

*Cherwell*

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

# Business Plan 2015/16



## Introduction

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Welcome to Cherwell District Council's business plan for 2015/16. This document sets out the Council's four strategic priorities along with the key objectives and actual deliverables for the coming year, and how progress and success will be measured and monitored, taking into account the priorities and aspirations of the communities and people who live and work in our District. Our business plan is based on a strategic understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our District and the consultation we undertake with local businesses and residents to determine local requirements.

But before looking to the future, it is always helpful to reflect upon the past; to see how we can improve further and to be clear about the future direction of travel. To challenge ourselves and ask the question, are we still moving in the right direction and at the right pace?

With our partner, South Northamptonshire Council, we have taken a pro-active, direct approach to dealing with the current challenges facing local government. By tackling issues head on – developing efficient working models, focusing on increasing the Councils' capacity for innovation, agility and the need to be fit for the future, we are carving out a space for Cherwell District to stay at the forefront of implementing new ways of delivering services that maintain quality and standards at the front line. We are truly transforming and the benefits are real. They can be evidenced through the on-going financial savings that we are making, and our ability to avoid increasing council tax levels for the sixth year in succession.

Our confidence, excitement and ambition have grown enormously over the past couple of years and we are clear about the future. We are continuing to work with our third partner, Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) and can now show that shared services across three councils, in three counties and in three regions also sit comfortably with our "can-do" mantra.

Our commitment to transforming public services continues to be recognised and supported by the Government and we are proud that this has been reflected through further additional Government grants totalling £2m to be used for the further development of innovative working practices. We are proud that we are seen as an exemplar in innovation and transformation, and that that enables us to continue to raise the national profile of our District.

Sharing services and exploring the potential for new ways of delivering public services represents the economic reality of tomorrow's local government services and our strategic march to survival and growth, which is what we want for our District. But it is not just the reform of public services within our District that gives us every reason to be proud and enables us to steer the District towards a stronger future; so does national accreditation in the form of being awarded garden city status in Bicester, and so does the acquisition of the former MoD site, known as Graven Hill, both of which we achieved in 2014.

To achieve this vision we recognise that a strong local economy is essential for a strong local community. And this remains our overriding priority. We will continue to promote economic growth; building thriving communities through a strong, sustainable, and dynamic local economy

offering our communities more stable, high quality and high value jobs, with increased opportunities for all, and more affordable homes for local people.

Against an on-going background of rapidly reducing financial resources, our business plan directly aligns the Council's vision and priorities with its current and future income so that the Council will be able to manage its day-to-day business even more effectively and transparently.

During 2013/14 the Council continued to deliver high quality services, new projects and innovations, whilst taking pride in the fact that our 2014 annual customer satisfaction level for overall satisfaction is the highest level recorded since the survey began in 2006.

Some highlights include:

- ensuring high rates of recycling, street cleanliness and neighbourhood litter blitzes to improve the quality of our local environment
- job clubs continued across the District, with over 1290 job seeker visits. Of particular note was the Banbury Job Fair held at the end of February 2014 which attracted over 200 jobseekers and a dozen employers.
- significant progress was made on preparing the Local Plan for the District and the draft submission was formally submitted in January 2014 to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for public Examination.
- the Masterplans for Banbury and Bicester were successfully progressed during the year with the opening of Pioneer Square in Bicester. Planning permission for the Community Building has been submitted and outline planning has been approved for Castle Quay 2 project in Banbury.
- we were selected as finalists by the Government Opportunities (GO) Excellence in Public Procurement Awards for Collaborative Procurement
- we were shortlisted for our work in transforming the way we provide services with our partner, South Northamptonshire Council, and for our own unique agenda in connecting with you, our residents.
- the overall percentage of people satisfied with the services' provided by the Council rose again, to 76%.
- This business plan outlines our performance pledges for the year, our major projects and key objectives. We remain committed to working effectively with our partners to ensure high quality services are delivered in times of financial constraint. We are also keen to use the new freedoms for local communities and public service providers to provide better and more locally determined services.

We believe we are still moving in the right direction and at the right pace. We hope you are inspired by our journey and our on-going commitment to this District.

**Councillor Barry Wood**



Leader of Cherwell District Council

**Sue Smith**



Chief Executive, Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils

## An overview of Cherwell

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Named after the River Cherwell which flows through it, the District is located between London and Birmingham, at the most northern point of the South East region, where it meets the West Midlands and East Midlands. Cherwell borders Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire, Aylesbury Vale, South Northamptonshire and Stratford on Avon Districts. The District is at a number of major cross-roads; the M40 passes through Cherwell and has strategic connections to the A34 and A43, while there are good rail connections to both London and Birmingham, with new investment bringing new rail connections to Oxford, Reading, Milton Keynes and Bedford.

Approximately 142,252 people live in the District with over half of the population living in the principal centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington; the remainder in more than 70 smaller settlements. Cherwell's population has increased significantly over the past 20 years and this trend is set to continue with the population predicted to reach 155,650 by 2021.

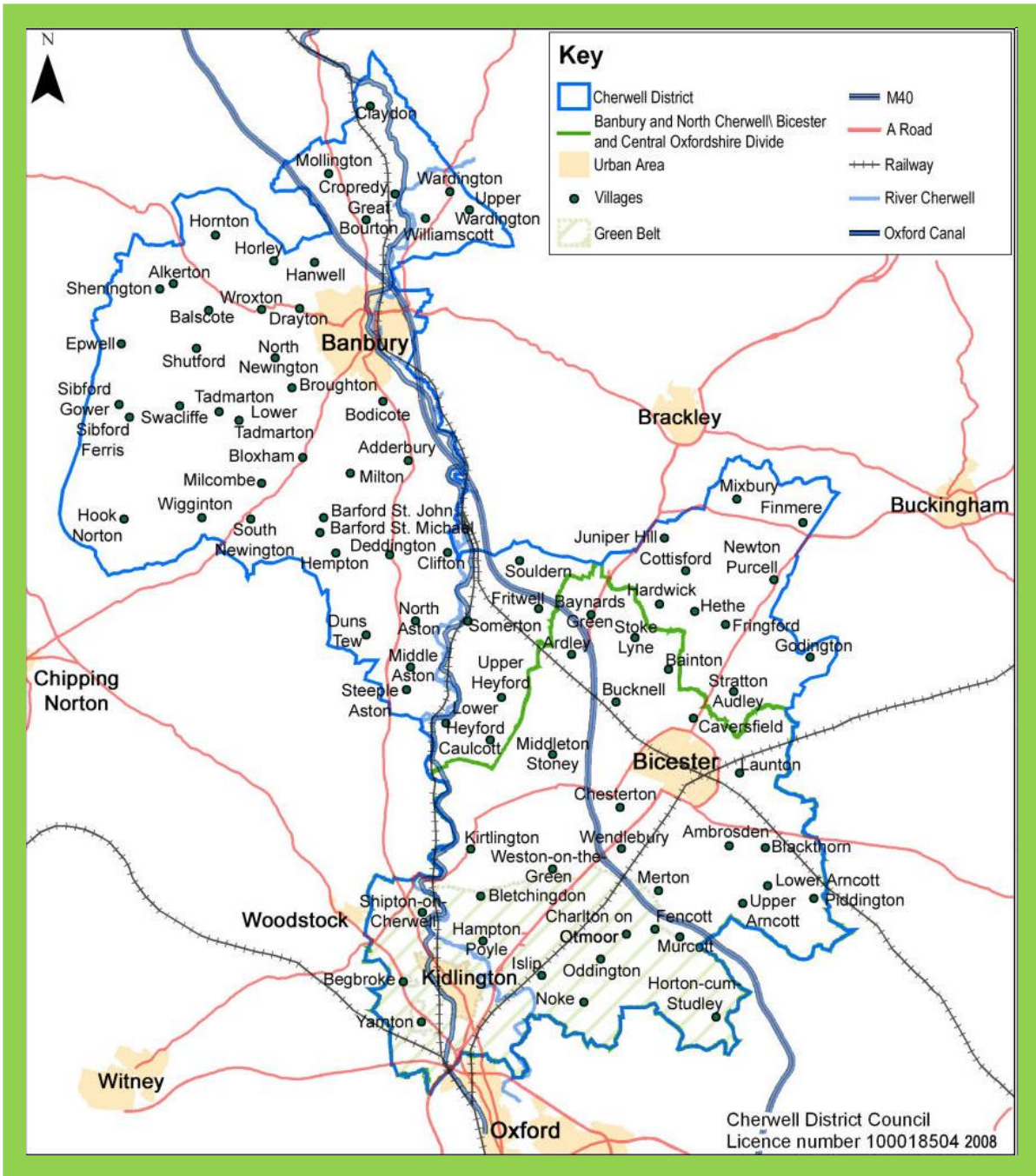
One of the Council's main strategic challenges is to ensure that the District grows in a sustainable way; one that delivers a prosperous economy and thriving communities.

Most of the recent growth has been in the towns of Banbury and Bicester and this trend will continue over the coming years. Bicester's population in particular is expected to increase significantly, predominately as a result of the North West Bicester development which will see approximately 6,000 houses built over the next 20 years and the Graven Hill development which includes the UK's largest self-build housing development. Delivering the Local Plan will play a key role in this, as will implementing the Masterplans for Banbury and Bicester to secure new housing, retail, employment and leisure opportunities. The Council is working with its partners to ensure that this growth is delivered, with infrastructure provided while protecting and enhancing the character of our urban centres, villages and landscapes.

Another key challenge for the District will be responding to population changes. The population of Cherwell is continuing to age, with the number of residents aged 60 and above predicted to increase by over 7,000 between 2011 and 2021. By 2021, nearly a quarter of Cherwell's population will be aged 60 or over. This rate of increase will provide challenges and the Council will have to continue to anticipate the future services required by our older population, building on our strong track record of ensuring the needs of older residents are met. The Council is focused on ensuring that our services are accessible to all people living in the District.

Another of the Council's key challenges will be to ensure that communities across the District continue to thrive. As part of this commitment, the Council will be working with partners to increase the affordable housing options across the District, whilst continuing to work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into employment by promoting the District as a great place in which to live, work, invest and visit. A key element of this will be delivering the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme which focuses on the most deprived areas of the District.





For more information about Cherwell and the District in Oxfordshire go to our partnership website: - <http://www.oxford.gov.uk/districtdatapublications>

## Section 1: A focus on delivery

**Our strategic approach to Business Planning: Managing our Performance, Resources and Assets and ensuring Accountability and Transparency to our residents and stakeholders.**

As part of our annual business planning process we follow a clear cycle. We consult with businesses and residents to understand local priorities, we work with our partners to agree priorities and objectives and set a budget to deliver them. Finally our services develop plans to ensure we meet our commitments and we monitor and report upon our progress.

Each annual business plan outlines the key actions/tasks in the relevant year, along with the associated performance measures/outcomes. This enables us to demonstrate that we align our resources to the delivery of the agreed business strategy in the most effective way possible, whilst also providing a clear direction of travel for the Council, its employees and for everyone in our District and those who read this document.

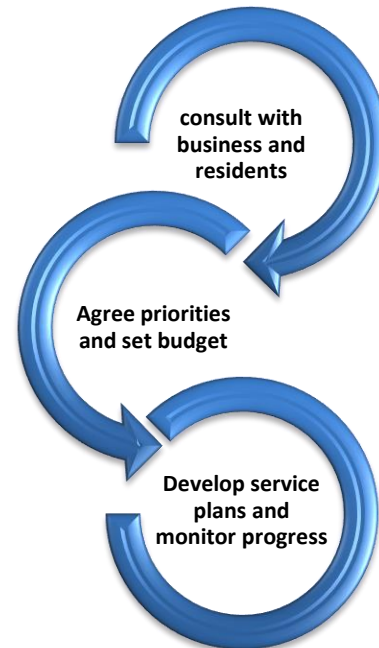
It will provide the foundation for us to be judged by anyone who wishes to measure our progress, and builds upon some of the external accreditations and acknowledgements received in recent years.

Our business planning cycle is underpinned by a rigorous approach to budget reviews aimed at identifying opportunities for increased efficiency and performance. This process is led by locally elected members.

### Improvement and Innovation

The Council has a robust strategy in place to deliver savings and service efficiencies as significant budgetary constraints continue to affect local government as part of the national plan to reduce the budget deficit. The joint working transformation programme sets out how the Council will protect frontline services and reduce running costs by working with partners to commission and deliver collaborative services. We will achieve this through exploring opportunities with our partners to share services and generate income by providing services to others where appropriate. In previous years savings have been delivered through shared senior management and business support services such as human resources and finance. As the transformation programme develops the council will look at opportunities in frontline services for collaboration to enhance capacity and reduce running costs.

During 2015/16 the council will also work to develop innovative solutions to help deliver service improvements and support local communities.

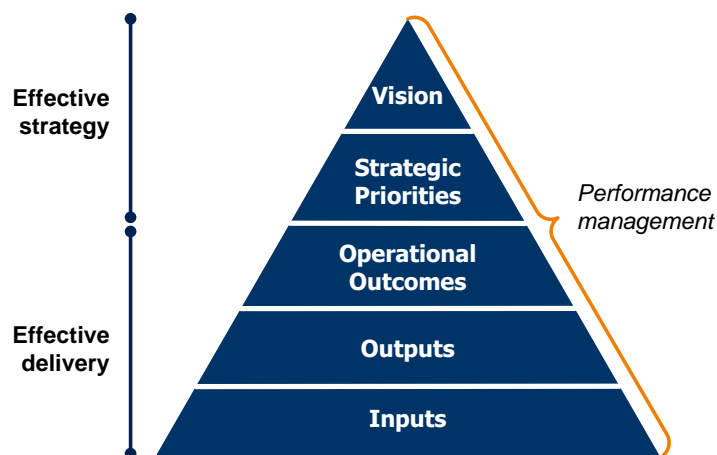


An ICT development plan will help improve access to services online and continued work with suppliers will identify procurement savings and reduce energy costs.

### Managing our Performance

Together the medium term financial plan, along with the annual business plan, individual operational service plans and ultimately the appraisal targets of individual employees all demonstrate that the Council has a clear and robust “golden thread” between resource availability and delivery of the Council’s agreed strategic priorities. In times of austerity, these tools are fundamental, and help us to provide effective community leadership, and will demonstrate that we are adopting a more mature and commercially aware approach to running our Council.

Performance management represents an essential part of our assurance and accountability process. It ensures that we are focused on the delivery of our strategic and operational objectives and provides an effective way of demonstrating our achievements to local residents whilst also being transparent about the issues or challenges that we are facing.



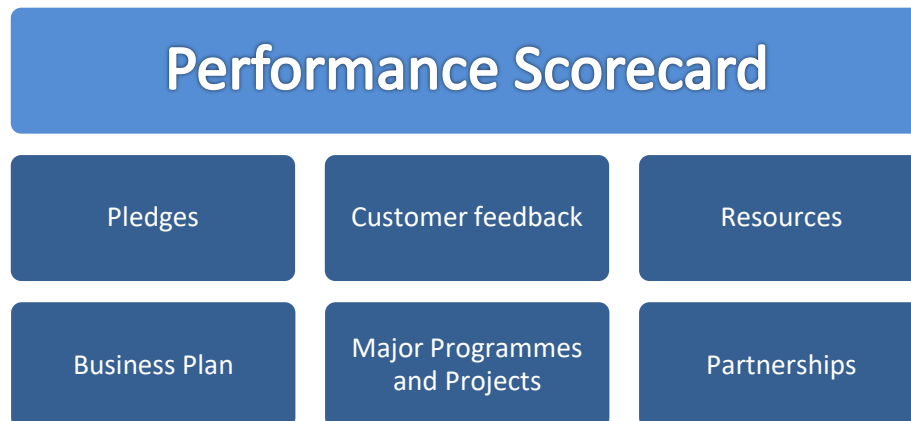
### Reporting our Performance

The table overleaf outlines our performance scorecard. As with any business we report on a number of measures which reflect the Council’s priorities and core activities. These include the performance pledges, customer feedback and resources. We also review our business plan targets, the performance of key Council services, major programmes and projects and our work with commercial and voluntary sector partners.

This approach helps to ensure we monitor the performance of our whole organisation.

We report our performance on a quarterly basis and it is reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being considered by The Executive. This facilitates a whole council owned and transparent approach to performance management. Where performance issues and challenges are identified the Joint Management Team and lead elected members work together to deliver improvement.

Details about our performance and expenditure are published on a monthly basis and can be found on the finance and performance pages of our website. [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)



### Managing our Resources

The Council continues to face challenging financial times, and we are not alone. Many other local authorities and public sector agencies are feeling the very real effect of decreasing funding, and are having to consider decisions that they thought they would never have to contemplate. We can and must learn from the experience of others. To that end, we are opening our eyes and minds to new ways of delivering our services. We are actively exploring all opportunities to not only ensure our survival, but ultimately also our growth. It is an ambitious aspiration, but it is one that we have to face head on. And it is our commitment to you. We must ensure that as taxpayers, your money is spent wisely and that we deliver services that provide you with what you need, when you need it.

For the sixth year in succession the Council has avoided asking you for an increase in its proportion of council tax for 2015/16. We have achieved this by continuing to proactively embrace the challenges of reduced government funding by using innovative thinking, technology, joint working and ensuring services offer value for money.

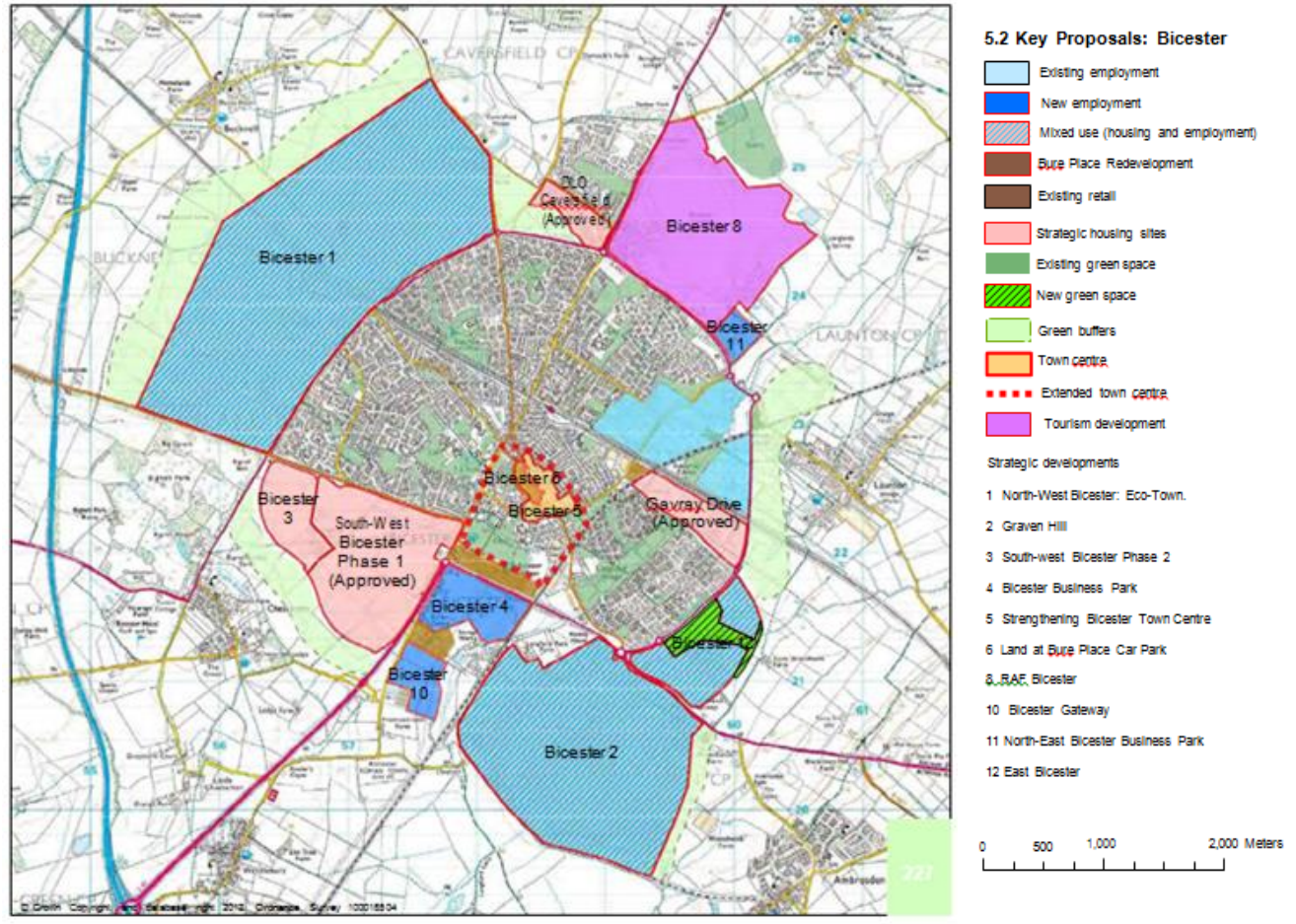
The revenue budget for 2015/16 can be found in our budget book which is signposted below. The Council also has an ambitious Capital Programme and an aspiration to regenerate the two market towns of Banbury and Bicester whilst not forgetting to invest adequate financial capital resources across the rest of the District for the people who live and work here. We aim to do this by delivering high quality programmes which will significantly boost the economic prosperity of the area and create much needed jobs and investment.

Cherwell District Council has a main Capital Investment Programme for 2015/16. The programme is funded through a mixture of grants, capital receipts and other Council resources. Like all public sector organisations, we face challenging economic conditions.

The main schemes into which the capital investment is being focused will help to achieve better housing conditions, improved vehicles for refuse collection and recycling, and more environmentally friendly facilities for the tax payers of the District to use.



The Council has acquired through a company limited by shares the Ministry Of Defence site at **Graven Hill, Bicester** in order to deliver the UK’s largest-self build housing development within a beautiful location; a million square feet of state-of-the-art commercial space, delivering jobs, inward investment and growth; new recreation opportunities for Bicester with extensive open space.



The Council’s Vision for Graven Hill is for it to be:

- The UK’s largest-self build housing development – delivering diversity in the local housing market through creating the largest opportunity in the UK for people who want to build their own homes, within a beautiful location.
- State of the art commercial space – delivering the creation of jobs and inward investment and growth in the local economy, through creating a million square feet of commercial space and attracting new forms of technology and manufacturing.
- A new recreation ‘offer’ for Bicester- through the creation of extensive open space including woodland, cycle paths, sports pitches and recreation and play areas.
- An innovative project that will deliver financial benefits to the Council that can be reinvested in other innovative projects across the District.

The site will be delivered in 2 phases – Sept 2015 and Sept 2019 and the project will run for 10 years. The project is governed by the Council by the Partnering Board.

The Council has, through the creation of a Graven Hill Development Company in 2014, purchased the land from the Ministry of Defence for £27m. Graven Hill will deliver the UK's first large-scale self-build community of up to 1,900 homes and one million square feet of commercial space.

This is a multimillion pound project which cannot be met from existing capital resources. Therefore the associated costs will be financed through borrowing in line with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

More details about our budget can be found in the Council's budget book which accompanies this document and is available on the finance pages of our website. [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)

### Asset Management

The Council undertook a fundamental review of its Assets in 2014. This Asset Review & subsequent strategy has been created to:

- Clarify the extent of the Council's property portfolio,
- Provide some 'purpose' to the portfolio through a re-organisation of the property interests into meaningful 'Sub-Portfolios'
- Provide information about annual liabilities and sources of income
- Challenge the retention of some property interests,
- Highlight priorities and issues that will need to be resolved
- Identify specific objectives and actions to address the issues, and
- Scope out the delivery platform required to drive the actions identified forwards.



The outcomes required of the strategy are that by 2019;

- We will have a single, comprehensive source of shared property data to support informed decision-making.
- We will have a 'first class' Strategic and Professional approach to the guardianship of our property portfolio supported by a robust delivery platform.
- We will have a best value for money solution for our operational office accommodation (HQ and 'Local Front Doors').
- We will have agreed an approach to our Depot provision, with our Partners and addressed short term issues.

In order to deliver this strategy and ensure we are maximising the value of our assets we will focus on developing the following plans in 2015/16:

- 1) Asset Strategy Resource Plan
- 2) Operational Offices Plan
- 3) Car Parks Plan
- 4) Community Buildings Plan
- 5) Local Centres Plan

### **Innovation in Cherwell**

The i-lab (previously known as the Innovation Group) is an open forum for staff across Cherwell, South Northamptonshire and Stratford-on-Avon District Councils that facilitates creativity, innovation and delivery.

The i-lab's mission is to encourage entrepreneurial and innovative spirit across the three Councils and to support people with good ideas to develop and test them so that they can be put into practice.

The forums are held across the three Councils and are open to every member of staff. The Chief Executive of Cherwell and South Northamptonshire and the Chief Executive of Stratford-on Avon attend but do not lead the sessions. All staff across the three Councils are encouraged to bring forward ideas for innovation through the 'i-lab.' A series of bold ideas for saving money, streamlining processes and saving time are being generated and on agreement, applied to each Council.

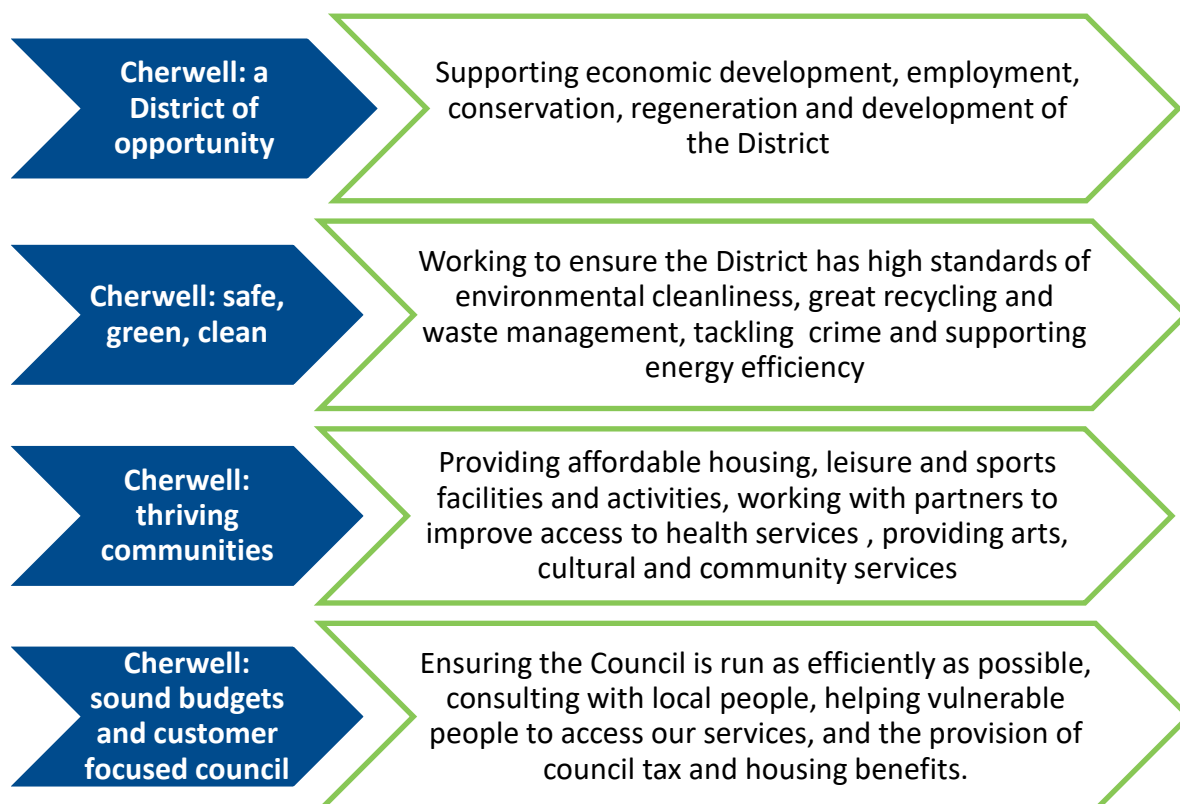


The i-Lab has met six times as a 3-way group since January 2014. Since then six ideas have been through the i-Lab and four of those ideas are now being progressed further with support from members of the i-lab. The i-lab has also facilitated training on innovation and design thinking for 30 members of staff.

## Section 2: Council Priorities and Business Plan 2015/16

The work that we have outlined above and our approach to serving the District demonstrates our commitment to reform, to regeneration and growth, to healthy challenge of past and present practices, as well as to challenge of ourselves. We believe that only by being open to such challenge and innovation can we learn and grow and deliver the best for our residents and local businesses. That is why our long term vision for the District continues to be ambitious.

Our long term vision for the District is ambitious. Working with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors we are aiming to build a District with a diverse economy. We are working to secure opportunities for all, and to help grow vibrant, thriving communities connected by a sense of pride, place and purpose. To help deliver this vision the Council has four strategic priorities. These priorities shape the work we do, our services, plans and major projects. They are outlined below:



Our business plan for 2015/16 is based around these four strategic priorities, with each having a set of key objectives, actions and targets.

These are outlined in more detail on pages 10 to 17.

In addition to our strategic priorities we have an ambitious programme of projects which will help to deliver long term benefits to the District. These are:

- **Bicester projects** delivery of the North West Bicester development, helping to provide an innovative and sustainable place to live and work, continuing to improve the retail and leisure offer in Bicester town centre, helping the town to develop into a thriving community.
- **Banbury projects** supporting the development of Banbury Town Centre and sustainable development in key areas in the town.
- **Kidlington projects** supporting the completion and implementation of the Masterplan, helping to develop a strong village centre afforded by its location.
- **Banbury Brighter Futures** working to address disadvantage and health inequalities in Banbury town.

**Joint Working and Service Transformation** continuing to reduce the base cost of back office services to protect frontline and core service delivery



## Cherwell: a district of opportunity

### **Implement the Cherwell Local Plan as the framework for sustainable housing, new employment and infrastructure investment over the next 20 years**

- Deliver a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Bicester, Banbury Town and Kidlington Masterplans and SPDs for strategic sites to guide investment.

### **Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester helping to provide new housing, jobs and leisure opportunities.**

- Northwest Bicester: facilitate the 5 applications for the site
- Northwest Bicester: delivery of the Eco – Bicester business centre
- Complete the Bicester town centre regeneration including the council commercial community building
- Graven Hill: deliver the demonstration project on the Graven Hill site
- Graven Hill: set up a sales and marketing suite to promote the plots
- Graven Hill: appoint an infrastructure contractor
- Deliver the SW Bicester Phase 2 (sports pavilion and 3G pitch)

### **Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury helping to provide retail, employment and town centre development opportunities.**

- The extension and improvement of Woodgreen Leisure centre as a better facility for the town
- Prepare a scheme for the redevelopment of the Bolton Road site
- Secure a start on site by the developer subject to the detailed development agreement being completed, and maximise the Council's income and returns from Castle Quay and Castle Quay 2
- Take steps to develop a Masterplan for the redevelopment of Canalside within Banbury Town Centre redevelopment
- Commission and complete a commercial appraisal for Banbury town centre, and subsequently bring forward appropriate redevelopment proposals for urgent consideration
- Develop a car parking strategy for the town
- Review future arts provision

## Cherwell: a district of opportunity

### **Complete and implement the Masterplan for Kidlington, helping to develop a strong village centre afforded by its location.**

- Agree the next steps for the development options for Kidlington against agreed timescales and milestones
- Establish new management arrangements for SBSG on behalf of KPC

### **Promote inward investment and support business growth within the District.**

- Support business growth, skills and employment in local companies and the visitor economy to strengthen the economy of the District.
- Continue to use the Cherwell Investment Partnership as a hub for inward investment and ensuring sufficient business sites and employment land are available to meet the needs of the District.
- Produce marketing material to promote commercial and industrial business sites to the area

### **Deliver high quality regulatory services that support the growth of the local economy.**

- Build on the Council's 'Better Business' approach to support new and existing businesses
- Work proactively with developers on both planning applications and pre-application enquiries to enable the speedy delivery of new commercial projects
- Identify the blockages to development and investigate a range of solutions, in consultation with planning agents
- Provide high quality responsive regulatory services
- Embed the Regulatory Code and Corporate Enforcement Policy

## Cherwell: safe, green, clean

**Provide high quality recycling and waste services, aimed at helping residents recycle as much as possible.**

- Maintain a minimum 57% recycling rate
- Maintain levels of customer satisfaction with the recycling and waste services

**Provide high quality street cleansing services, and tackle environmental crime (littering, fly tipping, graffiti) where it arises.**

- Maintain customer satisfaction with street cleansing
- Undertake 6 neighbourhood blitzes with community involvement

**Work with partners to help ensure the District remains a low crime area, reducing fear of crime, tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and focussing on safeguarding our residents and businesses.**

- To develop an alternative CCTV operational system for our Urban centres
- Continue to work with the local police and licence holders to ensure our town centres remain safe and vibrant in the evenings

**Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment.**

- Deliver the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan "Protecting and Enhancing Cherwell's Natural Environment"
- Develop and begin Implementation of a new carbon management plan from 2015-20 which increases the energy efficiency of the organisation and lowers the carbon footprint

## Cherwell: thriving communities

### **Deliver affordable housing and work with private sector landlords to help improve affordable housing options.**

- Deliver 150 units of affordable housing and 100 self-build housing projects as part of the HCA funded Build! programme whilst exploring new diverse funding regimes for the longer term sustainability of affordable housing across the district. And the potential development of an off-site construction facility for the long term production of off-site units for affordable housing
- Extend the current enforcement action within the private sector to bring back into use empty dwellings, and improve the housing sector private stock. Encourage private sector landlords to improve their stock through targeted grant action and other housing advice.

### **Work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into paid employment.**

- Commissioning of high quality financial and debt advice for vulnerable residents. Effective implementation of welfare reform and administration of benefits. Delivery of the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme to provide opportunities in some of the District's most disadvantaged people.
- Continue to support skills development, apprenticeships and job clubs in order to help support local employment and reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.
- Extend Jobs Match service to support local companies to fill vacancies
- Extend the contract with CAB for debt advice, volunteering and volunteer driver scheme

### **Provide high quality housing options advice and support to prevent homelessness.**

- Deliver the actions identified within the revised Homelessness prevention strategy adopted by the Council.

### **Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the District.**

- Support the work of the Community Partnership Network with financial, clinical and technological changes in the health and social care sector.
- Enable the development of volunteer transport schemes to support the health and wellbeing needs of vulnerable residents.

## Cherwell: thriving communities

### **Provide high quality and accessible leisure opportunities.**

- Maintain a minimum usage level of visits to leisure facilities
- Commence Phase 2 pavilion works for South West Bicester Sports Village
- Increase access to leisure and recreation opportunities through development and outreach work
- Procure new contract arrangements for Woodgreen Leisure Centre including new dry side facilities

### **Provide support to the voluntary and community sector.**

- Secure social and community infrastructure for housing developments across the District
- Continue to support the voluntary sector and community groups
- Continue to support the growth & development of neighbourhood community associations
- Increase and promote volunteering opportunities throughout the District.
- Local Strategic Partnership

### **Protect our built heritage by supporting effective conservation, managing the impacts of growth and working to ensure development takes place in appropriate areas.**

- Continue programme of Conservation Reviews
- Provide design guidance on major developments

### **Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services.**

- Work with BT/BDUK and Oxfordshire County Council to extend Superfast Broadband across the District
- “Rural Proof” significant new policies and initiatives to ensure they are equitable to rural residents



## Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

### **Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships, joint working and other service delivery models.**

- Extend the joint working programme to include:
  - New methods of service delivery
  - More services delivered in partnership
- Identify and remove unnecessary work from service delivery processes to help deliver savings and efficiencies
- Plan to reduce the number of ICT systems required to deliver and manage services, through sharing where possible, and taking advantage of new procurement opportunities
- Through a 3-way Working Group with South Northamptonshire and Stratford on Avon District Councils, review service delivery operating models using the Transformation Challenge Funding provided by DCLG in order to further our exemplar model of sharing services and deliver quantifiable efficiencies and savings; deliver a minimum of 10% financial savings.
- Make successful bids for external funding
- Maximise income through designing services and implementing delivery vehicles that can attract a market
- Deploy solutions which reduce 'non-productive' time spent travelling between sites and deliver reductions in mileage and subsistence costs through increased use of technologies such as video conferencing.
- Review all ICT contracts to harmonise where possible to gain cost savings through economies of scale achieved through increased joint working.

### **Work to effectively communicate with local residents and businesses to better understand and respond to their needs**

- Continue to increase our use of social media to communicate with residents and local businesses
- Continue to support the increased use of the Council website as a communications and transactional tool
- Continue to develop the Council's website and maintain the SOCITM rating of 3/ 4 stars
- Continue to develop our business focused communications

## Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

### **Improve customer service through the use of technology and responding to customer feedback.**

- Implement additional online services for customers and deliver a significant reduction in phone contact in relation to those services
- Increased capacity to build service delivery processes suitable for online self-services
- Bring about a measurable plan to increase significantly the proportion of our total customer demand that is met through self service
- Target the reduction of avoidable contact from customers by:
  - Improved information signposting
  - More information on-line
  - Improved letters and communications with clear, understandable instructions and information

### **Deliver rolling strategy of the five year business strategy, medium term financial plan and a capital programme that ensures the Council is resourced to deliver its strategic priorities.**

- Deliver the rolling annual balanced budget setting of the financial plan (Medium Term Financial Strategy)
- Deliver the savings targets within the agreed timescales
- Develop and implement a Car parking strategy
- Continue the implementation of the programme of harmonisation of ICT business applications with our core partners; SNC and SDC.
- Insert appropriate working to reflect decision in relation to proposed new strategic governance operating model (subject to decisions of the 3 councils)

### **Work to ensure the Council gets the most out of its resources, including land and property through effective asset management.**

- Develop and implement a commercial investment strategy, incorporating DTZ recommendations as adopted.

### **Deliver below inflation increases to the CDC element of Council Tax.**

- CDC Council Tax element frozen for 2015/16

## Section 3: Performance Pledges 2015/16

Every year from the key objectives and actions detailed across our strategic priorities several are highlighted as performance pledges. They are key activities that reflect local priorities and these pledges demonstrate our commitment to the delivery of important local services and new projects to help make Cherwell a great place to live. Our pledges are included within the council tax leaflet that goes to every household in the District; in every quarterly review of progress undertaken by the Council's Executive and in our annual report, published at the end of each financial year. For 2015/16 our pledges are:

### Cherwell: a district of opportunity

- ➔ Make progress onsite for the initial housing development at North West Bicester.
- ➔ Progress work on North West Bicester exemplar site
- ➔ Make progress on site for the initial infrastructure at Graven Hill and promotion of the self-build plots
- ➔ Commission and complete a commercial appraisal for Banbury town centre, and subsequently bring forward appropriate redevelopment proposals for urgent consideration
- ➔ Complete and implement the Masterplan for Kidlington, helping to develop a strong village centre

### Cherwell: safe, green, clean

- ➔ Maintain the District's high recycling rate
- ➔ Improve local residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness continuing our successful programme of neighbourhood litter blitzes
- ➔ Work with the local police and licence holders to ensure our town centres remain safe and vibrant in the evenings.

### Cherwell: thriving communities

- ➔ Continue working with our partners to provide support to the most vulnerable individuals and families in the district, building on the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme.
- ➔ Deliver 150 units of affordable homes in the District and support opportunities for self-build and developing self-build skills.
- ➔ Continue to support skills development, apprenticeships and job clubs in order to help support local employment and reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

### Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

- ➔ Deliver the savings target £500,000 within the agreed timescales.
- ➔ Continue to improve our website, and implement additional online services for customers
- ➔ Extend the Joint working Transformation Programme to enable the council to save money and maintain a low council tax.

## Section 4: Getting in touch

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Throughout the year the Council provides opportunities for local people to have their say. Whether this be through customer satisfaction surveys, budget consultation, consultation on new projects and services, talking to local business organisations or feedback via our link-points or web site we are keen to listen to what you like and what needs to be improved.

Since 2006 we have been consulting with citizens of Cherwell on an annual basis to seek views and ideas on overall satisfaction with the council and also many other areas. 2014 recorded the highest level of satisfaction since this survey began.

Our consultations are published on our one-stop consultation portal which can be found at:

**<http://consult.cherwell.gov.uk/portal/>**

However, if you would like to feedback about any other matter you can do so using the contact details below.

<p><b>Click</b></p> 	<p>Consultation inbox: <a href="mailto:consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>To find and email your ward councillor: <a href="http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/mgFindCouncillor.aspx">http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/mgFindCouncillor.aspx</a></p>
<p><b>Call</b></p> 	<p>The Performance and Insight Team: 01295 221575</p> <p>Customer Services: 01295 227001</p>
<p><b>Write</b></p> 	<p>The Performance and Insight Team Bodicote House Bodicote Banbury Oxfordshire, OX15 4AA</p>

For general enquiries our contact details are via the web site [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk) or the customer service team 01295 227001.

## Alternative formats

This document is available in alternative formats and languages, please contact 01295 227001:

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać. 01295 227001

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如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。01295 227001

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔  
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Cherwell District Council –  
Business Plan 2015/16

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