in 2019 to 9160 units in 2023. But the supply of available properties each year does not keep up with demand. As a result, waiting times, to achieve a nomination via our Housing Register can be lengthy, even for those assessed with urgent and significant housing need.

The number of people that are rough sleeping in Cherwell has risen over recent years, which is a similar trend to what is shown nationally. From a low of 6 in the annual rough sleeper estimate in 2021, this rose to 17 reported in the estimate in 2022. The Single Homeless Team work proactively with the Outreach Service and other partners to find housing solutions for many clients that are rough sleeping. This has resulted in few people rough sleeping without an offer for extended periods. Cherwell has also managed to limit the number of people who require temporary accommodation to a consistent number despite these pressures. We have an average of 35 placements at any one time over the last 2 years.

DLUHC have challenged all local authorities to have a plan to end rough sleeping. The County Council and Districts worked in partnership on a plan in 2022 and have updated this in May 2023.

Challenges identified in the plan are:

- the lack of affordable accommodation to prevent people from becoming homeless or provide move-on from current pathways.
- Shortage of 1 bed homeless in the county
- Increased complexity for people in and out of services needing support to manage accommodation.
- Lack of care home provision for people with substance misuse and challenging behaviour
- Insufficient or inappropriate accommodation to get people rapidly off the streets.

Specifically in Cherwell, we have identified with DLUHC a group of 5 targeted individuals who have been known to services for some time and regularly fall into repeat homelessness. We keep track of their situations and learn lessons from any interventions which can break this cycle of rough sleeping. The Council has received specific funding to work with these individuals as target priority group.

In 2022, Oxfordshire County Council launched the Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-2025, as well as a new Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024. The Safe Accommodation Strategy was linked to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Part 4, which introduced a statutory duty on all local authorities to provide safe accommodation support services. In conjunction with this, Tier 2 authorities like Cherwell received grant funding from Oxfordshire County Council to improve services locally and help with the pressures that may come with the new duties.

5. Delivering the Strategy

Consultation

(consultation details and outcomes will appear here)

Working in Partnership

Whilst the provision of services to homeless households is a statutory duty of the Council, the delivery of the service benefits from the support of many partners. These partners are both statutory agencies such as Health and Social Care as well as Registered Providers of Social Housing and voluntary sector organisations. We will continue to work closely with these partners to realise the vision and ambitions of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Partnership working across the statutory and non-statutory sectors is important for maximising resources effectively and ensuring better outcomes for clients. The Action Plan within this Strategy expands upon how these partnerships will be utilised and how they will help deliver the Strategy.

Monitoring and Review

The Strategy has been developed in consultation with partners and stakeholders who will continue to be involved in the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan. The progress against these targets and outcomes set out in the Action Plan will be reviewed annually by the Cherwell District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6. Action Plan

Cherwell Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2024 – 29

1. Identify the causes of homelessness, facilitating early interventions to ensure pathways to housing to reduce rough sleeping

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale	
Page 32	1	<p>Improve partnership working between Districts across the County to ensure quality housing advice services are provided to clients</p>	<p>Work in partnership across the public and third sector to ensure access to services and support, if housing issues are identified, is clear and used effectively.</p> <p>Ensure advice and information is available early and ahead of statutory duties to focus 'upstream' to prevent homelessness</p>	<p>Evaluate and review the Duty to Refer protocol across the County</p> <p>Provide training for partners and service providers to create wider knowledge within teams of housing issues and challenges.</p> <p>Provide a space and promote co-location for staff from partner agencies to work in the Housing Team office.</p>	<p>Countywide Steering Group</p> <p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>	<p>Improvement in housing knowledge and advice across agencies that leads to more holistic and planned responses to housing clients requiring support and leads to less crisis interventions that could lead to rough sleeping</p>	Year 2
	2	<p>Achieving transition to a Housing led rapid rehousing service, supporting the Countywide Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>Establish clearer countywide governance, in relation to the prevention of and effective response to 'multiple exclusion' homelessness.</p> <p>Terms of reference will be clear on accountability and responsibility and other partnership groups will hold them accountable.</p>	<p>Fully engage with partnerships to deliver and monitor Alliance Service</p> <p>Support and lead where relevant on the delivery of the Countywide Homelessness Strategy</p> <p>Provide support for the monitoring of services, and ensure this reflects the funding commitment from</p>	<p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Single Homeless Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Services are being delivered consistently across the county and meeting the needs of clients.</p> <p>More Cherwell clients are able to access pathways out for homelessness and rough sleeping, reducing its prevalence.</p>	Year 2-.3

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
		<p>Services for Cherwell clients are delivered via the Alliance in proportion to the needs and contributions into the Service. Including Off Street Accommodation</p> <p>Proactively engage with the monitoring and joint commissioning of services to meet the needs of Cherwell</p>	<p>Cherwell, ensure grant funding is spent in-line with criteria.</p> <p>Work with partners within the Homeless Alliance to ensure Off Street Accommodation in Cherwell is delivered in-line with grant funding.</p> <p>Understand local needs and resources to inform commissioning and delivery of services</p>			
3 Page 33	<p>Improve early intervention to prevent evictions from Supported Accommodation, Social and Private Sector Housing</p>	<p>Engage with landlords to establish pre- eviction protocols and provide support to tenants to prevent eviction.</p> <p>Prevent eviction to the streets for complex clients who must leave supported accommodation due to their actions or risks.</p> <p>Expand and improve existing partnerships to address issues that directly or indirectly affect homelessness and could improve prevention</p>	<p>Promote Pre- eviction Protocols, support, and advice for landlords to ensure that tenants have good practical information on rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>Ensure that tenancy support services are focused on helping clients remain in accommodation and prevent eviction.</p> <p>Consider how emergency provision could be put in place for those needing to exit supported accommodation at short notice, providing off street accommodation pending further assessment</p> <p>Investigate ways a countywide service could</p>	<p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Tenancy Relations Officer</p> <p>Housing Management Team Leader</p> <p>Housing Options Team Leader</p>	<p>Registered Providers and Private Landlords contact ahead of taking action to evict tenants, reducing homelessness presentations through notices served.</p> <p>Wider partnerships are being utilised to increase prevention opportunities and goals</p>	<p>Year 2</p>

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
Page 34			<p>operate to work more closely with the private sector, pooling resources and establishing a consistent offer.</p> <p>Work with the Economic Development Team to improve and advice and information regarding housing and homelessness at employment fairs and other events</p> <p>Strengthen links between the existing partnership of the money advice service provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau with the Housing Options Team to target those threatened with homelessness.</p>			

2. Ensure that our service is accessible to all and engage and assist households who have difficulty receiving our services.

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
1	Communication and messaging delivers consistent information regarding housing options and challenges, to manage client and partner expectations.	Ensure partners are providing clear and consistent advice on housing options to clients within their services.	<p>Provide training and information on housing issues for internal and external partners.</p> <p>Ensure that information is clear and consistent and up to date</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Strategic Housing Team Leader</p>	Clients that require support and housing advice are accessing it at an earlier stage, reducing crisis presentations, temporary accommodation access or rough sleeping	Year 1

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
		<p>Ensure website, leaflets, standard letters, and other communication up to date and relevant.</p>	<p>Establish a communication plan to use all available opportunities so that information on housing issues and challenges is far reaching.</p> <p>Promote co-location or increased work shadowing with partner agencies to help build relationships and understand of each other's roles and responsibilities.</p>			
2 Page 35	<p>Clients requiring additional support to access services are identified and appropriate adjustments made to meet the needs of all clients</p>	<p>Deliver services with a strong focus on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion</p> <p>Improve access to services for groups who may be disadvantaged or have difficulty engaging</p>	<p>Review the support needs of clients for whom English is not their first language. Ensure that suitable and accessible translation services are available.</p> <p>Consider officers having specialisms within the Housing Team to work with specific groups, undertake relevant training and share knowledge with colleagues</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of telephone translation is sufficient when explaining complicated legal matters such as homeless discharges.</p> <p>Consider the needs of those with multiple disadvantages and ensure services are</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Single Homeless Co-ordinator</p>	<p>The vulnerability of clients is acknowledged and the contributory effect that this could have on accessing support and housing advice.</p> <p>That vulnerable clients are not unduly affected in our reported figures with regard to achieving effective outcomes in preventing and relieving rough sleeping.</p>	Year 1

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
			available where clients are best placed to engage.			
3	Clients within the various resettlement schemes can access housing options services in Cherwell	<p>Reduce risks of these vulnerable groups being threatened with homelessness or rough sleeping in Cherwell</p> <p>Ensure that there are pathways available to all types of housing, removing barriers that could be associated</p> <p>Provide support to enable integration into communities, reducing isolation and exacerbating housing insecurity</p>	<p>Ensure effective internal partnership working between allocations, housing options and resettlement teams to ensure holistic support to clients</p> <p>Ensure the provision of a resettlement focus and liaison single point of contact within the Housing Options Team, to ensure that the pathway is understood and vulnerabilities or difficulties accessing services are established and mitigated</p> <p>Consider additional support schemes that could assist people achieve permanent housing who have been resettled</p> <p>Ensure effective working across the County and support and move on</p> <p>Analyse data returns regularly and put into place appropriate measure to ensure that resettlement clients are not being disadvantaged when</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Head of Resettlement</p>	That the client group is not unduly disadvantaged and is able to access the pathway in a way that is fair and meets their needs	Year 1

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
			receiving housing options services			

3. Deliver long term housing solutions and help sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable. Creating resilience

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
1	Minimise barriers to allocating social housing to single homeless households in greatest housing need	<p>Ensure that social housing is available to meet the needs of those with the greatest need.</p> <p>Work proactively with providers of Social Housing to deliver housing to meet identified local needs.</p> <p>Ensure that any 'hard to let' properties across Oxfordshire are used to meet local needs working with Registered providers to secure suitable nominations from within the county.</p>	<p>Regular review of Allocations Scheme. Collecting data and identifying groups who may be excluded or needs which are not being met.</p> <p>Hold regular review meetings with Register Providers to understand the policies they may have in place regarding exclusions and align this with nominations agreements. Keeping exclusions to a minimum.</p>	Strategic Housing Team Leader	A robust Allocations Scheme is managed and maintained, that is flexible to clients needs and emerging demands	Year 1
2	Domestic Abuse survivors are supported adequately and are provided with a range of options when they	Ensure coordinated support for survivors of domestic abuse within Cherwell, ensuring they can access support when they require it	<p>Draft a new Domestic Abuse Strategy for Cherwell District Council</p> <p>To seek Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>	Domestic Abuse survivors receive a quality and supportive service from the Council, shown and	Year 2

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
Page 38	approach the Council for support	<p>Ensure that safe accommodation is provided to survivors of domestic abuse that approach the Council for support</p> <p>Ensure that domestic abuse and the support available through the Council or through partner agencies is better promoted within Cherwell, so people know what support is available and how they may be able to access it.</p>	<p>Accreditation for the Council, to work towards wider service improvements</p> <p>Consider outreach work in refuges to improve the housing outcomes for those leaving refuge and moving into permanent accommodation</p>		demonstrated by accreditation status	
	Improve tenancy support and sustainment of tenancies, preventing homelessness or repeat homelessness.	<p>Supporting clients in an agile way that is tailored to their individual needs.</p> <p>Enable clients to stay in their homes or sustain their current accommodation, preventing them from becoming homeless</p> <p>Assist clients to sustain their new homes and tenancies, leading to a reduction in repeat homelessness.</p>	<p>Roll out of tenancy sustainment workshops to help vulnerable people maintain their accommodation or to access further support</p> <p>Consider introduction of a risk assessment at the start of new tenancies that are housed through the general needs pathway to identify sustainment risks and make appropriate onward referrals</p> <p>Improve links with Registered Providers and their housing teams to improve</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Housing Management Team Leader</p>	Improving tenancy sustainment within Cherwell, leading to less homelessness presentations and pressure on the service.	Year 2

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
			communication and interventions around clients that they may be considering taking legal actions against, to ensure support can be provided before homelessness occurs			
4	Improve access to supported accommodation pathways for clients that meet the needs of the pathway.	<p>Ensure that the most vulnerable clients are able to access the most appropriate supported accommodation pathway, so they can receive the support they need</p> <p>Evaluate the supported accommodation pathways that are available and ensure that they have the flexibility to respond to changing demands and needs of clients.</p> <p>Improving move on opportunities to enabled throughput within the supported accommodation pathway.</p>	<p>Improve access to the supported accommodation process to ensure that the most appropriate clients are placed in the available placements</p> <p>Improve move on options and speed of move on to enable more movement and availability in the pathway</p> <p>Ensure improved exit plans to ensure enduring long term housing options</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Single Homelessness Coordinator</p>	That more clients have access to the pathway and the most appropriate housing when they need it, reducing rough sleeping.	Year 2-3

4. Improve access to quality and affordable accommodation across all sectors for homeless households.

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
1	Improve access to Private Sector accommodation to meet the needs of those homeless or at risk	<p>Work with the private sector to deliver more options to prevent and relieve homelessness.</p> <p>Consider if working collaboratively with other districts across Oxfordshire could encourage more private landlords to work with the Local Authority.</p>	<p>Review current incentives and offers to private landlords and consider how effective these are in creating tenancies.</p> <p>Undertake a review of offers to Private Landlords across the county, looking at resources and value for money.</p> <p>Understand the views of Private Landlords and what they would need to work with the Local Authority.</p> <p>Ensure that information on the support available to secure private rented, in Cherwell or further afield is widely known and easy to access.</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Leader</p> <p>Housing Management Team Leader</p> <p>Tenancy Relations Officer</p>	More households have homeless prevented or relieved by and offer in the private sector in our reported figures	Year 1
2	Deliver more units of accommodation for Housing First	<p>Provide suitable homes to meet the needs of clients requiring Housing First Accommodation.</p> <p>Create more capacity in the social housing stock to deliver Housing First</p>	<p>Engage Registered Providers to reduce age restrictions and create more properties for general needs applicants and encourage Registered Providers to support the delivery of units for Housing First.</p> <p>Ensure that developers and planners understand the type and location of property</p>	<p>Strategic Housing Team Leader</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>	An increase in the delivery of Housing First units, which has shown to be an effective way in bridging the gap between rough sleeping or repeat homelessness and sustaining tenancies effectively.	Year 3

	Aim	Objectives	Actions	Owner	Success Measure or Outcome	Implementation Timescale
			<p>needed so that delivery meets demand.</p> <p>Delivery is monitored via the Housing Strategy Team and discussed at Registered Providers review meetings.</p>			
3	Deliver quality and affordable homes.	<p>Engage with the planning team to influence development to meet identified needs.</p> <p>Promote the delivery of Social Rented accommodation.</p> <p>Support the delivery of homes meeting the highest standards with regards energy efficiency.</p>	<p>Establish protocols for input on development sites and planning applications to consider the needs of those in housing need in the district.</p> <p>Promote the objectives of the Tenancy Strategy, Allocations Scheme and Nominations agreement with Registered Providers in achieving more rented homes, particularly at social rent.</p>	Strategic Housing Team Leader	More property at Social Rent is delivered in Cherwell	Year 3

Glossary

CANO – Citizens Advice North Oxfordshire

CDC – Cherwell District Council

CHSG – Countywide Housing Steering Group

CIH – Chartered Institute of Housing

DLUHC – Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

HCLIC – Homelessness Case Level Information Collection

HDG – Homelessness Directors Group

LEAF – Lived Experience Advisory Forum

LGBTQ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning

LHA – Local Housing Allowance

MARM – Mult-agency Risk Management

MEAM – Making Every Adult Matter

RP – Registered Provider of Social Housing

ToR – Terms of Reference

UKRS – UK Resettlement Scheme

Appendix 2

Review of Homelessness in Cherwell

Cherwell District Council Population Overview

By size of population, Cherwell has grown to be the largest district in Oxfordshire. The most recent census in July 2021 advises the population has grown to 161,000, an increase of 13.5%. The District is estimated to grow by a further 20,000 households by the end of the decade.

The census in 2021 details that the percentage of households in social rented housing in Cherwell rose to 13.3%, which contrasts with the national trend that has seen social renting decrease. This is still below the national average of 17.1% of households in social tenancies. Private renting in Cherwell rose by nearly 4% to 19.8% and homeownership decreased by 4%, although this is still 65% of the housing tenure in the district.

Cherwell has seen a rise in the proportion of people who do not identify as having a UK nationality, this rose to 11% in the 2021 census. The census reported that 79.5% of the local population were born in England, with Poland being the second highest country of birth. That figure has doubled in the last 10 years. 88% of the Cherwell population identify as White, which is a slight decrease over the last 10 years. The next largest other ethnic group is Asian at 6%, then mixed ethnicity at 3% with Black and other groups around 2%.

The percentage of people who have sought assistance as being homeless or at risk, broadly reflect the ethnicity of the general population, but those who identify as Black are higher at 6% of homeless presentations and those with mixed ethnicity as 3%.

A review of the homeless statistics submitted to DLUHC over the last five years reveal that number of people presenting for assistance is returning to the levels seen prior to the Covid 19 pandemic.

At the height of the Covid Pandemic there was a shift to cases being immediately owed relief duties and less option for early intervention. This is now returning to pre-covid levels, with many cases being supported ahead of any crisis.

Homelessness Data

Below is an illustration of some of the key data and statistics that show trends and pressures on homelessness services within Cherwell.

Local Authorities have a number of statutory homelessness duties. These are outlined within legislation. The data and statistics refer to many of them, such as the Prevention, Relief and Main duty. A brief overviews of these duties and what they mean for applicants is provided below

Prevention Duty

An applicant is likely to become homeless in the near future (within 56 days) but does not by statutory definition, threatened with homelessness. However, local authorities are encouraged to begin taking reasonable steps to prevent the homelessness rather than waiting. The duty applies regardless of whether the applicants is within a 'Priority Need' group. Priority Need is a further assessment of a clients vulnerability if they were to become

homeless and is also linked the provision of temporary accommodation should the need arise at a later date.

Relief Duty

The Relief Duty requires a local authority to take reasonable steps to help and applicant secure suitable accommodation for at least 6 months because the applicant is homeless. This does not mean that the accommodation is always a new letting of social or private accommodation, but instead the act of securing accommodation. In the relief duty, it is possible to refer the case to another local authority if it is believed that a local connection exists to the other local authority. Where a local authority has reason to believe that the applicants is eligible, homeless and in priority need, they should provide temporary accommodation until all the enquiries are made and completed.

Main Duty

The Main Duty applies when the Relief Duty ends (after 56 days of commencement of the duty) and the applicant is in priority need and is not homeless intentionally.

Homelessness Assessments and Duty Owed

Assessments

The below table shows the overall number of being assessed and accessing the service. It has trended downwards initially over the last 5 years, as was seen by many authorities as the Homelessness Reduction Act settled in. But is not starting to trend upwards. Not all clients that are assessed are owed a duty.

Duty	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Application/Assessments	450	435	318	377	419
Prevention Duty Owed	253	287	150	250	257
Relief Duty Owed	141	121	164	126	162

Duties Owed

The below table shows the outcomes of homeless cases and when the outcome is reached in the process. The COVID period had an effect on our ability to prevent homelessness and thus more clients were owed the relief duty as a proportion of those owed a duty. The number of cases that are being resolved in the prevention stage is again increasing and is higher than the other duties, as was seen pre COVID.

Duty	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Prevention Duty Ended	211	148	172	214	260
Relief Duty Ended	146	141	197	228	228
Decision at end of Relief Duty	53	35	49	43	83
Decision at end of Main Duty	42	19	21	23	45

Household Types and Duties Owed

Household Types Owed the Prevention Duty

The below table shows the type of applicant that approaches in the Prevention Duty. In the prevention duty, family presentations have prevalence, but single families are also high. Families are more likely to be seen by the team in the prevention duty and thus can have more chance of early interventions to prevent homelessness, reducing the need to be placed in temporary accommodation.

Household Type	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Single Female with Children	79	85	43	71	72
Single Male with Children	2	10	5	2	10
Single Adult Male	56	79	55	69	54
Single Adult Female	43	49	23	49	44
Couple with Children	50	28	7	41	53
Couple no Children	17	31	14	13	19
Three adults with Children	3	3	1	2	5
Three adults without Children	3	2	2	3	0

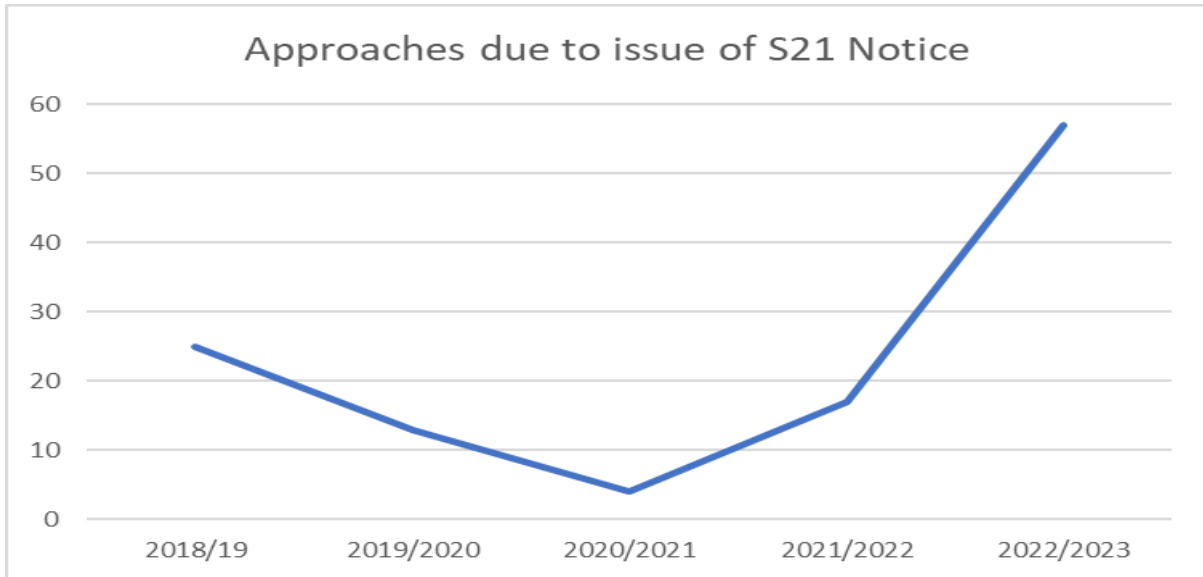
Household Types Owed the Relief Duty

The below table shows the type of applicant that approaches in the Relief Duty. In the relief duty, where more crisis presentations are seen, single males are by far the most dominant group. This is also linked to those at risk of or those who are rough sleeping and those that are in temporary accommodation.

Household Type	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Single Female with Children	35	28	18	17	25
Single Male with Children	5	4	7	0	5
Single Adult Male	52	61	95	78	85
Single Adult Female	27	13	30	19	28
Couple with Children	9	11	8	6	11
Couple no Children	11	3	6	6	0
Three adults with Children	2	0	0	0	0
Three adults without Children	0	1	0	0	0

Reasons for Loss of Accommodation

A Section 21 Notice brings a private rented tenancy to an end. Approaches for assistance due to the loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (due to service of a Section 21 Notice) has increased considerably in recent years. The numbers were low during the COVID period because of a 'stay' on evictions during the pandemic, so the number of notices did decline from pre-pandemic levels. However, they have increased sharply since.



Reasons for Loss of Accommodation at the Prevention Stage

This measure shows the housing circumstances of applicants approaching the Council at the earlier Prevention Stage. The figures show consistently that the main reason for a housing approach at this stage is a breakdown in a relationship with a family member or friend and because of the ending of a private rented tenancy. These are trends and factors that are typical and are seen by other local authorities.

Type of accommodation loss	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Family or Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	59	84	43	46	56
End of private rented tenancy – AST	108	110	44	119	141
Domestic Abuse	8	13	16	18	12
Non-Violent relationship breakdown with partner	20	29	14	17	6
End of social rented tenancy	15	19	7	13	16
Eviction from supported accommodation	8	1	4	3	7
End of private rented tenancy – no AST	9	10	10	13	10
Other violence or harassment	1	0	0	1	1
Left institution with no accommodation available	0	0	2	4	3
Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	0	0	0	0	1
Other reasons/not known	25	21	10	16	4

Reasons for Loss of Accommodation at the Relief Stage

This measure shows the housing circumstances of applicants approaching the Council at the Relief Stage. These reflect those that are at a later stage of homelessness and may be in housing crisis or emergency, such as going into temporary accommodation. The figures show that the most prevalent reason for loss of accommodation at this stage is still family and friends no longer able to accommodate, however, the proportion of relationship breakdown, either abusive or not, jumps significantly as a proportion of the overall number, compared with the prevention duty.

Type of accommodation loss	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Family or Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	40	36	64	40	59
End of private rented tenancy – AST	35	17	16	24	25
Domestic Abuse	6	9	8	16	17
Non-Violent relationship breakdown with partner	18	16	25	17	22
End of social rented tenancy	8	9	6	5	4
Eviction from supported accommodation	2	3	9	7	4
End of private rented tenancy – no AST	5	8	12	4	9
Other violence or harassment	1	2	6	6	6
Left institution with no accommodation available	2	2	4	1	5
Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	0	0	0	0	2
Other reasons/not known	24	19	14	6	9

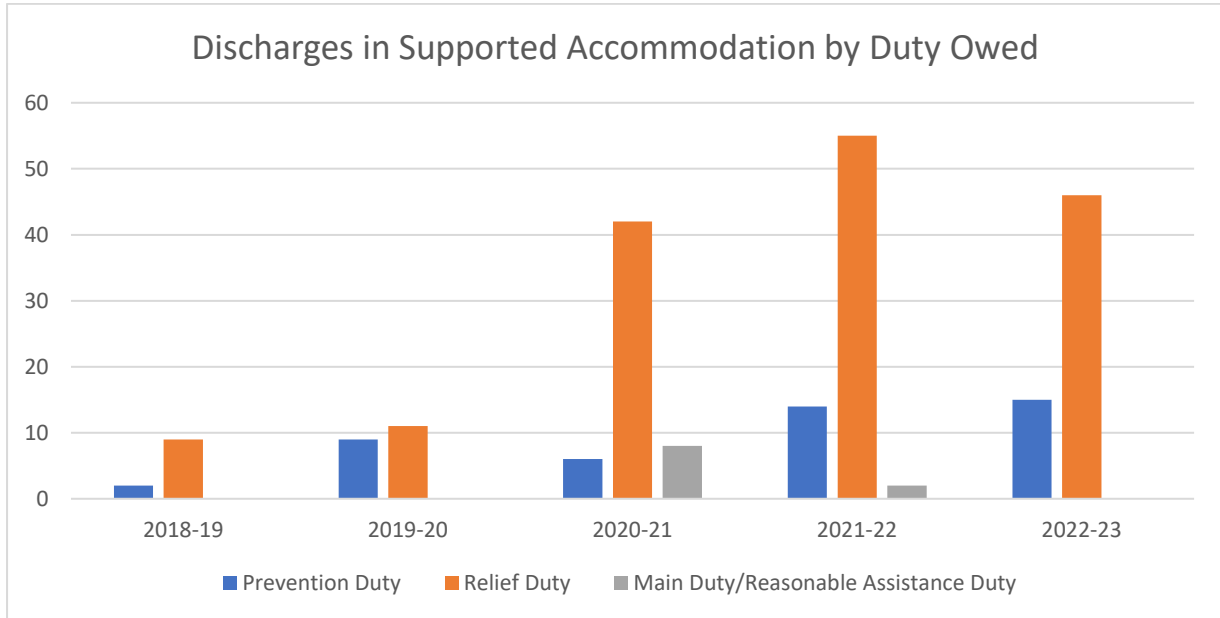
Discharges of Duty

The below table shows the outcome of cases and where they are placed following their homelessness and by duty. The most common way in which duties at Prevention, Relief or Main duty have been discharged remains an offer of social housing. This is particularly true for households who are owed main duties, with very few being resolved by securing private rented or moving in with family or friends.

Discharge method	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Social Housing – Prevention Duty	84	101	37	50	63
Social Housing – Relief Duty	48	56	64	66	74
Social Housing – Main Duty	36	18	15	16	36
Private Rented – Prevention Duty	37	30	42	57	49
Private Rented – Relief Duty	13	11	29	18	22
Private Rented – Main Duty	2	0	2	0	4
Family/Friends – Prevention Duty	10	15	13	21	29
Family/Friends – Relief Duty	5	4	3	7	17
Family/Friends – Main Duty	0	0	0	0	0
Offers Refused or left temporary accommodation	5	6	13	7	5

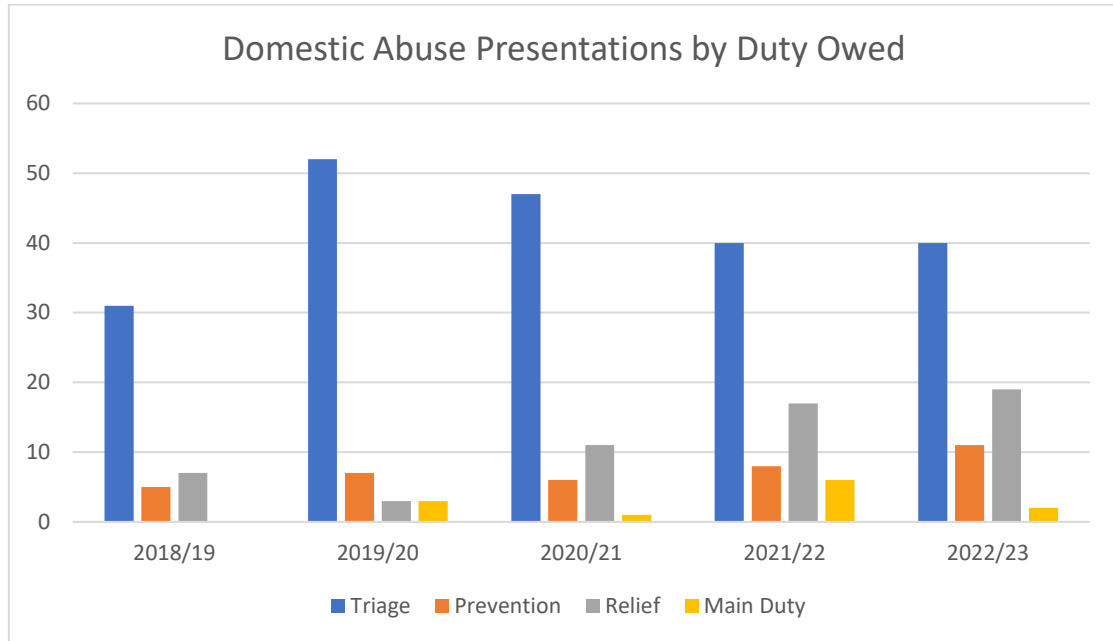
Discharges of Duty into Supported Accommodation

The number of households having their homelessness duties discharged into supported accommodation has shown an increase over the last three years. This shows that the clients that are being seen in all duties are potentially more vulnerable and therefore not suitable for general needs accommodation in social housing or a discharge into the private sector.



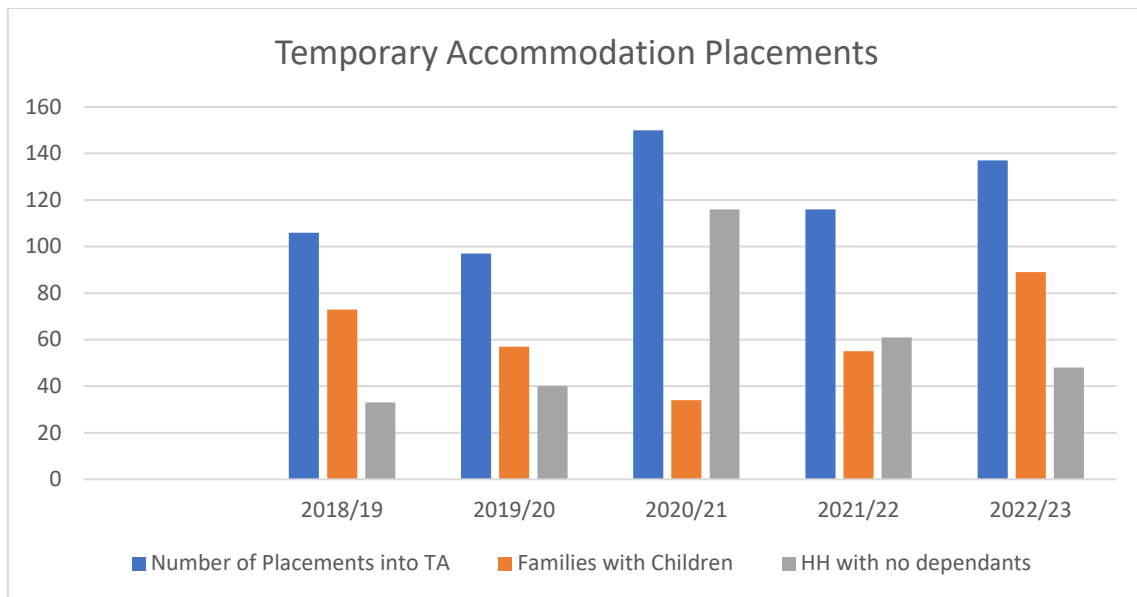
Domestic Abuse

In Cherwell the number of applicants presenting as homeless due to domestic abuse is relatively low compared to the total number of cases presenting for homeless advice and support. Of the cases presenting as homeless due to domestic abuse, most were given advice only and did not progress to any formal homeless duties. The prevalence of domestic abuse is increasing.



Temporary Accommodation

The number of households requiring temporary accommodation has risen over recent years. The high number during the pandemic were due to the requirement to take everyone into emergency accommodation, regardless of priority need. The number of placements in 2023 is greater than for 2021/22 and much higher than pre-pandemic levels. The pressure and requirement for temporary accommodation is therefore increasing. Higher numbers presenting for emergency accommodation duties and longer waiting times for nominations via the Housing Register requires a review of temporary accommodation resources to meet expected future demand.



Rough Sleeping

Rough Sleeping figures are reported annually in a formal estimate to DLUHC. The increase in numbers reported in Cherwell reflects the higher numbers of rough sleeping nationally. Cherwell has seen a significant rise in rough sleeping post pandemic. Men are the most at risk of rough sleeping. It is also an issue that affects all age groups and nationalities.

Gender of Rough Sleeper	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Male	8	8	8	4	15
Female	3	3	2	2	2
Total	11	11	10	6	17

Age of Rough Sleeper	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Under 18	0	0	0	0	0
18-25	1	4	0	2	3
Over 25	9	7	10	4	14
Not known	1	0	0	0	0

Nationality of Rough Sleeper	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
UK National	9	10	8	6	13
EEA National	2	0	2	0	3
Non EEA National	0	1	0	0	1

Housing Register

Housing Register figures show the current demand for accommodation, (July 2023)

There is greater demand on the housing register for those that have housing need than there is supply of suitable property. The supply of property during the COVID 19 period also had an effect on the number of properties available and overall lets. Numbers are rising again in 2023 and it is hoped figures similar to lets in 2017/18 will be achieved. Even at this level the waiting times for a nomination are expected to increase.

Current Bedroom Need	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total
1 bedroom	44	128	172	401	745
2 bedroom	10	167	105	326	608
3 bedroom	2	216	28	105	351
4+ bedroom	1	111	5	14	131
Total	57	622	310	846	1835

The number of properties that are being let through the Housing Register has decreased over recent years, this has a knock on effect on homelessness because there is less movement through the pathway.

The waiting times for larger family homes has grown in particular. This is an area where more households are assessed as being in significant need, but supply is limited.

Lets by bedroom size.

Bedroom Size	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1 bedroom	255	209	258	137	187
2 bedroom	298	334	263	210	235
3 bedroom	183	174	119	87	111
4 bedroom	16	22	25	17	13
5 bedroom	0	0	1	1	0
Total	752	739	666	452	546

Private Rented Market Data

Summary of monthly rent data by bedroom size 2022-23. Cost per month.

Bedroom	Lower Quartile (£)	Median (£)	Upper Quartile (£)
Room	400	460	550
Studio	498	625	820
1 bedroom	565	725	925
2 bedroom	625	800	1050
3 bedroom	725	900	1250
4+ bedroom	1127	1500	2100
All Categories	625	825	1150

Local Housing Allowance Rates

There are two rates operating in Cherwell, depending on where you live. These are called the Cherwell Valley Rate and the Oxford Rate. Local Housing Allowance is a mechanism of how much housing benefit you can claim to help pay your rent if you are renting privately.

The data shows that rents in the Cherwell area are more expensive than that national average. The Oxford rate is also considerably higher than the Cherwell Valley Rate.

The table when contrasted with the previous table show the disparity between market rents and local housing allowance

Number of bedrooms	Weekly LHA amount (Cherwell Valley Rate) (£)	Weekly LHA amount (Oxford Rate) (£)	National Average (£)
Shared	338.09	515.10	346.53
1 bedroom rate	648.22	772.89	561.51
2 bedroom rate	772.89	910.00	694.76
3 bedroom rate	897.52	1096.98	837.89
4 bedroom rate	1293.98	1580.67	1092.39

Housing Market Data

The market data shows that there are affordability issues within the housing market within Cherwell, with property prices considerably in excess of the national average.

Month	National Average	Cherwell Average
May 2023	£285,861	£366,014

Average Earnings

People in Cherwell do earn more than the national average, both male and female. However, the average earnings are not significantly greater than the national average, compared to the property price disparity.

Year 2022 per year gross earnings (£)

	Male Average	Female Average	Combined Average
National Average	39795	26878	33402
Cherwell Average	40139	28392	34858

Conclusions following review of homelessness in Cherwell

The review of Cherwell's homelessness data and associated waiting list pressures informs the drawing of the following conclusions.

- That the overall trend of homelessness in Cherwell is downward from where it was in 2018/19 in terms of the full picture. However, the amount of homelessness preventions has fallen at a rate that is faster than the other duties, which in turn means that more people are likely to be in crisis situations. It also shows that homelessness prevention is becoming more difficult
- The most prevalent group in of homelessness person is single males, which follows a national trend. Females or couples with children are more common in the Prevention Duty.
- The service of Section 21 "no fault eviction" notices have become increasingly more prevalent. There has been a significant increase, which could be linked to economic factors and upcoming changes in legislation.
- Domestic Abuse prevalence is increasing.
- Friends and family and the breakdown of these relationships and living arrangements is a major contributing factor to homelessness within the District.

- An offer of social housing is the main way in which our homelessness duties are discharged. The ability of the Council to be able to discharge to the Private Sector has fallen over the last two years.
- The number of lettings of Social Housing that have been made through the Choice Based Lettings system have fallen and have not recovered to pre COVID levels. This creates additional waiting list pressures making it more difficult to discharge duties to social housing.
- The supply of one-bedroom units is slowing in favour of a greater number of 2- and 3-bedroom units. This is therefore meeting certain areas of Cherwell demand regarding homelessness, particularly families with children, the number of single people who are homeless have more limited options through the general housing pathway.
- There has been a reduction in the lets and availability of the largest properties. Larger properties are also the most difficult to source through the private sector because of affordability issues within Cherwell. If families approach requiring these larger properties, such as 4-bedroom houses, it can be particularly difficult to discharge duties.
- There is an increasing use of supported accommodation as a way of discharging homeless duties, this suggests the client group is more vulnerable and therefore may be more susceptible to repeat homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Rough sleeping figures within Cherwell have increased, showing a growing national trend. These are predominantly single men. Since COVID lockdowns ended, there has been a particularly significant increase.
- Affordability of accommodation is an issue within Cherwell.

Sources

VOA administrative database

Land Registry

Office of National Statistics

DLUHC Live Tables

Census

Cherwell District Council
Equality and Climate Impact Assessment
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
2024-2029

Contents

Section 1: Summary details.....	3
Section 2: Detail of proposal.....	4
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics.....	8
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts	15
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts	16
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts	17
Section 4: Review	19

Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Wellbeing and Housing – Housing Services
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	New policy to cover existing service function
Summary of assessment 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).	<p>It is a statutory requirement to complete a review of homelessness within a District area and produce a strategy to tackle the issue every 5 years. The review of homelessness analysis pressures on the service area, by analysing who is approaching the Council for assistance and what their housing circumstances are. It also reviews what housing outcomes they are able to achieve. The review also has a wider view of the local market conditions, regarding supply and affordability of accommodation across the tenures.</p> <p>The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our approach and actions to prevent and reduce with an overall aim of ending homelessness and rough sleeping within the District. The strategy also outlines that partnerships that are in place and how we will continue to involve and work in partnership to deliver accommodation and support service users.</p> <p>The strategy aligns with our key partners across the other Oxfordshire Districts, City and County Council's and the strategy encourages a positive partnership approach to engaging and resolving individual needs and housing difficulties and to be able to target and provide support for the most vulnerable and in need.</p>
Completed By	Richard Smith

Authorised By	Nicola Riley
Date of Assessment	November 2023

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The current Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was produced when Cherwell District Council was in a partnership with Oxfordshire County Council. The new and reviewed strategy therefore is a Cherwell focussed one.</p> <p>The previous strategy was produced at a time where the context of homelessness services and provision was heavily influenced by COVID 19 and this is reflected within the strategy and action plan. Since the production of the current strategy, Oxfordshire County Council have also produced a Countywide Homelessness Strategy, that works alongside the District strategies. Additionally, since the current strategy was produced, Cherwell District Council and the other Districts and City are in a co-commissioning partnership “Alliance” with Oxfordshire County Council. The Alliance therefore provides the vast majority of support services for those rough sleeping or at most risk of rough sleeping.</p> <p>The Council has therefore produced a new strategy and action plan that takes account of the changed national, local and organisational context.</p>
--	---

<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The strategy sets out the following vision and priorities:</p> <p>Vision</p> <p>Working in partnership to prevent homelessness and create new pathways that focus on customer needs to ensure a decent and affordable home for all.</p> <p>The four strategic priorities for our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-29 are:</p> <p>Priority 1 Identify the causes of homelessness, facilitating early interventions to ensure a pathway to housing and reducing rough sleeping.</p> <p>Priority 2 Ensure that our service is accessible to all; engaging and assisting households who have difficulty receiving our services.</p> <p>Priority 3 Deliver long term housing solutions and help sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable, creating resilience.</p> <p>Priority 4 Improve access to quality and affordable accommodation across all sectors for homeless households.</p> <p>The priorities provide the framework for the action plan, which cover the aims and projects that the Council will undertake as part of its homelessness prevention and reduction activities over the next 5 years.</p> <p>A strategy is required by legislation. Preventing, relieving and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping requires partnership working to deliver a range of services and accommodation options for people who may not be able to resolve their housing circumstances without assistance. This strategy sets out the need to further develop to meet and respond to the changing needs of the client group so that lasting prevention and accommodation options are provided that reduces the risk of repeat homelessness and housing crisis.</p>
---	---

<p>Evidence / Intelligence</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>The Review of Homelessness within Appendix 2 of the Report provides data and research findings of who is most likely to become homeless at which stage within the process. The strategy is also produced in consultation with the public and stakeholders, the outcomes of this are also within the report.</p> <p>With regard to impacts of the issue on certain communities and groups, in 2022-2023 within Cherwell,</p> <p>76.4% of approaches had a white background (13% of the total were unspecified so could be higher than 76.4%)</p> <p>76.6% advised they were a British or Irish citizen habitually residents in the UK or Ireland.</p> <p>44.9% advised they had a mental health issue or a history of one and 31.7% advised that they had a physical disability.</p> <p>60% of those approaching at the prevention stage were women</p> <p>53.1% of those approaching at the relief stage were single men</p> <p>73.3% of those approaching were between 18 and 45 years old.</p> <p>1.5% specified as not heterosexual or otherwise refused to say.</p> <p>33.2% specified that they were in some sort of work, which is higher than the 30.3% who advised they were registered unemployed.</p> <p>The review of homelessness and the consultation outcomes have influenced the priorities and action plan actions within the strategy document.</p>
--	---

<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</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>Option 1 - To not have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</p> <p>This option has been rejected as it is not feasible due to it being a statutory requirement to have a Homelessness Strategy that is reviewed every 5 years.</p> <p>Option 2 - To continue having a joint strategy and not review at this time</p> <p>This option has been rejected due to the contextual issues outlined in above sections meaning that the current strategy does not contain fit for purpose outcomes and objectives.</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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that homelessness disproportionately affects younger people.</p> <p>The strategy proposes continuation of partnership working with the Alliance and the Young People Supported Accommodation pathway (YPSA) to ensure that support is provided and outcomes are available for this group</p>	<p>Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.</p> <p>The reports we receive from service providers about the number of people accessing and requiring the relevant services will also show the impact.</p>	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that there is a considerable number of physical and mentally ill or disabled people facing homelessness.</p> <p>Priority Need categories within homelessness legislation ensure that the needs of this group are acknowledged when approaching and being assessed by the team.</p> <p>Wider contacts with Housing Strategy and Planning teams and the data we have and provide ensure that more housing that meets specific needs, such as mobility needs standards, is provided.</p>	Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Priority Need categories within homelessness legislation ensure that the needs of this group are acknowledged when approaching and being assessed by the team.</p> <p>A wider review of the Allocations Policy, that is part of the strategy, also ensures that pregnant women are prioritised for allocations to larger properties before a child is born</p>	None	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
----------------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------	---	------	---------------------	-------------------

<p>Race</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Ethnicity information is collected by those undertaking assessments and the data shows that within Cherwell, the majority of those facing homelessness are White UK or Irish Nationals.</p> <p>The strategy and partnership approaches, particularly through more outreach work, could lead to more approach and engagement from minority groups, that may currently be hidden homeless or staying in otherwise unsatisfactory living arrangements.</p>	<p>Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.</p>	<p>Head of Housing CDC</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
--------------------	---------------------------------	--	---------------------------------	--	---	----------------------------	--------------------------

<p>Sex</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Data shows that men are more affected by homelessness than women, particularly in rough sleeping numbers and those approaching at the Relief stage. However, women are more likely to approach at earlier stages.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse, which affects women more prevalently than men, is also an issue that is rising.</p>	<p>Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.</p> <p>Services provided through the pathways respond to the needs and vulnerabilities of client groups to help them into appropriate accommodation.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse data is also collected. There are specific new clauses in the strategy regarding Domestic Abuse to look to address the increasing trend and improve access to support services.</p>	<p>Head of Housing CDC</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
-------------------	---------------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---	--	----------------------------	--------------------------

Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that there is a small minority of people identifying as non-heterosexual, below the average that would be expected. There is also a large group of people where it is undisclosed.</p> <p>As this information is known, we are therefore mindful of barriers that may be in place</p>	<p>Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data</p>	<p>Head of Housing CDC</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy proposes a review of the Housing Allocations scheme and Armed Forces are an additional preference category within the scheme. Therefore, additional priority is awarded to ensure access to services by this group	None	N/A	N/A
Carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy proposes a review of the Housing Allocations scheme and carers and those requiring additional bedrooms for carers are part of the scheme and its review.	None	N/A	N/A
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider 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
Other Council Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Social Value ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ 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"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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.

Review Date	Annual
Person Responsible for Review	Head of Housing
Authorised By	Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix One - Cherwell District Council Cost of Living action plan Winter 2023/2024

Initiative begins	Activity	Area of focus	Key delivery partners	Progress
October	Relaunch the Cherwell Warm Welcome Network, encouraging more partners	Fuel Poverty	Various community partners (38 in 22/23)	
	International Older Peoples Day stalls in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and promoting the community pop up @ Castle Quay	Advice and support Health and wellbeing	Age UK Oxfordshire, Trading standards, Citizens Advice,	
	Additional Food Grants for Community Food Provision	Food Insecurity	Community food Network Partners	
	Activate and Eat Club Half term provision	Food Insecurity	Schools in Cherwell	
November	'Who can help?' booklet refresh and promotion	Advice and Support	All Voluntary Sector Partners and statutory provision	
	Expanded winter warmers programme	Health and wellbeing Food Insecurity	The Hill, Cherwell Collective, BYCE	
	Expand Fuel support programme. Extra Warmth	Fuel Poverty	Citizens Advice	

Initiative begins	Activity	Area of focus	Key delivery partners	Progress
	Reduced membership fees for Oil Co-op for rural residents with oil heating	Fuel Poverty	Community First Oxfordshire	
December and January	Debt and money advice; linking with partners on scam awareness and Loan sharks, domestic abuse	Money Maximisation	Trading Standards, Citizens Advice, CDC (Cherwell District Council) Revenues and Benefits team, Reducing the risk	
	Additional support to distribute surplus festive food	Food Insecurity	Cherwell Community food network, Oxford Food Hub	
	Healthy Eating recipe swap	Food Insecurity Health and wellbeing	Cherwell Community food network	
February and March	Activate and Eat Club available in Half term	Food Insecurity	Schools in Cherwell	
	Cookery skills and shared cooking programme	Health and wellbeing Food insecurity Fuel Poverty	The Hill Parish Councils Cherwell Collective Good Food Oxfordshire	

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 November 2023

Cherwell District Council Safeguarding Self-Assessment 2023.

Report of Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing

This report is public

Purpose of report

To update the committee on how well the council is performing in delivering its safeguarding duties.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider self-assessment and actions
- 1.2 Consider actions for future safeguarding briefings for Members

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Section 11 (s11) of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key organisations to self-assess the extent to which they meet the safeguarding requirements and standards.
- 2.2 These key organisations include both County and District councils that provide any of the following services, including children's and adults social care, public health, sport, housing, culture, leisure services, licencing, and youth services.
- 2.3 The assessment requires organisations to carry out their existing functions in a way that considers the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The audit is an opportunity for each agency to demonstrate compliance with statutory guidance and to consider any actions required for improvement as well as reporting on actions from previous audits.
- 2.4 Cherwell District Councils core business is not explicitly and directly to work with children and young people, or adults with care and support needs as we do not

have the social care duty but where Cherwell services do come in to contact with children and young people or vulnerable people our systems and processes we must demonstrate an ability and capacity to safeguard and promote their welfare through the following guidelines.

- Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- Wider promotion of safeguarding, working agencies that have direct contact with children and young people.
- Senior Management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities for children and young or vulnerable people is available to all staff.
- Staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults for all staff who might come in to contact with children and families.
- Safer Recruitment.
- Monthly safeguarding briefings for all staff on national and local themes of safeguarding concerns.
- Internal awareness campaigns across Cherwell and joint working with District Councils.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 As outlined in the introduction this report will focus on providing Members with more detailed information around actions on the Section 11 Self-Assessment. The Section 11 Self-Assessment is attached as appendix 1). The report will also highlight the processes being put in place by Officers to ensure that Staff and Members have access to the support and training needed to fulfil their roles. In addition, the report will give information on any trends in terms of reporting of safeguarding incidents through the internal reporting mechanisms.
- 3.2 The assessment will also cover whether commissioning arrangements are sufficiently robust and address the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children based upon these standards. As part of these assessments there is the ability to recognise any opportunities that may be needed to support some commissioned services with their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 3.3 As the District Council has a Contract with Parkwood Leisure to deliver the services at the Leisure Centres the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead takes the opportunity to conduct Centre specific audits to ensure they are also meeting their safeguarding and contractual requirements. This process brings benefit not only to the District Council but also to the Leisure Operator in reviewing their practices. This external auditing of commissioned services is a process officers are keen to implement with other organisations who we commission to act on the Councils behalf.
- 3.4 Whilst there has been an emphasis on safeguarding audits in our Leisure Centres, there has also been internal auditing of the Council's own Holiday Activity Programmes. This year we have provided an improved safeguarding training package for the Youth Activity workers including behaviour Management. This has enabled those officers to reflect on the good practices that are in place but also taking the opportunity to improve their confidence in recognising signs of neglect & abuse.

Improved mechanisms in place for reporting concerns, making reporting timely and appropriate.

4.0 Staff Awareness

4.1 To underpin staff awareness around safeguarding and to complement the training offered via the iHasco platform, staff have been given greater access to various training opportunities particularly through internal briefings. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead has provided a number of online sessions including topics such as Neglect/ Self-Neglect/ Modern Slavery and Domestic Abuse/ Exploitation/How to make a Good Referral.

These sessions have been particularly well attended by staff and the interactive nature of the training means they are well informed and engaged. We have evidenced that whilst recognising these briefings were important there was also a need to ensure that if staff were empowered to identify signs of abuse that they should also be better supported in how to carry out internal reporting or how to make an external referral and therefore additional training sessions on this have been provided. This year we have achieved a 51% increase against last year's attendance for all the internal safeguarding briefings.

4.2 All delegates provide feedback on the learning, which has generally been a positive experience and therefore intend to continue with this offering next year

4.3 A number of these briefings are offered to Members, and these are available on the members page including pre-recorded briefings on Neglect and Domestic Abuse. Attendance of these sessions has been disappointing and therefore we would like to engage with Members to identify how we could make them more accessible and what would encourage use of the resources available.

4.4 As part of the assessment, we share relevant information with the two safeguarding boards, Oxfordshire safeguarding adults Board (OSAB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) helping to maintain a good awareness and understanding of emerging risks that are relevant to our area. Working with all partners involved to consider strategic actions that can manage and reduce these risks.

4.5 Other initiatives to support Officers as part of their role have included the provision of a safeguarding wallet size card on what to do if you are concerned for a child or vulnerable adult. These have been provided to Members, Refuse Collectors and Youth Activity Workers. This initiative was driven by identifying those staff who were often front facing and dealing with members of the public in an external environment who would then have access to the relevant contact details in the need of a referral or reporting of an incident. We are looking at expanding these resources working with Taxi licencing and providing resources/ guidance for exploitation/CSE/CCE for the Taxi drivers.

Additionally, customer service and housing and Community service teams also benefit from attendance at their morning briefings by the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead providing advice and support. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead provides the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Boards 7 Minute briefings on a variety of topics to support the team. This was recognised as a valuable tool to aid those teams who regularly deal with members of the public who are vulnerable.

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Boards Financial Abuse Training has also been offered to Housing and Customer Service Jan 2023.

OSCB training is also provided to all services in Cherwell and underpins the internal online training through iHasco.

- 4.6 The members intranet page has been updated with contact details for safeguarding concerns and pre-recorded briefings on Domestic Abuse and Neglect. iHasco training logins provided to all members the below chart shows the data for training Jan -Oct 23 (Part completed is where PREVENT training is the only session completed).

	iHasco Training Completed	iHasco Training Not Completed	liHasco Training Part completed
Conservative	9	8	3
Labour	9	2	1
Progressive Oxfordshire	6	4	4
Independents	1	1	0

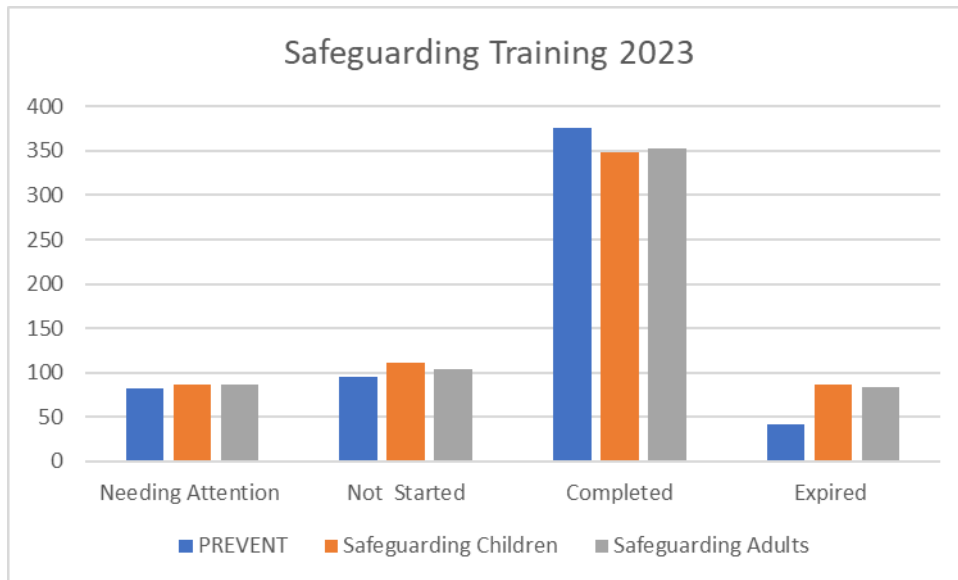
Awareness campaigns continue in line with the CDC awareness calendar which is available on the intranet. These campaigns are shared with districts in Oxfordshire to run campaigns at a similar time for improved effectiveness across the County. Often these are linked to National campaigns.

- 4.7 Since the launch of iHasco online training we have improved the monitoring and recording of safeguarding training across Cherwell. Outlined below are the number of staff who have completed the mandatory training on iHasco.

Compulsory Safeguarding training comprises of the following:

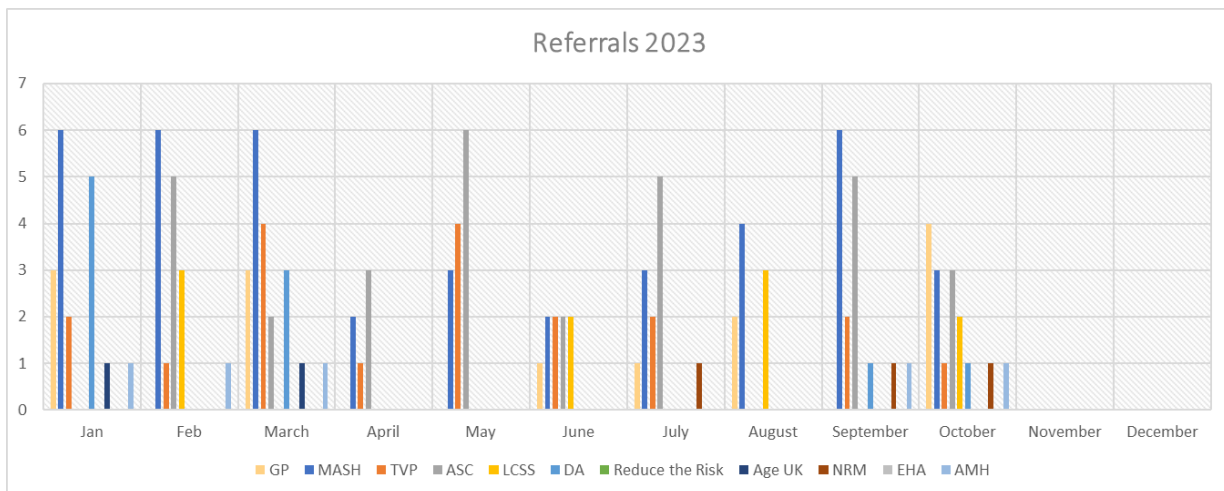
Active Users		Needing Attention	Not Started	Completed	Expired	Training Hrs/CPD Time logged
564	PREVENT	82	96	375	42	6254
564	Safeguarding Children	87	111	348	86	6254
564	Safeguarding Adults	85	104	353	83	6254

Safer recruitment training is added to Managers who hire individuals that need a DBS.



5.0 Reporting Safeguarding

5.1 As outlined above the District Council hosts its own internal reporting mechanism on the total amount of times external services have been contacted each month for 'See it Report it' (SIRI). Below are the occasions that each organisation has been contacted by the Council for a referral



2023 – we have recorded 184 SIRI reports (Jan-Oct), the actions taken from the SIRI reports referring to the Police and Social Care Services as follows:

- Adult Social Care, 31 29% increase on 2022.
- MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), 41 70% increase on 2022.
- TVP (Thames Valley Police), 19 35% decrease in 2022.

This equates to a total of 107 referrals to Adult Social Care/ Police/ MASH etc.

In addition to this these figures services across Cherwell do contact the Police including wellbeing and safer life checks, through the "Right Person Right Care" process. These are not always recorded on the internal reporting mechanism SIRI. Individual services have

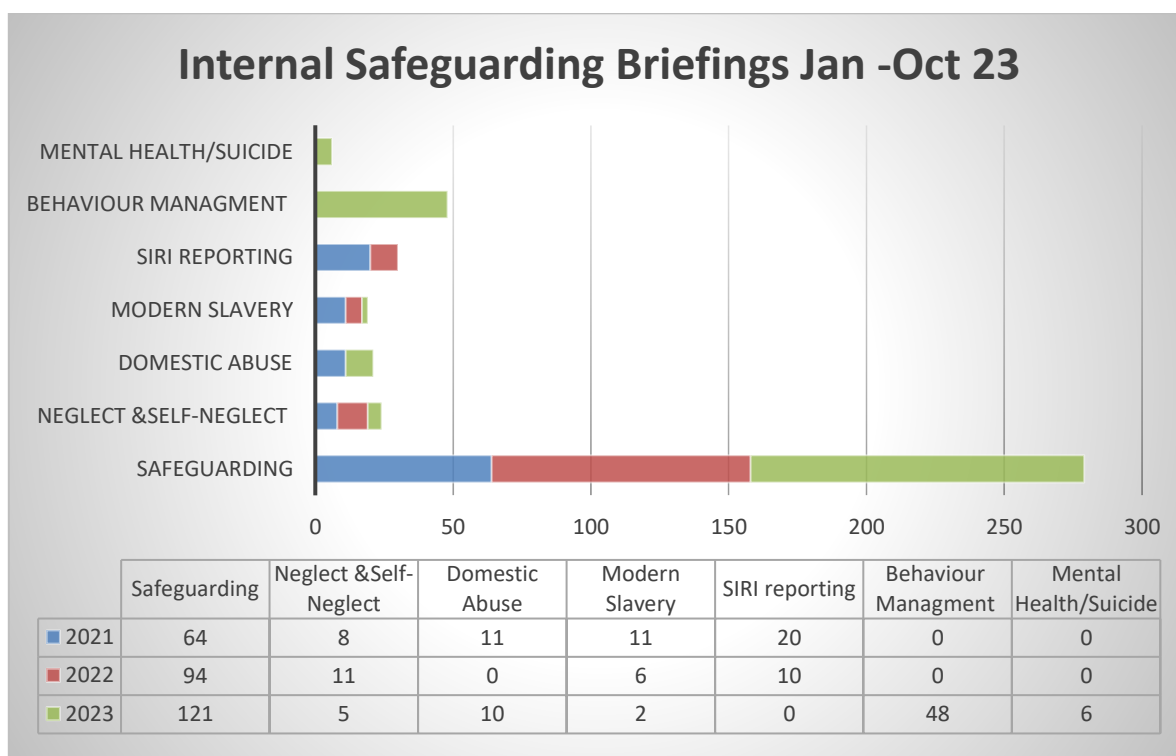
reported concerns directly to Oxfordshire Social Services not informing Cherwell Safeguarding team.

5.2 Whilst recognising this is an upward trend in the number of referrals there is a suggestion that this could be linked to the additional training given to staff to raise their awareness of incidents. The number of referrals is monitored closely to identify trends, work with MASH is in place to review these referrals being made, if they meet the threshold for safeguarding.

As outlined earlier in the report regular safeguarding briefings have been held through the year, these include Safeguarding, SIRI reporting, Mental Health/ Suicide, and Self – Harm / Self-Neglect / How to make a Good Referral etc.

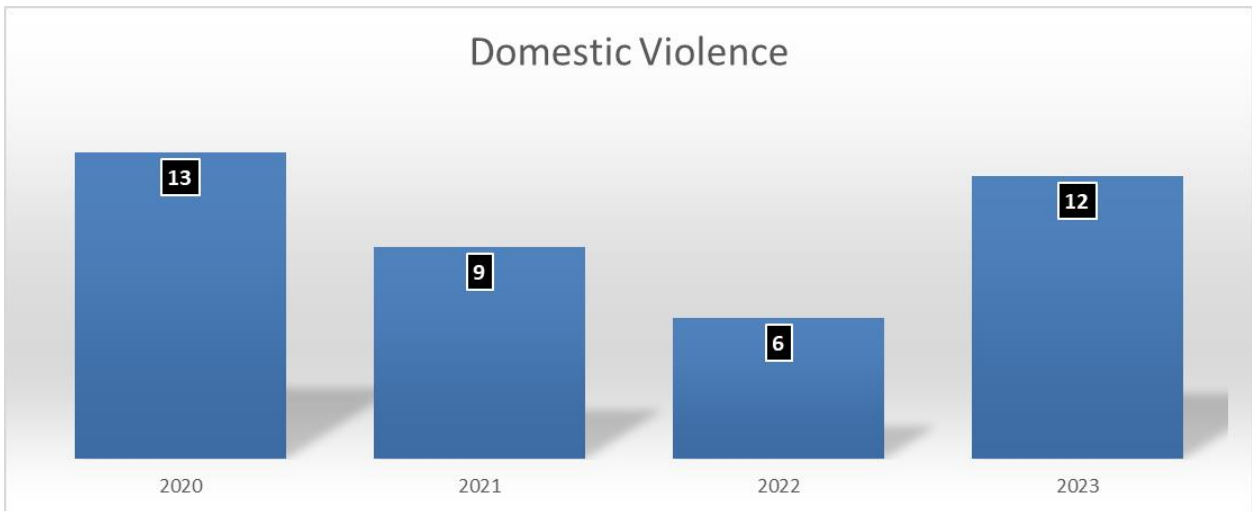
We developed these short presentation/ briefings to support this knowledge and underpin the safeguarding training available through the iHasco modules.

5.3 We have had a total of 192 members of staff attend safeguarding briefings this year, on a number of themed topics.

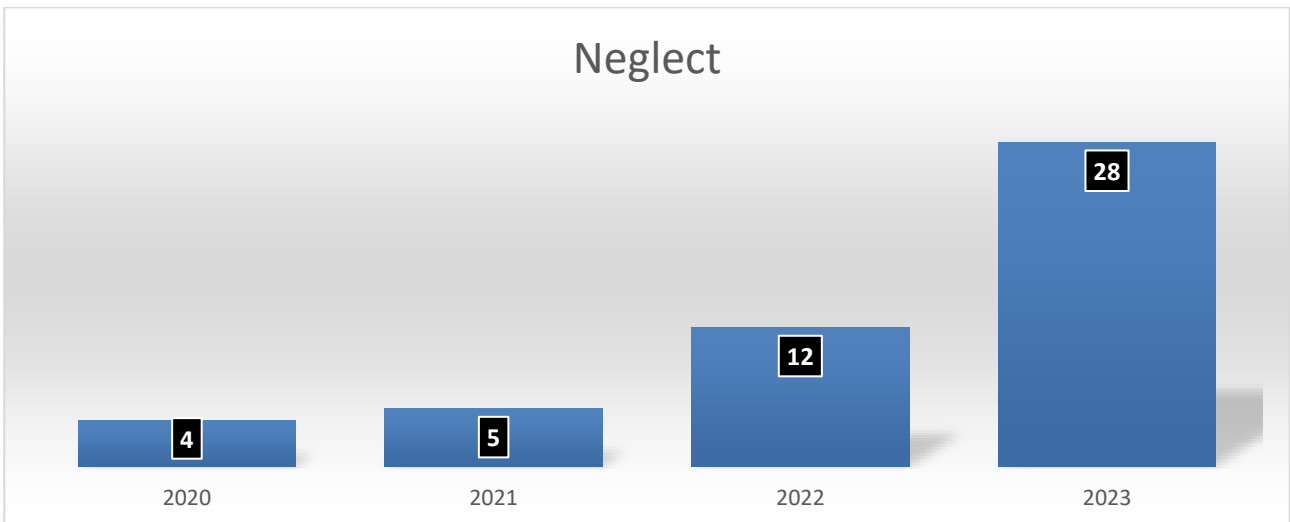


In addition to the above we have provided briefings on How to make a Good Referral / Child Sexual Exploitation / Criminal Exploitation.

5.4 Emerging themes for this year appear to be an increase on domestic abuse reporting, which is at its highest for the last three years. CDC now has a Domestic Abuse key worker embedded in housing team and leads on the DA training and DAHA accreditation.



5.5 Mental Health and Neglect are the two areas we continue to see the most reported on the SIRI reports. We are seeing an increase of Physical abuse been recorded this year.



In the Districts meetings we aim to review these themes to identify any concerns across the four districts.

6.0 External Partnering

6.1 As part of the partnering work with other organisations across the County the Deputy Safeguarding Lead attends the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children’s Board Single agency audit performance and quality assurance meetings (PAQA) with district councils. The Oxfordshire Children’s Safeguarding Boards (OSCB) subgroups enable the OSCB to deliver its multi-agency objectives as set out in the business plan which are then updated at each meeting.

6.2 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead also attends the PIQA meetings (Performance information and quality assurance subgroup). The purpose of this exercise is for agencies / services to share details on their safeguarding audit work and the learning from it. Information from these returns is included in the OSCB annual report.

- 6.3 District Council meetings are held Monthly the aim of the Joint District Safeguarding Partnership Group is to bring together safeguarding representatives from Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council to share information and learning in order to support their statutory safeguarding roles and responsibilities.

This includes the following:

Establishing ways of analysing data and identifying trends on safeguarding themes to inform Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board (OSAB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) understanding of prevalence of abuse and neglect. This analysis of data and trends allows for a focus of resource into these particular areas of concern. Where appropriate this information will assist the Safeguarding Boards in raising awareness of safeguarding issues among the districts, organisations, and the wider public.

Providing single agency returns to PIQA/PAQA covering both children and adults.

Circulation of information within districts to enhance learning gained through the partnership group meetings. (Cherwell District Council attend county safeguarding groups such as PIQA/PAQA / Neglect Strategy Group/ Neglect Forum/ Business group/ Engagement group providing updates to the districts)

Sharing of good practice and learning to deliver a consistent countywide approach to safeguarding.

Development of training needs across the districts to ensure a joined-up approach across the county.

Consolidating templates for audits, action plans, reporting mechanisms and any other methods of information gathering with a view to streamlining the processes.

7.0 Findings of Self-Assessment and Peer Report for 2021-2022

- 7.1 Attached as appendix B is the findings and identified actions from the Self-Assessment and Peer Reports for 2022

8.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1 The District Council, has a statutory duty to have appropriate arrangements and procedures in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults, living in our community.
- 8.2 This training framework acts as a core part of these arrangements and aims to ensure that employees and members are equipped with the relevant knowledge and

skillset to be able to identify safeguarding (and also criminal) concerns and report them to the appropriate person/agency in a timely manner.

- 8.3 We recommend that all members attend a Safeguarding Briefing every two years and encourage members to make use of the resources available including attending themed safeguarding briefings for Domestic Abuse and Self-Neglect/Neglect.

9.0 Consultation

None

10.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

Option 1: To not endorse the self-assessment. Rejected because there are improvements that have been identified and the council wants to show its commitment to being integral partners in the safeguarding partnerships.

11.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 11.1 There are no additional resource implications arising from the report

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance (S151 Officer), 01295 221845, michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 11.2 The report is to facilitate scrutiny in accordance with the OS work plan and constitution.

Comments checked by:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer, 01295 221651 shiraz.sheikh@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 11.3 The Council's approach to managing its safeguarding risks is captured in its Corporate Risk Register and includes a programme of training and awareness raising events with staff and members.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus, 01295 221652, shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 11.4 The council delivers its safeguarding duties in line with its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments that are set out in its Including Everyone, Equalities Framework.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus, 01295 221652,
shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

12.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A as not an Executive report

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Healthy, resilient and engaged communities.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities.

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix A Learning from the national auditing tool and feedback from the 2022 peer review event fed into the updated 2023 template.
- Appendix B – Self Assessment 2023.

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Susan Asbury Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Susan.asbury@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Phone: 01295 753748

Appendix A,

Learning from the national auditing tool and feedback from the 2022 peer review event fed into the updated 2023 template.

Group feedback forms returned highlighted the following examples of good practice:

Feedback from Group 4 on Cherwell District Council's return	Cherwell District Council shows a commitment to looking after the staff who deal with frontline situations. A system where staff contact team leaders after they have been affected by a call and take time out with the offer of further discussion. This is to prevent staff from going off sick or taking home stressful work events.
---	--

Groups identified the following areas for improvement:

Feedback from Group 4 on Cherwell District Council's return	Continuing to engage more with the parish council and making safeguarding awareness accessible for more of the community i.e., having safeguarding posters available in different languages. Cherwell District Council stated that it was hard to contribute to the areas of the return aimed towards children as they do not deliver direct services to children. However, as a provider they support members of the community which include families.
---	---

Community Safety and Housing on occasion are invited to MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) /JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination) meetings. However, not holding information on the named individual but could be part of the plan for example providing housing. MARAC team would lead these meetings.

We make referrals to relevant Child / Adult safeguarding services. Signposted to services for support and provide information if we hold it for such meetings where relevant.

Work needs to be done to ensure information is shared and if the use of tools should be used in CDC.

We need to investigate the structure to come together looking at the whole partnership. Focus on JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination) / MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) what information this group provides and how ownership of Tools such as Neglect etc are used or could be used in CDC.

The tools and interventions here are for use by any practitioner or volunteer working with children, young people and families and many can be used as soon as concerns emerge.

Child exploitation screening tool / Neglect screening tool and the Threshold of needs guidance.

Appendix A,

Further investigation and discussion needed to understand how we can use or if the need to use these tools is relevant to CDC.

Including working with procurement to ensure safeguarding in commissioned services is built into contracts.

Overall, returns and peer review group work highlighted some excellent examples of good practice and a strong commitment to safeguarding across the network.

Cherwell District Council Safeguarding Self-assessment 2023. First Version.

1.1 How do strategies and plans clearly set out the organisation’s safeguarding responsibilities and commitment to promoting the welfare of children and adults with care and support needs?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you’ve done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Governance and Structure Map- Each Board/Partnership member will also have an understanding of their individual accountability as the appropriate representative for their organisation in each forum. Where there is cross-over in membership of the Boards/Partnerships in respect of either an individual or partner organisation, members will be responsible for communicating and sharing relevant information or concerns that will facilitate effective joint working or a joint response to an issue. Some themes have relevance across a number of partnerships and in these cases the Boards/Partnerships will work together and take a pragmatic approach to achieve the best outcomes for people and ensure that there is no duplication of effort. In practice this means that each Board/Partnership has the opportunity to input into an area of work where it carries a responsibility</p>	<p>Monthly safeguarding briefings held and additional themed briefings each month. Cherwell representatives attend the following meetings/ strategy groups. PIQA. PAQA. Business Group meetings. Neglect Strategy group meetings. Districts Joint working group meetings (Cherwell representative attends all the above meetings as a representative for the districts) sharing good practice. OSAB/OSCB Board meetings. Engagement Group Meetings. CSE & Exploitation group meetings.</p>	<p>All Safeguarding training is reviewed annually, DA training was reviewed by AW VAWG May 23 ensuring the internal training is in line with Reduce the Risk. Themed briefing held through the year on national and local themes. Training has been provided for all employees and volunteers, Council Members now have online safeguarding training access with over 50 % completing Adult and Child Safeguarding, 65% have completed PREVENT training. CDC has provided 28 internal safeguarding briefing over the year covering, Modern Slavery /Domestic abuse/ Safeguarding/ Suicide & Mental Health/ Neglect/ Self-Neglect/ Behaviour Management for Youth Activators (in the holiday hubs)/ How to make a good referral. 183 staff have attended these internal training/briefing from Jan to Sept 23, this equates to a 20% increase in employees attending in the first 6 months</p>

<p>and/or has relevant knowledge, expertise and experience. Where a piece of work with a cross-cutting theme is identified, the other Boards will initially be contacted to ascertain the relevance of the theme / area of work for them. This will help partner organisations maintain a good awareness and understanding of emerging risks that are relevant to their area of work and will enable the Boards/Partnerships to consider strategic actions that can manage and reduce these risks. Sharing information also supports the principle of mutual challenge and support. Community Partnership- The four district-led Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are multi-agency forums where relevant partners work together to assess local crime priorities and agree how to deal with these issues. The Partnerships develop local plans for their respective areas to ensure delivery of community safety priorities that address local risks. They have direct lines of communication with the Safeguarding Boards for relevant issues or concerns to be escalated as necessary. CSPs are also represented on each Safeguarding Board through district council representatives. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, this policy is for all staff and elected members who may come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the course of their work, whether it is in</p>		<p>of the year. All briefings/training is available to all including volunteers, new staff complete as part of the mandatory safeguarding training and all employees are requested to attend annual safeguarding briefing to update knowledge. This is linked to supervision and learning & Development. Implementation of a Safeguarding Champion across services in CDC including Neglect Lead / Domestic Abuse lead/ New DA link worker in post from Sept 2023. Safeguarding Champions meet biannual these meetings, reviewing updates to policies / strategies, safeguarding action plan. Safeguarding Champions News bulletin is provided bimonthly this is to raise awareness of new training & learning from SAR' s/CSPR's by DDSL/ OSCB/OSAB and any new identified themes or concerns. Early Help Strategy- Cherwell provided early help strategies by offering the following. Physical Activity & Leisure opportunities/ preventative services. Funding targeted schemes for young people free swimming sessions and lessons. Funding for free school meals for children attending the Holiday Hubs activities. A subsidised leisure offers for young people, and those least able to afford to participate.</p>
--	--	--

<p>someone’s home, on council premises or in the community. Cherwell District Council (CDC) aims to work in a way that contributes to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults, preventing harm and radicalisation. CDC have a statutory duty to have appropriate arrangements and procedures in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults, living in our community. To meet this duty, we have the following in place: Training, Reporting Concerns, Recruitment, Multi Agency Working, Recording, Governance.</p>		<p>Youth Activators – Specific Early Years programme in early years settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •FAST – Family provision for the whole family offering free and heavily incentivised opportunities to be active as a family along with resources and equipment <p>Arts Development – Funding Creative Education Partnerships in Cherwell</p> <p>Parks / Countryside sites</p> <p>Provide Funding Pots (small)</p> <p>Health / Active lifestyle promotion and resources</p> <p>Grants – co-ordinate bids and offer small funding (spark funding)</p> <p>Affordable Housing – tenancy support</p> <p>Community Centres / Outreach / Family support intergenerational work</p> <p>Preventative Services</p> <p>Brighter Futures, an initiative facilitating a multiagency approach to innovative working in the most disadvantaged communities in Banbury.</p> <p>Nature Connectivity for wellbeing (muddyfeet & homestart)</p> <p>Liaison role with Early services in Cherwell (Bicester)</p>
--	--	--

		Community Safety provide partnership oversight of Anti-social Behaviour, Child Exploitation and County drugs Lines, Modern day slavery.
--	--	---

1.2 How do strategies and plans align with the multi-agency strategies and policies of the Safeguarding Boards?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Cherwell workforces understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities, leading to improvements in multi-agency working and outcomes for adults who are safeguarded. Utilising expertise, communication systems and resources across partner agencies. Approved support services are used through the social services and government support services. Senior managers attend panel meetings for strategic concerns in Domestic Abuse and Sexual Exploitation with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board. Attending Case reviews to ensure best practice and learning is attained. The Community Safety Partnership plan reflects priorities which contribute to safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs. We do have a</p>	<p>Cherwell representatives attend the following meetings/ strategy groups. PIQA. PAQA. Business Group meetings. Neglect Strategy group meetings. Districts Joint working group meetings (Cherwell representative attends all the above meetings as a representative for the districts) sharing good practice. These themed sub-groups report to the Board on specific areas of work, namely learning and improvement; training; communication; and multi-agency working. OSAB/OSCB Board meetings. CSE & Exploitation group meetings.</p>	<p>An integrated approach to tackling key issues and commissioning services by sharing information and intelligence. CDC DDSL representative for the Districts Joint Partnership group. The aim of the Joint District Safeguarding Partnership Group is to bring together safeguarding representatives from Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council to share information and learning in order to support their statutory safeguarding roles and responsibilities. This includes the following: Establishing ways of analysing data and identifying trends on safeguarding themes to inform Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board (OSAB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) understanding of prevalence of abuse and neglect. This analysis of data and trends allows for a focus of resource into these particular areas of concern. Where appropriate this information will</p>

<p>key role in the Joint Agency Tasking and Coordination Group which is the forum which brings together partners to share information on operational matters, including people at risk, and to determine the most appropriate response to deal with the issues concerned. The outcomes of agreed actions will be known to the group but not necessarily collated in a way we can provide as supporting evidence that the interventions, timing, etc. are appropriate. Sharing relevant information with Boards/Partnership helps maintain a good awareness and understanding of emerging risks that are relevant to our area. Working with the Partnership to consider strategic actions that can manage and reduce these risks. Key staff are on the OSCB & OSAB Board meetings and Training Subgroup regularly contributing to meetings. Our own DDSL is a trainer and cascades information or learning across the district council. Through partnership working Cherwell District Council work to safeguarding children and adults with Oxfordshire safeguarding board. Referrals to social adult and children services, the referrals are reviewed by the safeguarding champion in the team.</p> <p>The development, delivery and quality</p>		<p>assist the Safeguarding Boards in raising awareness of safeguarding issues among the districts, organisations, and the wider public. Example the Districts have their own individual Neglect action plan and a Joint Districts Neglect action plan. CDC has implemented a Neglect Champion and improved the Neglect & Self-Neglect training in each service area. Primarily Housing, Customer service and Community Safety teams. The business group has developed the Risk Register, which identifies key areas of concern, and it is monitored and reviewed at every meeting.</p>
---	--	--

<p>monitoring of safeguarding service provision is the responsibility of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB).</p>		
---	--	--

1.3 How do strategies and plans promote the partnership responsibilities of the organisation?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**
Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Cherwell District Councils continued Strategic links with OCC /NHS/TVP partnership in a locality are an essential element of the Safeguarding Boards border structure. The OSCB Business Group continues to work operationally under the OSCB. This group includes all the chairs of OSCB sub-groups and strategic leads for operational services. In addition, the Council's Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead is a representative on the group for</p>	<p>PIQA/PAQA Audits bimonthly meetings. OSCB/ OSAB meetings bimonthly. Business group meetings bimonthly. Engagement group meetings. CSE Exploitation group meetings. Neglect Strategy Group meetings. Health Shaping Families Partner- Food Projects and Community Development. Ongoing. DA link worker I post Sept 23.</p>	<p>Shared working protocols with the safeguarding boards. Early Help Strategy Cherwell representative attends themed sub-groups that report to the Board on specific areas of work, namely learning and improvement; training; communication; and multi-agency working. Where a piece of work with a cross-cutting theme is identified, the other Boards will initially be contacted to ascertain the relevance of the theme / area of work for them. A strategic, planned approach to domestic abuse is being taken forward with Cherwell's active contribution to the development and delivery of a</p>

<p>all Districts and Ox City. Its purpose is to recognise emerging concerns, problem solve, work collaboratively across the system and escalate issues when needed.</p> <p>To agree cross-boundary protocols, to adopt joint procedures and approaches to practise, joining subgroups and shared training. Link with the Safeguarding Adult Board, Safeguarding Children’s Board, Links with those who need to know (CSPR/ Rapid Reviews), links with other coordinating partnerships, District Councils, DASH, Reduce the Risk. Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) work together to assess local crime priorities and agree how to deal with these issues. The Partnerships develop local plans for their respective areas to ensure delivery of community safety priorities that address local risks. They have direct lines of communication with the Safeguarding Boards for relevant issues or concerns to be escalated as necessary. CSPs are also represented on each Safeguarding Board through district council representatives. The District Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, it expects and</p>		<p>countywide plan. Cherwell is now working towards a Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation and has recently employed a Domestic Abuse Housing Link workers to support complex cases and work towards achieving the DAHA accreditation.</p> <p>Neglect Lead in CDC attendees the Neglect Forum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer training to front facing teams on using the neglect practitioner assessment tool, to support staff to check list their thoughts and thinking. This is a tool we currently do not use but are aware of and work with the LCSS link worker on concerns. • Bespoke training for Housing team on identifying concerns of neglect/self -neglect on a home visit. In line with the Framework for recording the condition of the home. • DDSL and Neglect Lead attend the neglect practitioner forums, to share good practice and cascade through our safeguarding champion network. • Ensure that learning from neglect serious case reviews is shared within our monthly safeguarding briefings including Neglect and Self-Neglect. • Ensure our Housing / Customer service and Community Service teams record all concerns on our internal See it Report it form.
--	--	--

<p>encourages employees, and others that it deals with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work to come forward and voice those concerns.</p>		<p>Districts monthly meeting sharing and learning.</p> <p>To ensure free school meals were provided for those that are eligible and continued in school holidays/ holiday hub activities through participating in data mapping exercise to identify children and families.</p> <p>We have linked in with customer services to make them aware of everything on offer to residents including sending them documents for the knowledge hub.</p> <p>Cost of living web page has been updated to ensure it is correct as of October 23</p> <p>Food and support services leaflets have been added to website.</p> <p>Officer led deprivation focus group are meeting monthly to share practice, update others on what is available and how we can help.</p> <p>Food support mapping: visited most food support services in Cherwell to produce the food support services leaflet which is now in circulation. GFO have been given the new leaflet to go on their website and update their interactive map. Discussions continuing with Good Food Oxford re latest updates and actions linked to Cherwell Action Plan. Plans for key partners to meet to discuss local food hub. GFO and CDC to meet to finalise action plan. Updating the warm welcome network for this winter, exploring gaps and expanding the offer (esp. in villages) to support fuel poverty and social isolation. We've now updated the database, venue list for publication and an interactive map is in progress along with comms, pack distribution to go live Nov 1st. Physical packs are ready to go out this week.</p>
--	--	---

--	--	--

1.4 How do you know that staff across the organisation understand and act on their safeguarding responsibilities?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Cherwell District Council does not work directly with children or families, however where the services in Cherwell do have contact with Children in the Holiday Activity Hubs or vulnerable adults via Housing & Customer Service all staff have completed mandatory safeguarding training. Including PREVENT DUTY the following procedures will be implemented: Ensure employees are aware of the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' policy and procedures. Cherwell Holiday Hubs for children, all youth activity workers complete online safeguarding training. In addition, they attend a mandatory face to face safeguarding training and bespoke managing behaviour briefing. This has improved the safeguarding knowledge and appropriate actions to take if concerned for a child's wellbeing. Safeguarding audits have been completed on all sites with spot checks through the holiday periods. This has evidence the improved standards and processes for the program. The Activators completed feedback which highlighted the</p>	<p>Safeguarding Audits in the leisure Centres as part of the contract monitoring. Sept 2023.</p> <p>Holiday Hub youth activators safeguarding audit and spot check visit to all sites Aug 2023.</p> <p>Monthly safeguarding news bulletin to safeguarding champions.</p> <p>Safeguarding Champions meetings bi-monthly review processes, concerns raised from internal SIRI reporting or local themes for concern.</p> <p>Monthly awareness campaigns internally on viva engage/ CDC intranet page this reaches all staff and gives a link to training / briefings and signposting to supporting services internally and externally.</p> <p>Staff safeguarding survey July 2023.</p> <p>Frontline Worker and Voluntary Survey.</p> <p>DA Link worker in post Sept 23.</p>	<p>Leisure Centre Contract Safeguarding Audits. Holiday Hubs Safeguarding Audits and spot checks. DA link worker in place Sept 23 Neglect Lead May 23 DA lead May 23 Youth Activity workers more in-depth training, this will include scenarios going forward this was taken from the feedback form after each training session. Where youth activity workers asked for scenarios' for better understand and knowledge. Safeguarding Champions in all service areas and safeguarding news bulletin shared with all in CDC.</p> <p>Providing the online SIRI form for the Youth Activity workers, supported a better reporting and ensuring we make good referrals and use of the LCSS link worker.</p> <p>DDSL delivers drop-in sessions in team meetings on safeguarding using OSCB 7 min guides and updates on learning.</p> <p>Mandatory online training includes Safeguarding Children, safeguarding Adults and Prevent. Once the online training is complete a mandatory face to face safeguarding briefing is attended to ensure understanding of CDC's policies and reporting. It also gives a place for questions and dialogue for all</p>

<p>confidence in reporting concerns and speaking to parents about concerns when appropriate. We have also made available a link to the CDC internal online reporting SIRI report for making reporting concerns easier. Ensure employees and members of the public can effectively report concerns about children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk Operate sound recruitment and selection procedures for employees to ensure suitability for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults Identify and enable appropriate safeguarding training to take place for employees whose work involves or impacts upon children, young people or vulnerable adults All training is recorded and monitored on the Safeguarding training register and regular safeguarding briefing provided as refresher training. Demonstrate best practice in ensuring the safety of children, young people or vulnerable adults. Regular appraisals and 1:1s reviewing competencies of role with line manager. Training needs and development of role identified. We have a legal obligation to ensure that job applicants do not have a history that would make them unsuitable for posts involving contact with children. If the role involves working with children, then the DBS policy and associated Safer Recruitment guidance must be adhered to. Within Customer Service the advisor's go with their gut instinct and completing a referral is second nature. If they feel there</p>	<p>Monitoring of the internal reporting concerns mechanism "See It Report It" (SIRI), we identify the categories of concern and which agencies clients have been referred to.</p> <p>We have recognised an increase in referrals to MASH and ASC this is in part due to the training and increase in knowledge across CDC services. These referrals are being scrutinised to see how many have made the threshold for safeguarding concern. Working with MASH and LCSS to ensure the referrals are appropriate or do we have an area that needs further training.</p> <p>How to make a good referral training is in place and been delivered to services in CDC Dec 23.</p>	<p>staff to have the questions answered. Feedback forms are completed after every session. This year 171 staff have attended safeguarding briefings.</p> <p>DA link worker completing the DAHA accreditation, building DA champions group with revised training. Reviewed policies and processes for DA in Housing.</p> <p>How to make a good referral training Dec 23. Several staff in CDC have received a commendation from the safeguarding board.</p>
--	---	--

<p>is imminent danger to the individual or those around them, they will seek advice and/or call emergency services. The referral goes to the Team Leaders inbox (rather than an individual) where there is the potential for 1 of 3 to pick up and continue the process. The information is either escalated to the appropriate body, saved for future reference or further information is sought. Whatever the outcome, the Safeguarding Lead for CDC has access to the referrals to give them a final check. Continued resources through safeguarding briefings and training are provided through the internal newsletter. Information on Safeguarding is provided on the CDC intranet and links to training, briefings, and news stories with short clips are provided. Briefings are recorded and provided on the safeguarding page for all employees to have access to if unable to attend a briefing. There is a list of Named Safeguarding Officers, Designated Safeguarding leads and contact details on the 'Safeguarding' intranet page which has been reviewed and updated in June 2023. Safeguarding Champions are in each service area they attend bimonthly meetings, including champions news bulletin that provides updates and learning from SARs & CSPR's. They feed this learning back through team meetings and input into the safeguarding action plan for Cherwell. Domestic Abuse Lead / Domestic Abuse link worker started Sept 23 and a</p>		
--	--	--

<p>Neglect Lead are all been implemented this year to further support Cherwell's commitment and responsibilities to safeguarding. Cherwell safeguarding page signposts to the OSCB/OSAB and safeguarding services in OCC. Explains what to do if you need to make a referral, if an emergency or non-emergency. Contact details to discuss with the DDSL or DSL in CDC. Additional resources and information pages on DA/ Neglect/ Modern Slavery/PREVENT.</p>		
--	--	--

1.5 How do you know that senior management/board level leads are accountable for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements?

In the second box Evidence, **you should** describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR.

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Each Board/Partnership member will also have an understanding of their individual accountability as the appropriate representative for their organisation in each forum. Where there is cross-over in membership of the Boards/Partnerships in respect of either an individual or partner organisation, members will be responsible</p>	<p>Safeguarding leadership/ DDSL/DSL meetings. Monthly Members & Managers meetings review effective safeguarding measures are in place. Reviewing the following:</p>	<p>All staff and Board members comply with safeguarding training and attended the lead members portfolio meeting. Safeguarding Action plan / Risk management and review of processes/ strategies and themes of concern from the internal reporting mechanisms are discussed.</p>

<p>for communicating and sharing relevant information or concerns that will facilitate effective joint working or a joint response to an issue. Some themes have relevance across a number of partnerships and in these cases the Boards/Partnerships will work together and take a pragmatic approach to achieve the best outcomes for people and ensure that there is no duplication of effort. In practice this means that each Board/Partnership has the opportunity to input into an area of work where it carries a responsibility and/or has relevant knowledge, expertise and experience. Where a piece of work with a cross-cutting theme is identified, the other Boards will initially be contacted to ascertain the relevance of the theme / area of work for them. This will help partner organisations maintain a good awareness and understanding of emerging risks that are relevant to their area of work and will enable the Boards/Partnerships to consider strategic actions that can manage and reduce these risks. Sharing information also supports the principle of mutual challenge and support. Lead Members/ Portfolio Meetings are held monthly, the purpose is to support excellent communications between officers and the representative lead members portfolio holders and to provide a clear link between the Senior Team and Executive / Cabinet.</p>	<p>Safeguarding must be included in induction programmes for all staff and volunteers. Providing effective safeguarding supervision arrangements for staff, commensurate to their role and function. Developing an organisational culture where all staff are aware of their personal responsibilities for safeguarding and information sharing. Developing and promoting a learning culture to ensure continuous improvement. Policies are in line with legislation and guidance.</p>	<p>This seeks to clarify the roles and responsibilities in relation to system working. In addition, it provides the flexibility needed at local level to support the professional practice of individuals and the partnerships working to promote healthy behaviours to keep individuals and communities safe from harm. Monthly Members meeting Safeguarding agenda item.</p>
---	--	--

--	--	--

1.6 How does your organisation demonstrate that your Senior managers/board level leads have the required knowledge, skills and expertise, and keep abreast of local and national developments and learning to ensure that practice continues to improve?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Senior managers attend the quarterly-held Strategic Safeguarding Group meeting. The purpose of this group is to share safeguarding information, policy and practice from within the organisation and across our partnerships. The role of the group to ensure safeguarding is strategically placed across service plans and embedded in day-to-day operational work. Line managers are kept informed of all safeguarding matters relating to their team. Line managers must ensure teams complete their safeguarding training. This information is monitored by our HR system iTrent and monthly updates are sent to service heads to support them to target members of staff that are due refreshers and ensure they attend. The deputy designated safeguarding lead is responsible for up-to-date information on the council's</p>	<p>Monthly safeguarding briefings for all staff.</p> <p>Senior managers /board level leads all have safeguarding training provided both on-line/ face to face and with monthly safeguarding briefings. DSL/ DDSL are named persons to provide expert advice to all staff. To oversee, implement and monitor the ongoing assurance of safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>To ensure the adoption, implementation and auditing of policy and strategy in relation to safeguarding annually. This is agreed in the overview & scrutiny meeting in Nov 23.</p> <p>To ensure that there is a programme of training to support those with responsibility for safeguarding or who are front line staff. Reviewed monthly.</p> <p>Working in partnership with other groups including commissioners/providers of health care</p>	<p>Self-Assessment Front line voluntary survey Safeguarding training feedbacks Senior Managers/ board level meeting minutes. Needs Identified learning shared and new process implemented as follow: DA link worker DA lead DA Champions Neglect Lead. Training register for all employees and Members. If needed bespoke training provided for services in CDC through internal and external trainers.</p> <p>Gap Analysis for Safeguarding with Managers – Reviewed 7 managers completed.</p> <p>The returns were reviewed, and key finding as follows.</p>

<p>Intranet site, and for publishing safeguarding information and news stories. Our Safeguarding Communication involved releasing key information in-line with key dates in the safeguarding calendar which included CSE awareness day, Neglect learning from CSPR's Domestic Abuse awareness as well as key learning from OSAB and OSCB conferences/ Webinars and training events.</p>	<p>(as appropriate), local authorities and police to secure high quality, best practice in Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable adults.</p> <p>Weekly monitoring internal SIRI reports to ensure that serious incidents relating to safeguarding are reported immediately and managed effectively.</p> <p>Neglect Strategy meeting includes CDC individual Neglect Action plan reviewed monthly.</p> <p>Gap analysis on safeguarding training, what works, what needs to change for service areas completed by managers. Sept 23.</p> <p>Safeguarding on Services team meetings / DDSL attended to provided updates.</p> <p>iHasco online training for safeguarding Children/ Adults & Prevent provided to all including members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More F2F safeguarding briefings. • Safeguarding Quick link to be on front page of CDC intranet page. • Safeguarding will be added as agenda to service meetings. • Confident on how to report concerns. • Regular information and briefing provided monthly. • CDC Home page needs more information on Safeguarding. • DDSL to have more insight into other parts of the organisation that either hold data around safeguarding and/or those parts of the organisation that don't realise that there are safeguarding responsibilities as part of their team
---	---	--

1.7 How do you ensure that safeguarding activity is routinely monitored within the organisation at a senior level (senior manager/board level lead/elected members), issues are identified at the appropriate level and resources are put in place to resolve them?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Lead Members/ Portfolio Meetings are held monthly, the purpose is to support excellent communications between officers and the representative lead members portfolio holders and to provide a clear link between the Senior Team and Executive / Cabinet.</p> <p>Safeguarding Training and Briefings are provided for all employees, induction training involves mandatory safeguarding training. This has also been made available to members via iHasco online training. All training is monitored, and validation of courses are regularly reviewed. Email reminders are sent weekly for renewal of the training when due. The safeguarding annual audit is discussed in the Overview and Scrutiny program and discussed with the committee.</p> <p>Internal reporting SIRI is monitored and all Referrals to MASH or SC etc are reviewed.</p> <p>Cherell District Council is further represented on the performance and quality assurance group, training subgroups, exploitation subgroup, neglect strategy group, as well other task and finish groups.</p>	<p>Monthly Members & Managers meetings, Monthly team meetings where DDSL delivers pop in sessions on safeguarding themes/ trends/ learning for SAR's or CSPR's.</p> <p>Working with LCSS link worker on referrals and concerns for children or vulnerable adults.</p> <p>Training on what makes a good referral available to all staff in CDC Oct 23.</p> <p>Monthly updates provided to Cllr Chapmans briefing.</p> <p>PIQA/PAQA meetings.</p>	<p>Internal reporting SIRI is monitored weekly and reported to Senior managers / members monthly. Outcomes & Actions are provided and reviewed. Safeguarding training is monitored, and awareness campaigns are provided in line with national and local themes.</p> <p>Monitoring Internal SIRI reports identifying levels of concerns for MASH reporting, if we need targeted training including how to make a good referral or we are reporting accurately has been reviewed. This provided a process for customer service to work with LCSS link worker and joint working with the strength & needs forms when appropriate. This has provided clear process for reporting concerns from CDC customer service & Housing teams.</p> <p>Examples.</p> <p>All members were provided logins for iHasco training in June by August over 50% had completed all the three safeguarding modules or provided evidence they had completed safeguarding training with OSCB/OSAB.</p> <p>Additional training provided for mental health /suicide conversations for customer service housing staff,</p> <p>Bespoke safeguarding training for housing staff when visiting a home, how to recognise signs of neglect or abuse. In line with the Framework for recording the condition of the home.</p> <p>Neglect Lead in place for CDC.</p> <p>DA lead & DA link worker in place.</p>

		Members intranet page is updated and has prerecorded safeguarding briefings and resources/ resource page for services they can signpost to.
--	--	---

1.8 How do you know that key messages and issues raised at the Boards are fed back into and cascaded throughout your organisation?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Direct Leadership team meetings discuss and decide the critical messages to pass through the company's layers. Senior managers to line managers and to staff teams.</p> <p>Member's page updated with links to short clips, training via iHasco and recorded safeguarding briefings available. Safeguarding Briefings provided through the year. Internal Communications platforms used such as Safeguarding News Bulletin, CDC News, viva engage including a calendar of training dates each month. This provides dates for training or briefings, and awareness of current issues raised by Safeguarding Board or National events. Safeguarding Page, CDC intranet updated regularly with themed information and links to resources. ASK Ani/ Blue Sky apt. Safer Sleep for</p>	<p>DDSL/DSL attend relevant board / strategy group meetings.</p> <p>Information is cascaded through the safeguarding champions meetings monthly/ safeguarding news bulletin bi-monthly.</p> <p>Monthly Managers meetings/ Members meetings.</p> <p>CDC news page and viva engage is used to bring issues themes and information to all staff.</p> <p>These are updated weekly.</p> <p>DDSL delivers updates to team meetings (Housing/ Community Service/Leisure & Wellbeing) as an agenda item.</p> <p>Safeguarding Champions meetings bi-monthly.</p> <p>DDSL attends services areas team meetings to provide updates on themes in CDC and across OCC.</p>	<p>Register of internal briefings and training.</p> <p>Recourses DA posters in 7 languages provided to Community Service for POP up sessions, Leisure Centres and Parish Councils. OSCB 7 min briefings delivered in team meetings across services in CDC.</p> <p>Early Help guidance for families provided to families when signing up for holiday activities for children. Child protection in sport information for parents has been provided when the parents are booking children on the Active Holiday Clubs.</p> <p>This has been expanded to Parish Councils for the safe space program.</p> <p>Safeguarding Champions continue to raise awareness and offer guidance in their service areas and updates to DDSL/DSL.</p>

<p>babies. CDC representative attended the Senior Manger attends the DA strategic meeting. DA awareness in CDC was provided through monthly briefings. OSAB training and links to services available were sign posted in CDC news, News bulletin and CDC safeguarding Intranet page. This included DA briefing recorded for anyone not able to attend the briefings. CDC representative attends the Neglect Forum. Neglect posters, briefings and Neglect awareness was provided on the CDC intranet safeguarding page including short clips for all services users and Cllrs to view. Safeguarding concerns wallet card was provided to Depot managers for their teams and Youth activity workers. / Taxi Drivers. Including guidance on exploitation issued on receipt of licence. This card provided the information on who to contact if you have a concern, it highlighted what to recognise as Neglect and Safeguarding concerns. This has been received well as these workers do not have a computer and can miss the awareness campaigns provided in CDC news. Team leaders discuss safeguarding in daily briefings and smaller briefings have been provided for the Depot managers to use in these sessions.</p>	<p>Safeguarding champions Bulletin provided to all staff.</p> <p>Taxi Drivers receive Safeguarding Wallet card and exploitation guidance pack on receipt of licence.</p>	
---	--	--

1.9 How do you know that the Safeguarding Boards are abreast of emerging local issues and acting upon the latest research/reports into safeguarding?

In the second box Evidence, you should describe an **example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**
Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Representatives from Cherwell District Council sit on the Safeguarding Boards meeting. Strategic overview of trends and themes across the County and Districts are reviewed. Partnership working with all agencies ensure discussion/ challenges and action plans are developed. CDC supports 'task and finish' group and supports the Oxon DA strategic board.</p>	<p>Self-Assessment -Dec 23 PAQA/PIQA meetings Neglect Strategy meetings Engagement group meetings OSCB/OSAB Meetings</p>	<p>Senior representative attends Engagement group meetings. Homeless mortality report. PIQA & PAQA, Neglect Strategy meetings attended by senior representative for CDC and Districts providing development and agency guidance and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding is embedded across all services areas. • Team managers are able to support staff with safeguarding concerns. • Staff can confidentially raise concerns for colleagues. • New staff induction programmes include access to "See it Report it" and appropriate training.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members receive training and understand how to report safeguarding and handle sensitive information. • Training addresses local and national concerns. • Staff are listened to through the internal survey about what they feel they need support with most in relation to good quality safeguarding practice. •
--	--	---

1.10 How do you know that your escalation policies are clear and that staff know what to do when their safeguarding concerns are not being addressed within your organisation or by other agencies?

In the second box Evidence, you should describe an **example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**
Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
Safeguarding briefing provide the training and understanding of how to escalate if concerns are not being addressed. The safeguarding policy highlights reporting safeguarding concerns. Escalating	Monthly safeguarding briefings.	OSCB Escalation Policy for professionals with child protection or child welfare concerns. Record of training and internal briefings which highlights how to escalate concerns and to who.

<p>concerns is evidenced in the behaviour and unacceptable behaviour section of the policy section 9.0. CDC have a duty to have a designated officer to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. This person has responsibility for ensuring that CDC operates procedures for dealing with allegations in accordance with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards' guidance resolving inter-agency issues. Liaison with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards on any issues. CDC are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, it expects and encourages employees, and others that it deals with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the CDC work to come forward and voice those concerns. This includes concerns relating to Safeguarding arrangements. Such issues can be raised without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. CDC have a Whistleblowing Policy in place which is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.</p>	<p>Champions bi-monthly meetings discussion on concerns and actions taken recorded.</p> <p>Gap analyse with managers on what works and what doesn't to address any gaps in services or policies. Sept 23.</p> <p>OSCB/OSAB board meetings.</p> <p>PIQA/PAQA meetings.</p> <p>Contract monitoring meetings.</p>	<p>Commissioned services have a duty to ensure safeguarding process in place in agencies we have commissioned.</p> <p>Safeguarding commissioned services checklist for safeguarding is in progress / review.</p> <p>Safeguarding Intranet page provides signpost and information when raising a concern and what to do if you feel it necessary to challenge the outcomes. Safeguarding training covers reporting concerns and how to escalate concerns, this is also provided through scenarios in the training.</p> <p>OSAB Subgroup Exception Reporting, we can report concerns via this path.</p>
---	--	---

1.11 How does your organisation respond to challenge and improve practice as a result of constructive feedback?

In the second box Evidence, you should describe an **example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Internal Survey completed with all staff July 23, over all staff felt the Council is proactive in raising awareness by providing information around safeguarding to staff. Providing monthly briefings on safeguarding themes has improved overall awareness across services on all types of abuse. CDC News continued awareness on safeguarding information covering new identified risks or Concerns. Training links, signposts to services.</p> <p>All staff attending briefings /training complete a feedback form, asking what they have learnt, are they confident in reporting? These have been recorded in each service area and reviewed to provide further training where needed.</p>	<p>Staff Survey July 23 Gap Analysis for manager reviewing the training, what works Sept 23. Frontline Worker and Volunteer Survey Sept 23. Feedback forms for all attendees of safeguarding briefings monthly.</p> <p>PIQA/PAQA Audits Neglect Audit.</p> <p>Safeguarding Audits Holiday Hubs/ Leisure centres.</p>	<p>Feedbacks /Surveys/ Gap analysis reviewed at the safeguarding champions meetings with senior managers. Minutes provided and actions agreed as a group.</p> <p>The purpose of this exercise is for agencies / services to share details on their safeguarding audit work and the learning from it. Information from these returns is included in the OSCB annual report.</p> <p>Feedback from parents and staff for the holiday hubs ensure we listen to children's and parents and staff views.</p>

3.1 How do commissioning arrangements set out quality assurance and service standards in order to safeguard children and adults with care and support needs?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>The Management of the Leisure Centres within the District are contracted to Parkwood Leisure/Legacy Leisure. Included within this portfolio are Spiceball, Bicester, Kidlington, Woodgreen, Facilities. Contractual requirements are set out to ensure that service standards are met and whilst the removal of Creche provision from the Centres will reduce some of this responsibility there is still a clear position on safeguarding children as part of programmed activities. On an annual basis the Leisure Centres are audited by the Authority to ensure safeguarding procedures are being followed. Action plans are then drafted, and the Authority works with the Leisure Operator to resolve any outstanding items. In regard to commissioning of adults and children's services, Cherwell District Council does not procure these.</p>	<p>Holiday Hub safeguarding Audit Aug 23. Leisure centre audits Oct 23. Volunteer scheme Oct 23.</p>	<p>Holiday Hub staff feedback was opposite audits highlighted improved knowledge and practice. Concerns were raised and acted upon in a professional and timely manner. Early help family's guidance was provided on several occasions improving access to support for the family.</p> <p>Leisure centre audits highlighted areas to improve such as DBS checks to be built into weekly checks across all sites.</p> <p>Reviewed Volunteer scheme application form and incorporate Safeguarding on the Application Form and the Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Training offered to Volunteers – Safeguarding / Handling suicidal conversations.</p> <p>We have developed a 'kick-off' meeting list where any new procurements will be checked out in identifying if there are any issues relating to data protection, contract dates, etc., and we have now also added a question to ask if there are any safeguarding issues that may apply to any new procurement Oct 23.</p>

3.2 How does contract monitoring ensure that commissioned services meet the required standards on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults with care and support needs?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>The Community Safety Partnership plan reflects priorities which contribute to safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs but is not specific on the impact, or any criteria for who we work with or quality of the work. A commitment to keeping Safeguarding training and principles are up to date is placed into contractual obligations. On long term contracts these commitments are reviewed annually. All our current housing partners have their own safeguarding lead to take ownership of referrals and ensure processes are adhered to. In shorter contracts where monitoring is in place via quarterly meetings. "Safeguarding concerns and updates "are always discussed during AOB. Commissioned Leisure Services through the operation of the Leisure Centres is quality</p>	<p>Contract Monitoring Meetings. Leisure Centre Safeguarding Audits Annually. Safeguarding checklist is part of the kick off meeting.</p>	<p>Representatives from CDC attend the Contract Monitoring meetings, services are discussed, and action plans agreed. Safeguarding checklist is part of the commission process and embedded into the process. Safeguarding has been added to the volunteers risk assessment .</p>

<p>assured through the requirements of the Contract between the Leisure Operator and the Council. The contract allows for any changes in legislation to be adopted into the Contract. The Operator will also define its own assurance standards for Safeguarding. Safeguarding Audits of the Leisure Centres carried out by Safeguarding Officer and Leisure Facilities Manager to ensure good practices in place. Leisure Centre Safeguarding Audits, CDC completes safeguarding audits with the Leisure Centres ensuring policies and training are in place and spot checks on DBS's/ Training platforms. A cross section of staff across the centres are spot checked with question on training, safeguarding policy knowledge and understanding of their safeguarding policy. Any recommendation is provided to the Site Manger and DSL who will address any suggestion and work with CDC to maintained effective safeguarding across the centres. We have developed a 'kick-off' meeting list where any new procurements will be checked out in</p>		
--	--	--

<p>identifying if there are any issues relating to data protection, contract dates, etc., and we have now also added a question to ask if there are any safeguarding issues that may apply to any new procurement Oct 23.</p>		
---	--	--

3.3 How are safeguarding referrals/alerts tracked and under or over-reporting patterns addressed during contract monitoring?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Internal SIRI reports are monitored, reviewed and patterns or themes are identified and discussed with relevant services OSCB/OSCB/ DSL/ DA partnership/ Neglect Panel. Any concerns are discussed in the contract monitoring meetings. We also ensured that the provider was involved in the Cherwell Operations Group meetings so</p>	<p>Monthly review of themes, reported to Cllr Chapman briefing. Monthly District meetings. MASH/LCSS meeting June 23 discussed how we improve our reporting of concerns. Neglect Strategy Group meetings.</p>	<p>Identifying trends across CDC locally or nationally. Reviewing and updating training when needed. Bespoke training from external parties when needed. Districts meeting reviewing themes that can be highlighting concerns across the county or rural locations. Training on how to make a good referral provided to services in CDC.</p>

<p>that they were connected to the multi-agency discussions about young people of concern and could report into this forum their interactions with the young people they meet during the outreach work and raise any concerns about these young people. We also ensured that they had the Thames Valley Police partnership intelligence reporting form, and they advised me that they were using this to report information they thought needed to be shared with the Police. We do not monitor referrals from commissioned services.</p>	<p>DA partnership meetings. PIQA/PAQA meetings. OSCB/OSAB Board meetings. Districts partnership meetings. Contract Monitoring meetings.</p>	<p>Work is in progress with MASH need to be able to look at data to see which concerns have progressed which did not meet the threshold. MASH to look at data which areas are over reporting or if there are a high concern service area. Representatives from CDC attend the Contract Monitoring meetings, services are discussed, and action plans agreed.</p>
---	---	--

3.4 How is action taken to safeguard individuals when standards in services put people at risk?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence	
<p>All commissioned services have their own safeguarding referral system. All information shared is discussed and areas of concern highlighted, referrals to OSCB/OSAB/MASH/LSCB/ LADO/ DSL.</p>	<p>Monthly contract meetings for services working/come in to contact with children or adults with care and support needs. To ensure that</p>	<p>Raise public awareness so that professionals, other staff and communities as a whole play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect. Promoting an</p>	


<p>Awareness across the services in CDC is acted upon through communication in safeguarding champions meetings/ MARAC/ JTAC meetings. Information sharing on awareness CDC intranet and the Safeguarding Champions news leaflet. For identified themes raised in strategic meetings and additional training /briefing provided. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis. Employees should normally raise concerns in the first instance with their immediate manager or other appropriate manager. Channels of communication with CDC as the funder are always open. If a partner feels their service has been compromised by outside forces (COVID, for example) Support, financial, if necessary, can and, has been, supplied in order to maintain equitable levels of support and safeguarding-to ensure that individual client support is not impacted. Alternatively, dependent upon the nature, seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and the person suspected of malpractice, the matter may be raised with the Chief Executive (Monitoring Officer), Solicitor to the Council (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Head of Corporate Services, District Treasurer or Personnel Manager. Easy access to the Whistle blowing policy is located on the</p>	<p>the roles and responsibilities of individuals and organisations are clearly laid out.</p> <p>CSPRS/ Rapid Reviews information request are acted upon, and all information returned appropriately.</p> <p>Monthly safeguarding briefings & Training.</p> <p>Monthly safeguarding awareness campaigns.</p> <p>Community service teams pop up sessions in Banbury, enabling access to mainstream community safety measures.</p> <p>Housing and Customer services teams have all accessed OSAB mental capacity training Feb 23.</p>	<p>outcomes approach in safeguarding that works for people resulting in the best experience possible.</p> <p>Use of pop-up sessions using resources from Early Help Team. Neglect resources, posters/ leaflets, safeguarding wallet cards provided to café owners/ barbers Hairdressers, taxi drivers, refuse collectors/ Leisure Centres.</p> <p>DA resources and posters / leaflets available for businesses or volunteer groups this has been shared with parish councils/ Mosques/ Leisure Centres. This includes providing links to services such as Free travel to Refuge by women’s aid for victims of DA.</p> <p>OSAB Mental Capacity 7 min briefings used in morning huddles in Housing and Customer service teams. The 7 min briefings are used across all services where the DDSL attends to deliver a safeguarding section in each team meetings.</p> <p>Policy and procedures in place to provide the actions to take when concerns raised and who to contact. All safeguarding training incorporates this requirement.</p>
--	--	--

<p>CDC extranet and provided with the induction proses for new employees.</p>			
---	--	--	--

3.5 How do you ensure that there is a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services, and the process for escalating service gaps to the commissioning body is understood and established in practice?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>A Safeguarding page is available on CDC intranet for the internal portal along with key information being shared with Service Mangers. An annual report is drafted each year to identify safeguarding activity. This year we have reported to the overview and scrutiny panel on safeguarding activity providing a verbal update. Taken questions from members. For any long-term contracts there are regular contract monitoring meetings at which discussions would take place between Cherwell District Council and contractors about</p>	<p>Meeting with Procurement in CDC Aug 23. Monthly Contract monitoring meetings safe-guarding is on the agenda where appropriate.</p>	<p> Kick Off Meeting Template v1.1.docx</p> <p>Reviewed Kick of Meeting and added safeguarding, this is to be linked to a safeguarding checklist that Districts have provided as a joint piece of work. Commissioning & Procurement to confirm use of checklist in CDC.</p> <p>Internal reporting SIRI monitored; updates provided to Monthly Cllr/ Managers safeguarding meetings.</p>

<p>service changes and developments. In relation to grants these are also reviewed on an annual basis and opportunities are available to discuss service gaps and how these might be met.</p>		
---	--	--

5.1 How does your organisation demonstrate a culture of listening to children and adults with care and support needs and taking account of their wishes and feelings?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>It is not Cherwell District Councils duty to provide care and support services for people who have experienced abuse. However, District Council staff, such as our Housing Officers and Tenancy Officers, Community Safety Team participate in case conferences whereby they support residents at multiagency meeting to define concerns and agree plans. Children and adults with care and support needs who</p>	<p>Monthly safeguarding briefings. Safeguarding Champions meetings Cllr Chapmans monthly briefing and updates. Holiday Hubs feedbacks from parents and children's views.</p>	<p>Surveys Feedback forms.</p>

<p>have experienced abuse are supported and can access services that are appropriate to them, including signposting to and supporting through effective criminal, civil or social justice frameworks.</p>		
---	--	--

5.2

How do you know that safeguarding is personalised, so that children and adults experiencing or receiving safeguarding services are treated sensitively and respectfully, feel safer as a result of your intervention and that outcomes are consistent, regardless of the ethnicity, cultural identity / diversity, gender, sexuality, disability or age of the service user?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Where safeguarding concerns have been raised staff are open and transparent gathering/sharing information with other agencies and will refer concerns to the MASH according to the relevant Information Sharing Protocol. The District Council does not</p>	<p>Monthly safeguarding briefings, Monthly safeguarding campaigns. OSCB/OSAB Board meetings.</p>	<p>The internal training/ briefings incorporates looking for any indicators that suggest a person is at risk of harm, such as changes to demeanour or behaviour. Make a point of recording these indicators. Raising understanding of professional curiosity and how to act. Through monitoring the SRI reports recognising the repeated signs and reviewing them regularly we may identify a safeguarding issue.</p>

<p>have specific duties to provide support. However, if, through the course of delivering our services, a concern is identified we will signpost to relevant support services. Customer service and Housing have access to translation services through language line and can provide communications in large print, text.</p>		<p>Safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that every child, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, has a right to equal protection from harm.</p>
--	--	--

5.3

How do you know that outcomes are defined by the individuals concerned or, where people lack decision- making capacity, by their representatives or advocates and advocacy is used appropriately for children and adults with care and support needs who are (or may have been) experiencing abuse?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Where safeguarding concerns have been raised staff are open and transparent gathering/sharing information with other agencies and will refer concerns to the MASH according to the relevant Information Sharing Protocol. The District Council does not have specific</p>	<p>Mental Capacity Training Jan 23 Mental Capacity and Multiple exclusions – Homelessness Feb 23. Working with children who have a disability training offered to services. OSCB Feb 23.</p>	<p>Training register / Feedback forms/ staff meeting minuets. Lead individual will attend relevant meetings when invited. OSAB 7 Min Training provided. • MAC principles.</p>

<p>duties to provide support. However, if, through the course of delivering our services, a concern is identified we will signpost to relevant support services such as Advocacy for children and adults with care and support needs who are (or may have been) experiencing abuse. Staff have received training on other services available locally to connect with if a child or adult requires further advocacy support.</p> <p>Training provided to Housing and Customer services teams on Mental Capacity/ Mental Capacity and Multiple Exclusions - Homelessness.</p> <p>We operate a choice-based lettings process whereby individuals can define which homes they wish to be considered for and which homes they do not. Individuals are able to receive up to 3 offers of housing, which means that applicants are able to refuse 2 offers of housing if the homes they want to be considered for do not meet their requirements or aspirations.</p> <p>Applicants who lack decision-making capacity will not be offered housing unless an appropriate representative is in place and it is clear that the available housing is suitable for the applicant's care or support needs.</p>	<p>OSCB 7 min briefings provided in morning huddles for housing and customer service and community service teams.</p> <p>Attend case meeting/ JTAC etc when appropriate.</p> <p>OSCB/OSAB Board meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from SAR's. • Multi-agency Working & Understanding Professional Roles & Responsibilities. • Professional Curiosity, Overreliance & Judgement. • Multi-agency Risk Management Framework. • MEAM Approach. • Working with those who live street-based lives. • Mental Capacity. <p>Representative from Cherwell attends the board meetings. Information or actions is disseminated through the DDSL to managers and safeguarding champions.</p>
--	---	--

--	--	--

5.4

How do you know that the safeguarding process is proportionate, puts individuals in control and where this is not possible (for instance where there is concern that an individual or organisation could harm others) this is fully discussed and the person’s views considered as much as possible?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you’ve done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>Where safeguarding concerns have been raised staff are open and transparent gathering/sharing information with other agencies and will refer concerns to the MASH according to the relevant Information Sharing Protocol. All children/ Vulnerable Adults identified as having a safeguarding concern are referred to the MASH/ Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults for triage and assessment. Safeguarding training provides the understanding of using the no names consultation/ LCSS and what services are available, and how to report a concern.</p>	<p>Referrals completed on time and followed up by DDSL.</p> <p>Managers will triage concerns reported in their teams.</p> <p>OSCB/OSAB board meeting concerns are raised and discussed with action plans.</p>	<p>The local Authority takes the lead however, CDC will be part of strategic meetings and if appropriate actions discussed.</p> <p>OSCB/OSAB Board meeting minutes and action log.</p>

--	--	--

5.5

How do you know that your organisation’s complaints processes are effective and that children and adults with care and support needs are empowered to challenge services when expected standards/responsibilities are not met?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you’ve done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Rating

Response	Actions/ Lead/Timescale	Evidence
<p>CDC does not work closely with children or vulnerable adults or hold cases. There is a Corporate Complaints Procedure in place that is accessible and clear on the Cherwell District Council intranet page. The Council’s Comments, Complaints and Compliments procedure gives our customers a way of delivering their feedback about our services to our services. This is how we achieve our aims, deliver our services, manage customer expectation, and resolve issues. Listening to customer views about the services we provide are important. We can identify trends and take corrective, preventative action to prevent reoccurrence and so improve our services. We can evidence examples of this.</p> <p>‘See it Report it’, campaign’ and briefings on SIRI.</p>	<p>CDC does not have a mechanism to record complaints from children this is provided through OCC.</p> <p>Is this something that can be shared with CDC.</p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council Children and young people social care comments, compliments and complaints. Tell us when something is good or has gone wrong.</p> <p>A comment or complaint is when you tell us about something good or something that has gone wrong. If there is a problem, or if you want to tell us about something good, we want to hear from you.</p> <p>https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/about-your-council/have-your-say-about-council-services/complaints-about-oxfordshire-county-council/children-and-young-people</p>

<p>Neglect posters, Neglect Briefing. Domestic Abuse posters and Briefings. Safeguarding Wallet cards/posters to refuse collectors/ Depots drivers/ Taxi Drivers and Youth Activity Workers. Showing what to look for as well as signposting to appropriate agencies to report concerns.</p>		
--	--	--



Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing Paper

Subject: Working Groups update

If in attendance at the meeting on 28 November, the chair or an alternative representative from each group will be invited to give verbal updates.

Climate Action

Isabel Creed - Chair
John Broad
Patrick Clarke
Ian Middleton
Rebecca Biegel
John Donaldson
Simon Holland
Sean Woodcock
Andrew McHugh – as Portfolio Holder, Cleaner and Greener Communities

The Climate Action group met on 15 November, to discuss updating the Terms of Reference for the group in light of the approval of the Climate Action plan by Executive on 6 November 2023.

The revised Terms of Reference are currently being finalised, and the Monitoring Officer has agreed they can be published as a supplement to the agenda. The Committee is requested to approve the revisions.

The next meeting of the group will be arranged in due course.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) – joint group with Personnel Committee

Gemma Coton – Chair, and Personnel nominated member
Patrick Clarke
Lynne Parsons
Rob Pattenden
Chukwudi Okeke – Personnel nominated member
Chris Pruden – Personnel nominated member
Sandy Dallimore – as Portfolio Holder, Corporate Services

The EDI group met on 7 November, and agreed that meetings remaining for the 2023/24 municipal year would focus on one action plan per meeting, in the following order; Inclusive Workforce, Inclusive Communities and Inclusive Services.

The Council's outreach to community groups was discussed, and a proposed recommendation from Cllr Parsons relating to promoting volunteering amongst young people was agreed. The proposal will be reflected in recommendations made by the group on the Inclusive Communities action plan.



The group will meet again on 12 December, and the focus will be on the Inclusive Workforce action plan.

It is anticipated that updated action plans for 2024/25 will be submitted to Personnel Committee in January 2024 (Inclusive Workforce), Overview & Scrutiny (Inclusive Services and Inclusive Communities) in March 2024, and Executive in April 2024.

Food Insecurity

Rebecca Biegel – Chair

Patrick Clarke

Isabel Creed

Chukwudi Okeke

Bryn Williams

Dorothy Walker

Phil Chapman – as Portfolio Holder, Healthy and Safe Communities

The Food Insecurity group met on 14 November, and discussed the data dashboard for current projects of food vouchers, Banbury food hub, village updates and growing spaces. Food provision partners in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington are continuing to refer residents in need for £50 food vouchers. Banbury food for charities are working with local partners to facilitate discussions regarding Oxford Food Hub's expansion to the Cherwell district.

Cherwell Collective manage 12 spaces across Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington for the Harvest@Home initiative. They have secured Brighter Futures funding to expand their provision in Banbury. The council is creating a database and community involvement leaflet to help residents connect with local growing spaces.

Regarding food grants, £45,000 has been allocated to support local groups on the new, broader scheme. Grants of up to £3000 are being offered to organisations that provide or assist in the provision of food or developing community food activities involving cooking, growing or nutrition/food education. The grants went live at the start of November and four applications have been received so far.

Work continues on the Cherwell Food Action Plan, with officers working to ensure the targets in the plan are achievable.

The group will meet again on 9 January.

Completed by: Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer – Scrutiny & Democratic Lead

Date: 17 November 2023

Presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 28 November 2023



Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24

(Updated: 17 November 2023)

Tuesday 30 January 2024		
Attendance of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable	External Scrutiny. To meet the Council's requirement regarding crime and disorder committee. All Members will be invited to attend the meeting. Priority – healthy, resilient and engaged communities.	Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities Portfolio Holder - Councillor Phil Chapman, Healthy and Safe Communities
Regulatory Services and Community Safety and Wellbeing / Brighter Futures initiatives and activities	Performance monitoring. General session on regulatory services, importance of KPIs etc around Environmental Protection, Environmental Health, Community Safety. Overview of Brighter Futures/wellbeing activities and initiatives linked to community safety and anti-social behaviour activities Priority – healthy, resilient and engaged communities.	Regulatory Services & Community Safety: Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities & Tim Hughes, Assistant Director Regulatory Services and Community Safety Wellbeing/Brighter Futures Initiatives: Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Portfolio Holder - Councillor Phil Chapman, Healthy and Safe Communities
Performance Monitoring - December	Performance Monitoring. To consider the latest performance monitoring figures prior to consideration by Executive. Covers all priorities.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder - Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Corporate Services



Annual Delivery Plan 2024-25	Performance Monitoring. To consider the draft Plan for 2024-25. Covers all priorities.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder - Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Corporate Services
Working Groups update	Standing item. Progress update relating to established working groups.	Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny & Democratic Lead
Work Programme 2023-24 (standing item at each meeting)	Standing item. Review of work programme, update on topics suggested for consideration, update on items previously considered	Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny & Democratic Lead
Tuesday 12 March 2024		
Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action plans 2024-25	Performance Monitoring. To consider the updated action plans, prior to consideration by Executive.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder - Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Corporate Services
Performance Monitoring – Outcomes Framework 2024/25	Performance Monitoring. To consider the outcomes framework. Covers all priorities.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder - Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Corporate Services
Climate Action Plan Update	Performance Monitoring. An update on progress of work regarding the Climate Action Plan.	Jo Miskin, Climate Action Manager. Portfolio Holder - Councillor Andrew McHugh, Cleaner and Greener Communities



Working Groups update	Standing item. Progress update relating to established working groups.	Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny & Democratic Lead
Work Programme 2023-24 (standing item at each meeting)	Standing item. Review of work programme, update on topics suggested for consideration, update on items previously considered	Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny & Democratic Lead

Remaining meeting Dates 2023/24 (All Tuesday, 6.30pm unless indicated)

30 January 2024; 12 March 2024

Work Programme Items:

Members are reminded of the five roles of scrutiny when considering items for the work programme:

- Performance Monitoring; Policy Development; Policy Review; Holding the Executive to Account; External Scrutiny

Members are reminded that the Executive Forward Plan is published monthly, covering a period of four months. The current version of the plan is December 2023 to March 2024 and is available via the [Cherwell District Council website](#)

This page is intentionally left blank