

# Executive

## Overview and Scrutiny: Report of Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board: Partnership Scrutiny - Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

12 April 2010

### Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board report on the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.

A member of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board, will attend the meeting to present the report.

This report is public
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#### Recommendations

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The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the work of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board scrutiny review into the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.
- (2) Agree the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board recommendations regarding the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council as detailed below:

**Recommendation 1:**

That it be noted that the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council is an important partnership which should continue and be regarded as critical to the delivery of the rural agenda.

**Recommendation 2:**

That a Service Level Agreement for the rural community development and community transport elements of the partnership be adopted.

**Recommendation 3:**

That an annual programme of aims/objectives (aligned to the Rural Strategy Action Plan and the Council's corporate priorities) be agreed with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and regularly reviewed and monitored by officers, the elected Member representative from a rural ward and reported to the Portfolio Holder.

**Recommendation 4:**

That the role and involvement of elected Members (the representative from a rural ward and the Portfolio Holder) in the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council be clarified and strengthened.

**Recommendation 5:**

That the elected Member representative from a rural ward should work closely with rural community development officers and community transport officers to provide overall steer and direction for the partnership.

**Recommendation 6:**

That the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board should monitor progress against each of the above recommendations and review the situation, initially in September 2010.

## **Executive Summary**

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### **Introduction**

- 1.1 Cherwell District Council's Constitution delegates responsibility for the scrutiny of partnerships to the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board. As part of its annual work programme the Board will scrutinise at least one partnership per year.
- 1.2 The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board decided to focus their first partnership scrutiny review on the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.

### **Proposals**

- 1.3 The Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council covers three service areas: housing; rural community development; and, community transport. As the housing element of the partnership had been the subject of a scrutiny review in early 2009, the Board agreed that they would consider rural community development and community transport.
- 1.4 The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board decided to focus their review on the following issues:
  - To establish an understanding of the work of Rural Community Councils
  - To receive information on the structure and organisation of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
  - To establish a better understanding of the relationship between Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
  - To review and understand the funding arrangements from Cherwell District Council to Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
  - To determine whether the partnership provides value for money for Cherwell and meets the goals of both partners
  - To determine the extent to which the partnership meets the needs of the residents, businesses and parish councils in the rural areas

## **Conclusion**

- 1.5 The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board concluded its review into the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council at its meeting on 16 February 2010. The Board's findings, conclusions and recommendations are set out in the main body of the report (Appendix 1).
- 1.6 All of the background materials and evidence gathered throughout the review is contained in Volume 2. Copies are available in the Members' room and on request from Democratic Services.

## **Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options**

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The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

- Option One** To accept all of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board's recommendations.
- Option Two** To accept some of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board's recommendations.

## **Consultations**

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See Appendix 1 for details

## **Implications**

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- Financial:** There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.  
Comments checked by Denise Westlake, Service Accountant, 01295 221982
- Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.  
Comments checked by Pam Wilkinson, Principal Solicitor 01 295 221688
- Risk Management:** There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.  
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

## **Wards Affected**

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All rural wards

## Corporate Plan Themes

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**Cherwell, a district of opportunity; A safe and healthy Cherwell; Cherwell, an accessible value for money Council**

## Executive Portfolio

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**Councillor Nigel Morris**  
**Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural**

## Document Information

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<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Partnership Scrutiny: Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. Volume 1
<b>Background Papers</b>	
Partnership Scrutiny: Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. Volume 2	
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