

**Committee:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** Tuesday 13 September 2011  
**Time:** 6.30 pm  
**Venue:** Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

### Membership

<b>Councillor Kieron Mallon (Chairman)</b>	<b>Councillor Lynn Pratt (Vice-Chairman)</b>
<b>Councillor Ann Bonner</b>	<b>Councillor Tim Emptage</b>
<b>Councillor Chris Heath</b>	<b>Councillor Alastair Milne Home</b>
<b>Councillor Neil Prestidge</b>	<b>Councillor Leslie F Sibley</b>
<b>Councillor Daniel Sames</b>	<b>Councillor Trevor Stevens</b>
<b>Councillor Lawrie Stratford</b>	<b>Councillor Rose Stratford</b>

### Substitutes

<b>Councillor Andrew Beere</b>	<b>Councillor Patrick Cartledge</b>
<b>Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE</b>	<b>Councillor Simon Holland</b>
<b>Councillor David Hughes</b>	<b>Councillor George Parish</b>
<b>Councillor Alaric Rose</b>	<b>Councillor Douglas Williamson</b>

## 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. Urgent Business**

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

**4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2011.

**5. Equality Framework for Local Government 'Achieving' Self Assessment (Pages 9 - 44)**

Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

**Summary**

To review the completion of the annual Self Assessment undertaken by the Council against the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.

**Recommendations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Consider the evidence and information submitted in the Council's Self Assessment against the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- (2) Refer the Self Assessment to the Executive for approval.

**6. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 45 - 52)**

Report of Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services

**Summary**

To update the Committee on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12.

**Recommendations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note the current Overview and Scrutiny element of the work programme for 2011/12 as set out at Appendix 1.
- (2) Note any items of interest in the current version of the Forward Plan (September 2011 - December 2011) and consider whether to include them on the work programme for 2011/12.
- (3) Determine the agenda items for the 18 October 2011 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **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](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or (01295) 221583 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. The definition of personal and prejudicial interests is set out in the constitution. The Democratic Support Officer will have a copy available for inspection at all meetings.

**Personal Interest:** Members must declare the interest but may stay in the room, debate and vote on the issue.

**Prejudicial Interest:** Member must withdraw from the meeting room and should inform the Chairman accordingly.

With the exception of the some very specific circumstances, a Member with a personal interest also has a prejudicial interest if it is one which a Member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

#### **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.

## **Queries Regarding this Agenda**

Please contact Catherine Phythian, Legal and Democratic Services  
catherine.phythian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk (01295) 221583

**Sue Smith**  
**Chief Executive**

Published on Monday 5 September 2011

# Agenda Item 4

## Cherwell District Council

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 19 July 2011 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Kieron Mallon (Chairman)  
Councillor Lynn Pratt (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ann Bonner  
Councillor Tim Emptage  
Councillor Leslie F Sibley  
Councillor Daniel Sames  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Also Present: Councillor George Parish  
Councillor D M Pickford

Apologies for absence: Councillor Chris Heath  
Councillor Alastair Milne Home  
Councillor Neil Prestidge  
Councillor Trevor Stevens  
Councillor Rose Stratford

Officers: Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer  
Gillian Greaves, Head of Housing Services  
Martyn Swann, Strategic Housing Manager  
Helen Town, Strategic Housing Officer  
Barbara Horth, Private Sector Housing Inspector

#### 12 **Declarations of Interest**

Members declared interests in the following agenda items:

##### **5. Private Sector Housing Strategy.**

Councillor Kieron Mallon, Personal, as a private landlord.

Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Personal, as a Board Member of Sanctuary Housing.

Councillor Leslie F Sibley, Personal, as a Board Member of Sanctuary Housing.

## **6. Commissioning of Voluntary Sector Services.**

Councillor Alastair Milne Home, Personal, as a Banbury Town Councillor and Board Member of Banburyshire Community Transport Association.

Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Personal, as a member of Bicester Citizens Advice Bureau Management Committee.

### **13 Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

### **14 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 June 2011 and the Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board on 12 July 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

In the course of considering the minutes of the meeting on 12 July 2011 Councillor Sibley requested that officers be tasked to ensure that the financial information supporting the recommendations to the Executive included figures from June 2011.

### **15 Private Sector Housing Strategy**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Housing Services which provided an update on the progress made by the Council against the targets set by the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2010 -14.

Officers gave the following responses to specific questions from the Committee:

- **Inspection:** there was a planned inspection programme for licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) but during the year officers inspect additional HMOs as a result of referrals or complaints. The Committee requested a written response setting out the annual split between planned and responsive inspections and what percentage of HMOs were subject to inspection per year.
- **Enforcement Powers:** Certain large HMOs are required to have a licence under the Housing Act 2004. Non-licensable HMOs are assessed using the Housing Health & Safety Rating System under the Housing Act 2004. All HMOs (licensable or not) are subject to the HMO management regulations to ensure the owners of the HMO manage and maintain the property properly. Failure to comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 can result in enforcement action which can include serving improvement notices or in extreme cases making a prohibition order followed by prosecution for non-compliance. The Council can also prosecute landlords for failure to comply with the management regulations.

However, the Council does not always cover its costs when it prosecutes a private sector landlord and so the Housing team are exploring other options for dealing with non-compliance, for example, issuing a formal caution on the condition that the landlord attends a training course. Making a Prohibition Order is the last resort because of the implications for the homeless register. A further option is to issue an interim management order to transfer the control of a property to another body capable of managing the property. But this is particularly difficult for Cherwell as it is not a stock-holding Council and does not have the in-house skills and experience to act as a landlord which means we are reliant on partnership arrangements with our housing organisations. Development of this arrangement to allow the Council to use HMO management orders is currently being explored as part of the Private Sector Housing Development Project.

- Empty Homes Policy: production of this policy document has been delayed mainly because of external events (changes to national benefit payments and the economic recession) which required a re-prioritisation of resources in the housing team. The draft policy is scheduled for completion in the autumn. The Committee requested that they be given the opportunity to review the document prior to its submission to the Executive.
- Numbers of Private Sector Landlords: changes to the national benefits system has resulted in some landlords ceasing to offer property to Council nominated tenants. Options to address this situation and encourage more landlords to work with the Council in order to avoid a significant increase in the number of residents placed in temporary accommodation are being explored as part of the work of the Private Sector Housing Development Project.
- Complaints: the increase in the number of complaints was believed to be a reflection of the economic and social pressures caused by the current economic climate; there were no known or apparent underlying themes or trends in the type of complaint.

In conclusion the Committee agreed that as this was essentially a monitoring item it should be removed from the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. However, they asked officers to ensure that a further update on progress in this area be circulated to all Members at a future date.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the progress made with achievement of targets set by the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2010 -14 be noted.
- (2) That prior to its submission to the Executive, the Empty Homes Policy be reviewed.
- (3) That the Private Sector Housing Strategy be removed from the work programme.

## **Commissioning of Voluntary Sector Services**

This topic was confirmed as a review item at the meeting on 14 June when Councillors Mallon, Emptage, Pratt, Stevens, L Stratford and R Stratford had volunteered to meet with officers to discuss the specific issues relating to:

- Advice
- Volunteering
- Voluntary Car Transport Schemes

The notes of these informal working group discussions were tabled at the Committee alongside a question and answer statement in response to questions raised by Councillor Cartledge. The Strategic Housing Manager and the Strategic Housing Officer briefed Members on the key issues arising from the informal discussions and explained the details underlying the written answers provided.

In discussion the following points were made:

- That the commissioning project should not be seen as a cost-cutting exercise but as a vehicle to ensure the delivery of transparent, equitable cost effective services to the widest range of residents.
- Statistics and data analysis: the officers explained that statistical data should be treated with caution as it was not always possible to check the source data. For example when looking at call centre volumes for some of the charitable organisations it was not clear whether the figures were all first time callers or included a number of repeat calls. Clearly this had implications for performance assessment and the quality of service provided. This was an area that was targeted for improvement through the commissioning process which would require a more rigorous methodology for data collection and analysis.
- Volunteering: the commissioning project should seek to encourage volunteering from all age groups and backgrounds and replicate good practice from across the county. It was also important to recognise that volunteering schemes should complement service offerings and not be seen as a cheaper alternative delivery option.
- Community Transport: the Committee noted the current status of the County Council's review of dial-a-ride services across Oxfordshire and their intention to provide a base-line service which could be "topped-up" with funding from the individual District Councils. A survey to be led by the County Council of existing Banburyshire Community Transport Association (BCTA) customers was planned which would inform the new service specification to be delivered by either the County Council or a third party. This would also inform the District Council about the appropriate level of "top-up" funding that might be required. Officers also briefed the Members on the current status of the discussions with BCTA and the support that had been offered in the light of the Council's decision in principle to terminate the dial-a-ride funding agreement in March 2012.

In conclusion the Committee agreed that it was important that the Council used the commissioning exercise to ensure that the funds available were channelled towards strategically relevant services and projects which would meet the needs of residents securing positive outcomes for them. It was also acknowledged that the understanding of customer needs will become more refined as the commissioning exercise progresses and in this context a degree of flexibility is required in terms of the amount set aside to support the development of a County Council dial-a-ride service.

The Committee confirmed their support for the commissioning project and agreed that it was important that it progressed according to the set timetable to ensure that no residents were disadvantaged in April 2012 because contracts and suppliers were not in place.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee forward a short report to the September meeting of Executive confirming their support for the Council's approach to the Commissioning of Voluntary Sector Services and highlighting some of the observations made as a consequence of this review. The report should include as appendices the three documents of evidence and information submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting and the minutes of this meeting.

## 17 **Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11**

The Board considered a report of the Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services which presented the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11.

### **Resolved**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved to:

- (1) That the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11 be noted.
- (2) That the Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager be delegated, in consultation with the former and current Chairmen of the two scrutiny committees, to complete the foreword and to make any minor amendments to the annual report before submission to Council.

## 18 **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services which updated Members on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11.

### **Forward Plan**

The Committee noted that a report on the Options for future provision of ICT - South Northamptonshire Council & Cherwell District Council was due to go to the Executive. They agreed that this was a topic of some importance and

that it should be considered at a meeting of the Committee prior to the Executive making any final decision.

### **Registered Social Landlords Relationship Policy**

The Committee considered the draft scoping document for a review of the Registered Social Landlords Relationship Policy. They agreed that this was an important issue and indicated that the Council's approach to the setting, monitoring and enforcement of performance standards would be a particular area of interest as they saw this as a key success factor. The Head of Housing Services explained that regular performance review meetings were held with the individual Registered Social Landlords, and that these meetings looked at the interaction across all of the Council's service areas not just housing.

The Committee agreed that Councillors Bonner, Emptage and Mrs R Stratford would work with officers outside the meeting to develop a briefing pack on the current procedures and policies and to develop the plans for the structure of the review. The topic was scheduled for either the October or November meeting of the Committee.

### **Agenda for 13 September 2011**

The Committee confirmed their intention to review the Council's Equality Framework for Local Government 'Achieving' Self Assessment at this meeting. In view of the importance of this topic and the need to ensure that the self-assessment was subject to a detailed and robust challenge the Committee agreed that Councillors Mallon and L Stratford would work with officers to prepare for the debate at the Committee meeting.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the current Overview and Scrutiny element of the work programme for 2011/12 be noted.
- (2) That the issue of the future provision of ICT at South Northamptonshire Council & Cherwell District Council should be included on the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2011/12 and that officers be requested to bring a report on the options to the Committee prior to the Executive making a final decision.
- (3) That the scoping document for the review of the Registered Social Landlords Relationship Policy be agreed, that it be included on the work programme for October or November 2011 and that Councillors Bonner, Emptage Mrs R Stratford be nominated to work with officers on this topic.
- (4) That it be noted that the 13 September 2011 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would review the Councils Equality Framework for Local Government 'Achieving' Self Assessment and that Councillor Mallon and L Stratford had volunteered to work with officers on this topic.

Chairman:

Date:

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## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Equalities Self Assessment

13 September 2011

### Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To review the completion of the annual Self Assessment undertaken by the Council against the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.

This report is public

#### Recommendations

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The meeting is recommended to:

- (1) Consider the evidence and information submitted in the Council's Self Assessment against the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- (2) Refer the Self Assessment to the Executive for approval.

#### Introduction

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- 1.1 This report presents Cherwell District Council's equalities self assessment. This document is updated annually and sets out the organisation's strengths and areas for development. The self assessment forms part of the Council's approach to equalities which seeks to ensure that excellent customer service, fair access to local services and support to vulnerable people is part of all we do.
- 1.2 In 2010/11 Executive reviewed the first equalities assessment and took the decision not to go for an external peer assessment due to the costs associated with the process at a time of increased financial constraints. However, the Council remains committed to equalities and reports its performance on a quarterly basis against its equalities plan, through the annual self assessment and via equalities impact assessments.

## Details

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- 2.1 This evidence based self-assessment of the council's equalities performance has been prepared by the Equality Corporate Steering Group. This is an officer only group and it is essential that the assessment is subject to an independent review and challenge by members of the Council.
- 2.2 Such an objective review is essential if we are to ensure that we have self assessed Cherwell DC at the correct level and to highlight areas of weakness to allow continued improvement within Corporate Equalities. Furthermore the committee is asked to ensure that the general approach taken to equalities is relevant and meets the Council's wider objectives.
- 2.3 The Council aims to ensure its approach to equalities is meaningful and locally relevant. It is grounded in a clear understanding of the district and the corporate equality plan is based on five objectives, each supported by a number of local priorities:
- 1. Fair Access and Customer Satisfaction**
    - To ensure Cherwell District Council and our Partners treat the public fairly regardless of their background or way of life
    - To improve our services to the older generation within the Cherwell district
    - To ensure all our services both internal and external are accessible to all Equality Groups at a high standard
  - 2. Tackling Inequality and Deprivation**
    - To break the cycle of deprivation within the district (Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme)
  - 3. Building Strong and Cohesive Communities**
    - Promote integration between communities and groups through the use of sport, leisure, cultural activities and opportunities for community involvement
  - 4. Positive Engagement and Understanding**
    - To continue to increase engagement and work with young people within the district
    - Increase Cherwell's knowledge and understanding of the wider community to ensure we fulfil all residents' needs within our services
    - Raise internal awareness of diversity within our community
  - 5. Demonstrating Our Commitment to Equality**
    - Review and publicise all documentation in line with government framework
    - Review achieving standard to research and develop improvement programme
    - Ensure staff and services promote and embed equality into their work
    - All EIA's and Equality documents to be reviewed by the Corporate Equality and Diversity Steering Group
- 2.4 The Self Assessment document is attached at Appendix 1.

## Conclusion

- 3.1 Cherwell District Council has made significant progress delivering against the equalities agenda in recent years. The Council's approach has been redesigned to streamline processes and to focus on local priorities including improving access to services, delivering excellent customer service and working with groups who may need additional support from across the district.
- 3.2 The self assessment identifies areas of strength and key developmental priorities and the Council remains committed to ensuring its performance with regards to equalities and customer access is reported via the quarterly performance management review.

## Implications

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<b>Financial:</b>	None Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551
<b>Legal:</b>	The 2010 Equalities act places a number of duties upon local authorities, including the duty to undertake impact assessments with regards to policy and service decisions. Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Interim Monitoring Officer 01295 221687
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The author of this report is responsible for the performance and risk management framework. The risk associated with failure to comply with Equalities legislation are three fold, legal issues, reputational issues and the failure to deliver good quality and accessible services. The work the council undertakes with regards to equalities aims to mitigate these risks and the self assessment is an important part of this process. Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager, 01295 221563.

## Wards Affected

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All

## Corporate Plan Themes

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All

## Executive Lead

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Councillor Wood  
Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy and Partnerships

## Document Information

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<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Equalities Self Assessment
<b>Background Papers</b>	
Cherwell District Council Equalities Policy and Scheme	
<b>Report Author</b>	Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
<b>Contact Information</b>	01295 221563 <a href="mailto:claire.taylor@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">claire.taylor@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>

# Cherwell District Council Equalities Self Assessment August 2011

## Knowing Your Community

**2:1 - Relevant and appropriate information is gathered efficiently using a range of techniques, across the local community, to inform the authorities: corporate policy and strategy, sustainable community strategy, local area agreements and to identify key equality gaps.**

**Summary of Achievement**

Cherwell District Council collects and analyses good quality information and demographic data as part of our wider community mapping work. This includes a statistical profile of the district 'Living in Cherwell', Equalities Mapping and access to equalities profiles compiled by the Oxfordshire Data Observatory. During 2011/12 the Local Information System has been launched by the data observatory and this includes information about deprivation and disadvantage.

Cherwell District Council also has access to Geographical Information System (GIS) which allows users to combine data from multiple sources and layer this onto a map where the information can then be viewed, analysed and queried.

In addition to statistical profiles the Council has robust data sharing polices and work with partners such as the police, to share community information. This includes community profiles and tension monitoring and also the results of community consultations.

The council undertakes effective community consultation using both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand local priorities.

This information has assisted us when setting key future objectives within our corporate plan and strategies.

**Key Activities:**

- Living in Cherwell – demographic profile updated annually
- Member of the Oxfordshire data observatory strategic board – equalities profiles are developed that cover the whole county and different equalities groups
- Corporate consultation programme – a mix of quantitative and qualitative community consultation to measure satisfaction and set budget and service priorities, data is weighted to reflect the local population make up

## Knowing Your Community

**2:2 - Information and data are disaggregated and analysed corporately and at service/unit level to monitor and assess and set equality objectives. (Links to 2.4, 2.17 and 2.25).**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council has a robust corporate consultation programme that underpins service and financial planning. The results are analysed by population groups to ensure an understanding of the Cherwell community is developed. This includes sub-groups such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic location and urban/rural splits.</p> <p>All service managers are able to request bespoke analysis of corporate information to support service planning, this includes cross tabulations with different population or geographic groups.</p> <p>As part of the service planning process every September a series of managers workshops are held to provide an overview of community issues and priorities. This draws on the full range of information available.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bespoke analysis of the corporate consultation programme available for all Cherwell managers</li> <li>• Customer Service Mystery shopping yearly schedule.</li> <li>• During 2011/2012 Cherwell District Council aims to implement service experience days using volunteers from the Cherwell Disability Forum. This will be piloted in the Customer Service department and reviewed with the aim of rolling out throughout the council.</li> <li>• Customer Satisfaction Survey.</li> <li>• Annual service planning workshops</li> <li>• 2011 budget consultation – additional quantitative research to explore the impact of the recession and identify local priorities.</li> </ul>
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**2: 3 - Relevant and appropriate information and data (including data relating to the National Indicator Set) is mapped, disaggregated and used with partners, to assess and set equality objectives.**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council works alongside its partners to inform and discuss appropriate data which has been collected and analysed. These discussions form part of the Local Strategic Partnership meetings and other partnerships including the steering group that meets to address deprivation issues and the community safety partnership.</p>
	<p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the process of determining countywide priorities Cherwell District Council alongside the Oxfordshire Partnership</li> </ul>

	<p>have been charged with committing to the Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation and Addressing Health Inequalities in Banbury.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future objectives will include Cherwell District Council Equality Officer and Thames Valley Police CADO (Community and Diversity Officer) joint workings on projects which will help us identify current data on who lives in Cherwell.</li> <li>• Regular JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking and Coordinating) meetings occur whereby tension monitoring is discussed with all partners whereby an escalation process would commence if our area level was to increase.</li> <li>• Building Control (application of Building Regulations to the built environment) have introduced ethnicity monitoring within their customer satisfaction surveys to ensure all groups within the community are aware of their legal/statutory responsibilities and helping individuals to achieve those obligations should trends identify a need.</li> </ul>
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## Knowing Your Community

### Areas for Improvement:

#### Areas For Improvement

- The Council does not routinely collect data about sexual orientation. Staff awareness events have been held to promote an understanding of the LGBT community but currently sexual orientation is not collected as part of surveys (NB sexual orientation is monitored as part of the HR and Recruitment procedures).

<b>Knowing Your Community</b>	
<b>Key Sources of Evidence:</b>	
<b>Place Survey</b>	The Place Survey was a statutory exercise which Cherwell District Council completes every two years. This survey captures the local community's views, experiences and perceptions. It is analysed by population sub group and the results are used to inform service and improvement planning.
<b>Living In Cherwell</b>	The Living in Cherwell district profile provides a comprehensive source of data in relation to the Cherwell community. The profile is based on well researched facts, figures and is updated annually. Along with the corporate consultation programme the profile forms the evidence base for the corporate plan and improvement strategy.
<b>TVP – Community Profiles</b>	Thames Valley Police Community and Diversity Officers create Community Profiles on a yearly basis which gives in-depth information into the different communities.
<b>Data Observatory and Local Information System</b>	The District Council is a funding partner of the Oxfordshire Data Observatory. The Observatory produces population profiles at both district and smaller geographic areas. This information is used to information planning and decision making. The Data Observatory website has pages dedicated to equalities issues covering all equalities strands.
<b>Experian Data</b>	As part of the Oxfordshire Data Observatory partnership the Council has access to the Experian population data including the 'origins' data set. This information is used to help plan services. It provides information about the characteristics of different areas and helps identify preferred methods of communications and engagement. The origins data set helps inform the council about the breadth of different national and ethnic groups in the district.
<b>SCS – Sustainable Community Strategy</b>	The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out our long term strategic objectives for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Cherwell until 2030. The strategy was based on extensive consultation, including with harder to reach groups. As a result the strategy includes a focus on cohesion and equalities issues.
<b>Cherwell District Council Corporate Plan and Corporate Consultation Programme</b>	Equality objectives have been built with Cherwell's Corporate Plan, these have been developed using the corporate consultation programme which comprises of a detailed satisfaction survey (with booster samples for hard to reach groups) and qualitative budget consultation events (quotas are used to recruit participants ensuring a spread of representation from across the district.)
<b>Corporate Equality Action Plan</b>	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate its commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
<b>JATAC (meeting minutes)</b>	Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Group – Partners complete district tension monitoring, analyse and discuss accordingly.
<b>Brighter Futures In Banbury Evidence Papers</b>	Oxfordshire Partnership organise programmes with the objective to 'Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation and Addressing Health Inequalities in Banbury
<b>County wide Data Sharing Policy</b>	In place, available via Cherwell District Council legal team.
<b>GIS Database</b>	GIS allows users to combine data from multiple sources and layer this onto a map where the information can then be viewed, analysed and queried.

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

**2: 4 - Clear organisational and partnership equality priorities have been set and are owned and understood by all key stakeholders, including the voluntary and community sector. (Links to 2.2)**

**Summary of Achievement**

The Council has a robust strategy and policy framework. The Sustainable Community Strategy (Our District, Our Future) was launched in February 2010 and sets the long term vision for the district. The strategy was based on extensive consultation and has a clear evidence base drawing on social and demographic trends, long term policy direction and local priorities. Cherwell District Council led the development of the strategy and as part of the work the Local Strategic Partnership for Cherwell was fully reviewed and membership broadened to give the voluntary and business sectors greater representation on the partnership.

The Sustainable Community Strategy is underpinned by annual delivery plans (short term priorities set by the Local Strategic Partnership), the county wide Local Area Agreement and a suite of medium term strategies covering issues such as economic development, housing and homelessness, rural development.

Cherwell District Council also has a corporate plan which sets out the strategic priorities of the organisation. There is also an improvement strategy which is comprised of a number of projects aimed at priority areas for development or improvement.

Recognising the importance of equalities and diversity during 2009/2010 a 3 year Corporate Equality Action Plan was created. This action plan brings together our long term equalities objectives for the district across all the equality strands. The plan encompasses issues around deprivation and building strong and cohesive communities, both key priorities included within the Corporate Improvement strategy for 2011/2012. The Corporate Equalities Plan is refreshed annually.

**Key Activities:**

- Cherwell District Council Sustainable Community Strategy includes deprivation, equalities and cohesion objectives.
- The Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership has established a steering group to oversee a multi-agency work programme to tackle deprivation in priority areas in Banbury.
- Council's Corporate Plan has equalities objectives and a cross cutting priority aimed at tackling deprivation (reflecting the strategic significance of the sustainable community strategy).
- 3 year Corporate Equalities Plan which sets out specific equalities objectives underpinned by a refreshed equalities scheme.

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

**2:5 - Equality and cohesion priorities are monitored regularly by partners, the authority's political and senior managerial leadership, and appropriate resources are being allocated. (Links to 2.20)**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council monitors its Corporate Equality Action plan performance on a quarterly basis via the Equality Scorecard as part of the Councils overall quarterly performance report. This report is presented to the Executive Members by the portfolio holder with the responsibility for performance.</p> <p>This information forms part of the annual executive performance report. Equalities objectives are included and monitored within partnership activities (e.g. the LSP and the Brighter Futures Steering Group).</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader of the Council is the Equality and Diversity Portfolio holder.</li> <li>• The Executive lead for performance reviews data on a monthly basis.</li> <li>• During 2007/2008 Cherwell District Council introduced the opportunity for all staff to have their say on various topics which would constructively help shape the future of the Council. Within this survey is a section on Equalities. The survey is conducted every 2 years with the last one taking place during 2010 whereby constructive and realistic objectives have been set.</li> </ul>
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**2: 6 - Action is being taken to implement commitments within the equality schemes and monitored regularly by political and senior managerial leadership.**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council' Equality Scheme is reviewed yearly. This process is led by the Partnership and Equalities Officer and supported by the internal Corporate Equality Steering Group. The Equality Scheme is published on our internet site and the Equality and Access Panel is the primary means by which external consultation takes place in relation to the scheme. These reviews also form part on the yearly Executive reports.</p> <p>In addition the Equality and Access Panel receives feedback reports in relation to changes to our services which demonstrate our commitment to keep the local community informed. This group is attended by internal and external partners and senior management.</p>
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## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

**2:7 - Appropriate resources have been allocated and action has been taken to mitigate adverse impact and improve equality outcomes where shortfalls have been identified. (Links to 2.18)**

**Summary of Achievement**

Cherwell District Council maintains Equality Impact Assessment rolling programme of policies and strategies which have been identified as needing assessment via the management team. This document has been published to all senior members of staff and on Cherwell District Council’s website. This document is reviewed quarterly by the Corporate Equality Steering Group to ensure new policies and emerging issues are identified and reviewed.

Full Equality Impact Assessment’s are then consulted on with the public via the Equality and Access Consultation Panel or via other methods where required.

**Key Activities:**

- Quarterly Corporate Equality Steering group meetings to take place.
- All completed Equality Impact Assessments to be consulted on through the Corporate Equality Steering Group.
- Yearly review of Equality Impact Assessment rolling plan to be conducted alongside Head of Services.

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2:8 - Political overview and scrutiny processes review equality impacts and objectives	
<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>All of Cherwell District Council's Executive papers require an impact assessment across a range of criteria including finance, risk, legal and equalities where necessary. In addition the Executive papers include a section whereby the consultation undertaken as part of the policy development or the required decision is outlined.</p> <p>The Cherwell District Council Leader is the portfolio holder for the Equalities agenda and there is a member champion for community cohesion. This gives direct oversight to our equality and cohesion work programmes.</p> <p>The annual Equality Executive paper provides the Executive Members with a detailed review of the performance of work programme and has direct input into future work programmes. Scrutiny is also able to challenge the equalities work programme.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Members requested for Cherwell District Council to be accredited under the Equality Framework for Local Government during 2010/2011 resulting in the Corporate Equalities Programme 'Achieving' Self Assessment. Executive reviewed the first assessment and took the decision not to go for an external peer assessment due to the costs associated with the process at a time of increased financial constraints.</li> <li>• There is a dedicated Member cohesion champion who focuses on community cohesion. The champion is briefed monthly by the lead officer and he also chairs the community cohesion group (a group made up of representatives of the local community).</li> <li>• The Performance Scrutiny Working group meets on a quarterly basis to scrutinise performance. Equalities issues are included within these reports.</li> </ul>

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

### 2:9 - The authority communicates effectively about its equality and cohesion priorities, how it is responding to its communities' needs and promoting good relations

#### Summary of Achievement

The Council has a dedicated web page for its equalities work and also communicates with key stakeholders in a number of ways. These include the quarterly performance reports, consultation and community engagement events, targeted reports and articles in the resident's newsletter.

The Corporate Strategy and Performance Team work with key stakeholders across all sectors to publicise the work of the Council and a network of community engagement groups and forums has been established to ensure a wide as possible consultation and communication takes place.

Our Corporate Equalities Plan includes objectives and actions to improve consultation and communication with members of the local community. Our Equality and Access panel helps us refine all our policies and strategies to meet the needs of the local community which enables us to build strong relations across the community.

The Council publicises all public meetings on its website and all consultation opportunities are publicised on the council's consultation portal.

#### Key Activities:

- Disability Forum
- Voluntary Sector Forum
- Banbury Community Cohesion Group
- Cherwell Faith Forum
- Internal 'Knowing your Community' awareness events which help build levels of understanding about the diversity of Cherwell within the Council and partner agencies.
- Recognising that the rural communities may not have access to the internet, or the PC's we have provided Link point kiosks into those communities. These allow users to access any non-restricted websites
- Kiosk locations are:
  - Deddington Library, Deddington
  - Hook Norton
  - Cropredy Stores, Cropredy
  - Heyford Wharf
  - Ambrosden

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

**2:10 - The authority ensures that contractors, commissioned services and grant receivers regularly review their services and access to them to ensure they continue to be appropriate and accessible. (Links to 2.19)**

**Summary of Achievement**

Cherwell District Council takes into account within its tender evaluation and contracting processes a potential contractor's approach to equalities in terms of its employment practices and service delivery, which are monitored and managed during the life of each contract. This is outlined in the Council's procurement strategy and documentation.

The Council check a contractor's compliance with equality and diversity issues in two ways:

- Prior to Contract Award - by asking equalities questions either prior to or during the tender process. If following evaluation the response does not satisfy the Council's criteria, the firm may not be short listed or awarded a contract.
- After Contract Award - by including contract conditions on equality in all Council contracts and by monitoring a contractor's performance and compliance with those conditions.

**2: 11 - Work is being undertaken to promote equality of opportunity in terms of the participation of under-represented groups in civic and public life, including as elected representatives.**

**Summary of Achievement**

Cherwell District Council works with local schools, colleges and sixth forms to engage with the districts younger generation. We have done this by working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to create an Oxfordshire Youth Parliament. Cherwell District Council also work in partnership with The Hill youth centre in Bretch Hill, Banbury with their Youth Forum as its important to get young peoples support and feed back who live in a deprivation cycle area.

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

**2: 12 - The quality of community relations and harassment and hate crimes are monitored and analysed regularly. Appropriate action is taken to address the issues that have been identified**

**Summary of Achievement**

The Cherwell District is a low risk area and has good working community relationships. Cherwell District Council receives tension monitoring reports for the district from the Thames Valley Police Oxfordshire Community & Diversity Officer.

Regular JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating) meetings occur whereby tension monitoring is reviewed and an escalation process is in place if our area level was to increase.

The Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership has refreshed its local Information Sharing Protocol that has been developed so the Community Safety Partnerships can use its Information Sharing Procedures for the purposes of confidential data exchange.

Cherwell District Council are Partners on initiatives and steering groups such as MANTA Oxfordshire, Challenging Hate Crime programme and HALT (Homophobic Awareness Liaison Team). Both of these Steering groups produce reported figures of hate crimes within our district on a quarterly basis.

**Key Activities:**

- The Cherwell district has the highest reported hate crime figures next to Oxford City within the Oxfordshire area. As a result of this during 2011/2012 Cherwell will be the pilot district for the new Mantra Hate Crime Reporting programme. Cherwell District Council will act as a third party reporting centre which will facilitate hate crime reporting from an incident and witness perspective. Cherwell District Council will work closely via an escalation process with its partners to report, facilitate and take appropriate action to enable the district to tackle and reduce hate crime incidents.

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

### Areas for Improvement:

#### Areas For Improvement

- There is an opportunity to widen consultation as part of the annual review of the Equalities scheme.
- There is an opportunity for further Member engagement in the Equality Impact Assessment Process where issues can be escalated via the Equality Steering Group.
- To obtain accurate hate crime figures via the success of the Mantra Oxfordshire programme to ensure we have a clear understanding of what actions need to be taken in the future to reduce hate crime for the district.

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

### Key Sources of Evidence

<b>Corporate Equality Action Plan</b>	Cherwell District Council demonstrates its commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference.
<b>Corporate Improvement Plan</b>	Identifies and sets out projects to address areas for development in terms of improvement, value for money reviews or new policy development.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Programme</b>	A three year rolling Equality Impact assessment programme which outlines timescales as to when which policies or strategies need to be reviewed.
<b>Equality Impact Assessments</b>	Evidence of all completed Equality Impact Assessments throughout Cherwell District Council.
<b>Equality Scorecard</b>	The Equality Scorecard has been build into Cherwell District Council's performance management system allowing us to review or work programme progression which forms part of the overall Performance Management Framework.
<b>Equality Executive Reports</b>	Annual Equality Performance Report which gets reviewed by Executive members for future work programmes to be agreed.
<b>Cherwell District Council Service Plans</b>	Departmental Service Plans created by staff and managers to plan objectives on a yearly basis.
<b>LSP – Local Strategic</b>	The Cherwell LSP Management Group is a sub group of

## Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

### Key Sources of Evidence

<b>Partnership Management</b>	the LSP Board with operational responsibilities.
<b>Executive Lead Member – Leader of the Council</b>	The Leader of Cherwell District Council is the Executive Lead Member for Corporate Equalities.
<b>Equality Scheme</b>	Cherwell District Council has a Single Equality Scheme comprising the Corporate Action Plan and Equality Impact Assessment Plan. This document sets our standards and aspirations in relation to our future work programme.
<b>Equality and Access Panel</b>	A Consultation Panel whereby all our Impact Assessments and service changes are reviewed by the public. Suggestions are researched and feedback reported via minutes.
<b>Equality Good Practice Register</b>	Document available via the Partnership and Equality Officer.
<b>Cherwell Link</b>	Cherwell Link has included various equality articles
<b>Banbury Community Cohesion Group</b>	Voluntary group of Community Associations supported by Cherwell District Council.
<b>Oxfordshire Youth Parliament</b>	Supported by Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.
<b>IAG (Independent Advisory Group)</b>	TVP lead group made up of community representatives to share information and discuss and community issues. Meetings are held quarterly or on a need must basis.
<b>Oxfordshire MANTRA</b>	Oxfordshire Mantra Strategic Action Plan. Meeting minutes and agendas.
<b>Oxfordshire HALT</b>	HALT Strategic Action Plan. Partners Agreement, Meeting minutes and agendas.
<b>Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership</b>	Partner's agreement/protocol, meetings, minutes and agendas.

## Community Engagement and Satisfaction

### 2:13 - Community engagement structures are working efficiently and effectively.

#### Summary of Achievement

Cherwell District Council is a lead member of the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership. The sustainable community strategy for the district sets out a clear ambition for the partners taking a lead role in community leadership. The ambition 'resourceful and receptive community leadership' sets out an ambitious programme for community engagement.

As such the LSP has set out a clear structure and process for community engagement and Cherwell District Council has played a lead role in hosting and delivering several community engagement events.

In addition to partnership working Cherwell District Council has a strong and effective Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy which includes our equalities work programme for improved consultation with members of the local community. Regular consultations take place and feedback is monitored.

Cherwell District Council (in conjunction with the Access Officer) not only ensures the accessibility of its consultation events but also safe egress (means of escape in case of fire). For those who require assistance it also makes special arrangements for travel arrangements to translators and signers, specialist catering and community reimbursement where appropriate.

#### Key Activities:

- An annual LSP reference group – a conference style event open to all community stakeholders to help shape the priorities of the local strategic partnership.
- A family of community engagement forums that are supported by Cherwell District Council and its LSP partners. The aim of these is to provide clear and accessible community engagement opportunities. An LSP board member attends each event, they include: the faith forum, the disability forum, voluntary sector and countryside forums, the Parish Liaison events, seniors forum and connecting communities events.
- The Council holds a series of consultation activities including an annual budget consultation – where local residents are actively recruited and those who have previously participated are invited to return.
- The consultation portal provides a one stop shop for all council consultation and engagement events from public workshops to surveys.
- The Access Officer for Cherwell District Council sits on both the

	'Cherwell Disability Forum Steering Group' and 'The Equality & Diversity Steering Group.'
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## Community Engagement and Satisfaction

### 2.15 - Involvement and consultation influences and informs equality priorities and feedback is given to those consulted.

<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>Cherwell District Council involves and consults established local organisations and community representative bodies which are well aligned to all equalities groups.</p> <p>All feedback from consultation is communicated and used to set policy priorities throughout Cherwell District Council.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of several services contribute to and consult with the Banbury Asian forum</li> <li>• Cherwell District Council 's Housing services have developed a protocol for working directly with residents of all Regional Social Landlords in the district, allowing them direct influence on priorities. The group will also develop and monitor the housing services equality plan and area housing plan.</li> <li>• The Access and Equality Panel meetings receive feedback to all discussed agenda items.</li> </ul>
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### 2.16 - Partners work together to balance diverse, but sometimes conflicting interests, in the locality

<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>Within the Local Strategic Partnership Partners work together to implement the new Sustainable Community Strategy. This prioritises the aspirations for Cherwell until 2030. This required the gathering of evidence and residents views and reconciliation of conflicting views to determine collective priorities.</p> <p>The Community Cohesion working group are a community group who meet quarterly to promote knowledge and understanding about their own cultural communities. This objective is met by creating a quarterly newsletter distributed throughout Cherwell and by attending community events.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council hosts the JATAC on a regular basis. This partnership meeting combines expertise in all different fields from different organisations which helps to build a whole picture of the community in relation to community tension monitoring.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in relation to the Horton Hospital demonstrates the conflicts between cost, public demand and deliverability. The Better Healthcare Programme in Banbury earlier this year</li> </ul>
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	<p>concluded its work with the introduction of new Horton General Hospital models based on consultant delivered services. However, the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust has recently had to make further service changes to balance demand, service standards and available finance. There have been a number of inpatient bed reductions and changes from September to gynaecology services but within the previously agreed consultant delivered service models. A Community Partnership Network has been held to discuss the nature and implications of these changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Brighter Futures in Banbury project works to tackle deprivation in specific wards in Banbury using a number of diverse approaches and projects.</li> </ul>
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## Community Engagement and Satisfaction

### Areas for Improvement:

#### Areas For Improvement

- Feedback any complaints made on the grounds of discrimination.
- Housing services are reviewing grants given to community groups to improve distribution of funding to groups.

## Community Engagement and Satisfaction

### Key Sources of Evidence

<b>Corporate Equality Action Plan</b>	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate its commitment to improving equalities within the district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
<b>Corporate Improvement Plan</b>	Identifies and sets out projects to address areas for development in terms of improvement, value for money reviews or new policy development.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Programme</b>	A three year rolling Equality Impact assessment programme which outlines timescales as to when which policies or strategies need to be reviewed.
<b>Equality Impact Assessments</b>	Evidence of all completed Equality Impact Assessments throughout Cherwell District Council.
<b>Equality Scorecard</b>	The Equality Scorecard has been build into Cherwell District Council's performance management system allowing us to review or work programme progression which forms part of the overall Performance Management

	Framework.
<b>Equality Executive Reports</b>	Annual Equality Performance Report which gets reviewed by Executive members for future work programmes to be agreed.
<b>Cherwell District Council Service Plans</b>	Departmental Service Plans created by staff and managers to plan objectives on a yearly basis
<b>Banbury Community Cohesion Group</b>	Voluntary group of Community Associations.
<b>Fair and Aware 'Moving Forward' Corporate Training.</b>	Module 5 is based in 1-1 Equality Impact Assessment training to ensure a complete gap analysis is completed.
<b>Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2010/2011</b>	Including Equality Impact Assessment for strategy.
<b>CMT (Corporate Management Team)</b>	PMF Minutes of meetings.
<b>Equality Good Practice Register</b>	Available via Cherwell District Council's Partnership and Equality Officer and intranet site.
<b>Corporate Translation Policy</b>	Available via Cherwell District Council's Partnership and Equality Officer and intranet/Internet sites.
<b>Executive Reports</b>	Available from Democratic Services.

## Responsive Service and Customer Care

### **2.17 - A set of equality outcomes/objectives/goals have been produced at service/unit level to meet the needs of identified equality target groups, and those who are most vulnerable. (links to 2.2 and 2.4)**

<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>Cherwell District Council work to a 3 year Corporate Equality Action Plan. This action plan brings together our long term equalities objectives for the district across all the equality strands. The plan encompasses issues around deprivation and building strong and cohesive communities, both key priorities included within the Corporate Improvement Plan for 2011/2012.</p> <p>These strategic objectives are then filtered through down into our specific service yearly operational service plans.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <p>Cherwell District Council's Customer Specialist Team are responsible for taking it's services out to the hard to reach local communities to assist with ensuring all the community can access our services. Outlined below is a variety of events, community groups and community locations whereby this team have provided access and information to our services.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Frank Cook Court – Elderly Hook Norton Day Centre – Elderly &amp; Carers BHYP – under 25 mainly 17-19 Bicester and Banbury Job Clubs – Working Age</p>
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	<p>           Bicester Food Bank – All            Kaboodle Mens club – Men Only            Widows Club – All            Bretch Hill Estate Day – Brighter Future            Neets Week – under 25s            Banbury Show – All            Parish Liaison – Councillors            Kidlington Parish Council            OCVV Open Day – Students            Home alone - All            Oxeye – Partially Sighted            Salvation Army            Travellers site at Mollington and Station Approach -            Banbury            CDC Health Bus            Banbury Friendships Centre            Local Supermarkets            The Horton Hospital            Local Libraries            Local Doctors Surgeries         </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cherwell District Council's Housing services also do outreach work</li> <li>• Home visits to applicants who can't otherwise access housing services</li> <li>• The Housing provide preventative help (e.g. training courses) to Asian landlords who are struggling to meet their legal obligations - as we found higher numbers of Asian landlords were having legal action taken against them.</li> <li>• Housing services have explored effective ways to reach rural residents and other isolated people e.g. health bus – to give advice on homelessness prevention / access to social housing / grants and assistance</li> <li>• Housing strategy team have opted in to use the Oxfordshire supported housing need toolkit which will enable us to better predict the need for supported housing in the district and work with Planning to enable more effective delivery of housing for disabled and vulnerable people</li> <li>• Visiting older people's groups to promote the Home Improvement Agency</li> <li>• Attending Polish community group to promote services to enforce standards in private rented properties</li> <li>• Housing needs team visit groups for people with mental health problems and other support needs to discuss how to access suitable housing</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of the Access Officer regarding disabled/ inclusive access to council buildings. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) placed a duty on employers and service providers to ensure reasonable access to services and employment including the need to make 'reasonable adjustments' to physical features of premises to overcome barriers to access. The Audit Commission introduced BVPI 156 which required Councils to report the accessibility of their buildings through the compilation of access audits as defined by the now outdated approved document Part M (1991) to the Building Regulations. Although BVPI 156 has been withdrawn/deleted by CLG. Cherwell District Council have decided to continue with BVPI 156 as a local indicator within the Access Officer continuing bi-annual access audits of council premises (measured against the current approved document Part M (2004) to the Building Regulations). The findings of the audit being reported to the Directorate Team in order for managers to consider any indentified barriers to their service, including identification of reasonable adjustments. This is considered by the most effective way to continue measuring the accessibility and inclusiveness of all the council premises in the absence of a National Indicator. The Access Audits are held by the Access Officer.</li> </ul>
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## Responsive Services and Customer Care

### **2. 18 - Appropriate resources have been allocated and action has been taken to mitigate adverse impact and improve equality outcomes where shortfalls have been indentified. (links to 2.6)**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>The process for all Equality Impact Assessment objectives are fed into the Service Heads Service plans and are monitored, updated and reported on regularly.</p> <p>An Equality Scorecard is also created on a quarterly basis which reports on the Equalities overall performance.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cherwell District Council's Housing services has developed an equality action plan from the Equality Impact Assessment objectives. Community groups were consulted on its development, it is published on the website and will be monitored by the social housing residents' group</li> </ul>
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### **2. 19 - Mechanisms are in place to ensure that service equality objectives are delivered by contractors and providers through contract management, and those they are monitored properly. (links to 2.10)**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council takes into account within its tender evaluation and contracting processes, a potential contractor's approach to equalities in terms of its employment practices and service delivery, which will also be monitored and managed during the life of each contract.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <p>The 'Sustainable Community Strategy' Consultancy Services contract included equality objective's such as being able to reach 'hard to reach groups' For each invitation to quote processed via the Corporate Procurement team there is a pass/fail equal opportunities section where the potential contractor needs to list evidence of putting equal opportunities &amp; diversity into practice. The interested party also needs to confirm that they actively sign up to the whole raft of equalities legislation.</p> <p>For every tender if it is a restricted process the same will apply as with the invitation to quote process above. For every open tender the process will be as above.</p> <p>As well as this, where relevant the tender evaluation - as opposed to the pre-qualification listed above - will involve evidence of equal opportunities in action - such as the Pay Progression Consultancy invitation to quote under way at present.</p> <p>Once a contract is awarded contractors should be asked to provide updated equal opportunity policies at the annual review meeting if the contract is due to run for two or more years.</p> <p>Service areas are also being encouraged to provide ongoing evidence of equal opportunities in practice and that their workforce reflects the community in which they work.</p> <p>For the public toilet cleaning contract, let in partnership with three other local authorities, at least one company expressing an interest via the pre-qualification questionnaire was failed on their response to the equal opportunity questionnaire - this company was a national company that failed to provide evidence of how they put their policy into practice.</p> <p>The fire and intruder alarm maintenance tender has also failed one company on their response to the equal opportunities questionnaire - this was in spite of all companies being invited to a Selling to the Council workshop which explained the reasoning behind the pre-qualification and tender process. The company who was failed declined to attend the half an hour workshop and has received feedback as to why they failed.</p> <p>Housing services development protocol makes equality requirements of affordable housing providers when providing new affordable housing, including having a clear understanding of their potential residents including breakdown by age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and faith.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals for new housing should be assessed for impact on equality considerations.</li> <li>Require contractors to demonstrate commitment to equality through the tendering process, and monitor their performance.</li> <li>Provide housing for all groups where a need is identified including provision for wheelchair standard housing and supported housing for various client groups.</li> </ul>
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**2.20 - Equality and cohesion objectives are monitored regularly by portfolio holders and departmental management teams (DMTs). (Links to 2.7,2.22,and 2.23)**

<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>All service plans are monitored using Cherwell District Council's Performance Management Framework by the Corporate Management Team on a monthly basis. The Executive review performance against the corporate equalities plan on a quarterly basis. All Portfolio holders meet regularly with their Heads of Service whereby performance is discussed.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council has a Strategic Risk Register which is reviewed monthly, equalities is identified as a corporate level risk.</p>
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## Responsive Services and Customer Care

**2. 21 - The indentified needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups are addressed and services are designed to ensure that customers and citizens are treated with dignity and respect.**

<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>Throughout all our services to the local community we ensure that we are able to design and adapt our services to ensure that our customers are treated with dignity and respect.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Disabled Facility Grant</b> - The number of DFGs completed has gone up from 105 (2007/8) to 140 (2008/9). The number of Home Improvement Agency cases has increased from 250 (2007/08) to 694 (2008/09). The DFG budget for</li> </ul>
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	<p>2009/10 was increased to £950,000 - £375,000 from GOSE plus £575,000 from the Council, resourcing our priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tackling Domestic Violence</b> - A new scheme in 2009/10 assisting up to 30 families per year, independent domestic violence advisor service to support high risk cases, extended PACT outreach service (jointly commissioned with an RSL partner) (approx 40 families per year) which includes development of the freedom programme which this year has sought to reach hard to reach groups including people with mental health problems, Muslim women in Banbury</li> <li>• <b>Housing Services for Older people</b> One of the first district councils to produce a housing strategy specifically for older people, addressing the issues raised by an ageing population. Older people were involved from the start of the project and continue to take responsibility for monitoring the outcomes by regular attendance on the steering group which overlooks this work programme.</li> <li>• <b>Miller Road</b> self build project addresses the needs of young people who are NEET in a practical and responsive way (young people had identified the construction industry as a popular area in which to gain work skills). This project has resulted in seven young people being placed in apprenticeships</li> </ul>
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## Responsive Services and Customer Care

### 2. 22 - Human rights issues are considered and addressed when delivering services to customers and clients. (links to 2.7 and 2.20)

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council is an accessible district council which is aware of its community make up and ensures that its resources and services are accessed and available in a fair way.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Translation Policy Procedure</li> <li>• Face to Face Mystery Shopping - Face to face mystery shopping at our LinkPoint offices and the "shoppers" included people with hidden disabilities.</li> <li>• Re-development of Customer Services - Complete re-development of our three former cash offices into one stop shops has allowed us to put in place: All service access on ground floor, no step, wheelchair access, seated waiting areas, hearing loop at all service points, signage alerting customers to our zero tolerance of abuse, Language Line is available and used for face to face visitors and telephone callers, leaflets are available in large print, braille, audio tape and alternative languages. We identified that a lot of the callers at our town centre offices were Polish nationals. As a result of this we arranged for several posters and leaflets to be printed and displayed in Polish</li> <li>• Customer Service Officer – Specialist – Customer Service Officers who are non office based with the role of visiting the public at local level to ensure everyone within the district has access to our services.</li> <li>• Cherwell District Council provides Polish speaking customer service drop in sessions.</li> </ul>
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## Responsive Services and Customer Care

### 2. 23 – Access to and appropriateness of services is monitored regularly by portfolio holders and DMT's. (Links to 2.7 and 2.20)

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council has a robust performance management framework which includes a suite of performance measures monitored on a monthly basis. In the corporate score card there is a focus on customer measures and the corporate plan has several equalities targets. There is also a corporate improvement plan and the corporate equalities plan which further embed equalities into the performance management framework.</p> <p>In addition to these processes all portfolio holders meet regularly with their Heads of Service whereby discussions take place surrounding the performance of services. These discussions include issues around the quality of access and information about the service and ways to improve the service in line with community expectations.</p> <p>There is also a Member challenge process as part of service planning where councillors are able to consider each service plan to ensure that actions planned are appropriate, relevant and cost effective. The service plans include equalities actions.</p> <p>Executive reports which are written within the council have equality risk assessments which are signed prior to the paper going through Executive.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing services have developed monthly performance monitoring which includes adding value to partnership working with vulnerable communities. This will feed upwards to DMT and the portfolio holder</li> </ul>
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## Responsive Services and Customer Care

### Areas for Improvement:

#### Areas For Improvement

- Contract monitoring and management is a key focus for the Council's 2011/2012 Corporate Procurement Strategy and the emphasis on ensuring best practice forms part of this - with equal opportunities - being part of the overall drive for improved contract management
- The Housing Equality Group is overseeing the creation and implementation of an Equality Scorecard throughout 2011/2012.
- The Strategic housing team is piloting parish profiles to gain deeper understanding of housing need in rural areas, leading to better prioritisation of work to support communities in achieving affordable housing.

## Responsive Services and Customer Care

### Key Sources of Evidence

<b>Corporate Equality Action Plan</b>	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference.
<b>Corporate Improvement Plan</b>	Identifies and sets out projects to address areas for development in terms of improvement, value for money reviews or new policy development.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Programme</b>	This is a three year rolling Equality Impact assessment programme which outlines timescales as to when which policies or strategies need to be reviewed.
<b>Equality Impact Assessments</b>	Evidence of all completed Equality Impact Assessments throughout Cherwell District Council.
<b>Equality Scorecard</b>	The Equality Scorecard has been build into Cherwell District Council's performance management system allowing us to review or work programme progression which forms part of the overall Performance Management Framework.
<b>Equality Executive Reports</b>	Annual Equality Performance Report which gets reviewed by Executive members for future work programmes to be agreed.

<b>Responsive Services and Customer Care</b>	
<b>Key Sources of Evidence</b>	
<b>Cherwell District Council Service Plans</b>	Departmental Service Plans created by staff and managers to plan objectives on a yearly basis
<b>Banbury Community Cohesion Group</b>	Voluntary group of Community Associations funded through the Community Cohesion government grant.
<b>Fair &amp; Aware 'Moving Forward' Corporate Training.</b>	Module 5 is based in 1-1 Equality Impact Assessment training to ensure a complete gap analysis is completed.
<b>Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2010/2011</b>	Including Equality Impact Assessment for strategy.
<b>CMT (Corporate Management Team)</b>	PMF Minutes of meetings.
<b>Equality Good Practice Register</b>	Available via Cherwell District Council's Partnership and Equality Officer.
<b>Corporate Translation Policy</b>	Available via Cherwell District Council's Partnership and Equality Officer and intranet/Internet sites.
<b>Executive Reports</b>	Available from Democratic Services.

## Modern and Diverse Workforce

<b>2.24 - The equality aspects of the workforce strategy are implemented and monitored.</b>	
<b>Summary of Achievement</b>	<p>Cherwell District Council has robust Human Resources processes which are regularly reviewed and Equality Impact Assessed to ensure compliance. During 2010/11 the organisational change policy was reviewed to ensure shared services could be effectively undertaken.</p> <p>The Workforce Strategy encompasses our various policies which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part Time Working</li> <li>• Flexi Time</li> <li>• Redundancy and Redeployment (Organisational Change)</li> <li>• Future Workforce Planning</li> </ul>

**2.25- Employment objectives have been set based on internal monitoring, staff consultation and the assessment of the local labour market and barriers. (Links to 2.2)**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Employment objectives have been set within the People and Development Workforce Strategy. Monitoring of staff figures are completed quarterly which informs employment equality objectives and have been linked into the Corporate Equality Action Plan and the Corporate Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council opens itself to a range of techniques for attracting the local community to its workforce and also ensuring there is balance as to when it comes to looking after its existing staff. These consist of strategies and schemes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Apprenticeship Scheme</b> – This government funded scheme allows young adults from deprived areas of the Community to gain hands experience and training to assist them with their future carers.</li> <li>• <b>Recruitment and Employment</b> - Cherwell District Council have developed a number of new posts to encourage graduates and individuals without a professional qualification to move into professional roles. Career graded posts exist across the council. These roles have stepped progression with clear criteria for development including attainment of professional qualifications and experiential development. There has been a focus on encouraging an increase in numbers of employees in the 16-29 age groups and this has been successful</li> <li>• <b>Improved Work Experience Schemes</b> - Cherwell District Council worked with Cherwell Valley College to provide a work placement for a young adult with downs syndrome. The placement was strongly supported with considerable one to one supervision whilst providing experiential development within 3 departments over 22 weeks</li> </ul>
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**2.26 - The authority regularly monitors, analyses and publishes employment data to fulfil its statutory duties.**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council monitors and analyses its employment data on regular basis using various methods from the recruitment stage through to full employment.</p> <p>This is captured and analysed using our in house management system and reported on the web site.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A review of the HR policies, practices and procedures is being undertaken to enhance the internal monitoring of equalities.</b></li> </ul>
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## Modern and Diverse Workforce

**2. 27 - All employment procedures have been impact assessed and action has been taken to mitigate adverse impact and promote equality outcomes.**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>All HR policies and procedures have been through the Equality Impact Assessment and actions leading from this have been built into the Corporate Equality Action Plan, the employment data monitoring and the Service Heads yearly service plans.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A training programme has been running for 18 months based on best practice in selection interviewing. Attendance has been mandatory for any member of staff sitting on an interview panel. A comprehensive staff list is maintained by HR to ensure panel members have been trained</li> </ul>
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**2. 28 - The authority has made significant progress on its equal pay review and is working towards reaching agreement with unions.**

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council has completed a pay and grading review consisting of a job evaluation exercise, followed by a review of the current pay structures, with the implementation date of 1 April 2010 which was met. This supports the Single Status Agreement 1997 and the National Agreement 2004, which encouraged local authorities to undertake such reviews.</p> <p>The Equal Pay Act and the Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations, also make it especially important to maintain a fair and equitable pay and grading structure. Job evaluation aims to provide a systematic and consistent approach to defining the relative worth of posts within an organisation, and is a process whereby jobs are placed in a rank order according to overall demands placed upon the post holder, making it a fair and equitable process.</p> <p>This process has now been completed and the risk removed from the corporate risk register.</p> <p>The shared services programme may present future job evaluation challenges. This will be kept under review by the steering group. An agreed job evaluation process is in place for the recruitment and employment of the shared management team.</p>
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## Modern and Diverse Workforce

**2. 29 - It delivers a range of learning and development opportunities to support councillors and officers to deliver equality outcomes.**

**Summary of Achievement**

An extensive amount of work and resource has been put into this area over the last 2 years resulting in a new in house corporate training programme for all staff to increase our knowledge with the objective of improving the communities' level of service when accessing our services. The modular approach allows for Cherwell District Council's diverse workforce and how Equality and Diversity may impact upon their daily roles. The five modules within the course are:

- **Equality & Diversity 'The Challenge'** - To outline the primary legislation governing service provision and employee behaviour and to raise the profile of CDC Equality policy and procedure
- **The Work Environment: Is it a Fair Place for Everyone** - To provide employees with the ability to understand their work environment & culture and reflect on how attitudes and behaviours can effect others
- **Equality & the Community** - To provide the student with a clear awareness of the cultural diversity of the population. The dangers of assigning certain attributes to groups and to identify potential ways to manage service provision to a diverse community
- **Managing Equality & Diversity** - To provide managers with the knowledge to critically review their work environment to ensure it is fair and supportive allowing people to perform to their best level and to identify potential areas of organisation risk
- **Completing Equality Impact Assessments** - To provide students with the knowledge and awareness of how to effectively complete Equality Impact Assessment

## Modern and Diverse Workforce

### 2.30 Harassment and bullying incidents are monitored and analysed regularly. Appropriate action is taken to address the issues that have been identified.

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council has a clear policy and process to manage reported incidents. At present no formal complaints have been made.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A question is also included within the anonymous Staff Survey 2008/2010 relating to harassment and bullying within the workplace.</li> </ul>
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### 2. 31 - Equality implications inform the setting of objectives in management and individual appraisals.

<p><b>Summary of Achievement</b></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council has a holistic approach to performance appraisals that includes a direct assessment of the individual's commitment and performance in relation to equalities along side other competencies such as team working and customer focus. Managers are able to set equalities performance objectives for staff where required. There is a corporate equalities training programme that can support staff where development is required.</p> <p>The Council's policy requires all staff to have a full annual appraisal and a six monthly review. Completed appraisals are collected by the Learning and Development Manager for reviews to quality assure the process. The Learning and Development Manager is also a member of the Corporate Equalities Steering Group which ensures equalities issues are reflected in all staff development activities.</p> <p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual staff appraisal</li> <li>• Six monthly review</li> <li>• Quality Assurance of appraisal process</li> <li>• Training offered to managers to ensure effective appraisals are undertaken.</li> </ul>
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## Modern and Diverse Workforce

### 2. 32 - Staff are engaged positively in service transformation and in developing new roles and ways of working.

#### Summary of Achievement

Cherwell District Council's People and Improvement Service use a range of techniques to ensure that staff are involved in service transformation and developing new ways of working.

In addition the Council's service and financial planning process requires service heads to undertake staff engagement as part of the development of annual service plans.

#### Key Activities:

- **Staff consultation group** - Involved in new and amended policy development e.g. Job Evaluation process.
- **Cascade** – An internal fortnightly news and update presentation which is sent to all employees.
- **Service Planning Team Days** – Standard procedure for Team members to be involved in developing the yearly service plans alongside their managers
- **Staff Liaison Officer** - This staff supportive role during times of change such as restructures and job evaluation.
- **Anonymous feedback form**
- **Various specific staff consultations** e.g. including travel, improving communications, budgets etc.

## Modern and Diverse Workforce

### Areas for Improvement:

#### Areas For Improvement

- Area of improvement would be to align our staff force to the Cherwell community
- 2011 figures to be updated on Cherwell District Council website.

## Modern and Diverse Workforce

### Key Sources of Evidence

<b>HR Policies</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>HR Equality Impact Assessments</b>	All available via the People and Development Team, Equality Officer, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Performance Management Framework - Employment Data Reports</b>	All available via the People and Development Team,
<b>Staff Survey Results 2008 and 2010</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Staff Survey Team and Corporate Action Plans 2008/2010</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Corporate Equality Action Plan</b>	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
<b>Corporate Improvement Plan</b>	Equalities and cohesion have specific improvement projects for 2010/11. These are monitored through the performance management framework.
<b>Job Evaluation Procedure and Policy</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Fair &amp; Aware 'Moving Forward Training Schedule</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Learning and Development Training Schedule</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Member Training Schedule</b>	All available via the Democratic and Scrutiny team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Appraisal Policy and Selection on completed Appraisals</b>	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
<b>Service and Financial Planning Guidance</b>	Sets out how staff should be involved in service planning

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2011/12 Draft Work Programme

13 September 2011

### Report of Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12.

This report is public

#### Recommendations

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The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note any items of interest in the current version of the Forward Plan (September 2011 - December 2011) and consider whether to include them on the work programme for 2011/12.
- (2) Note the current Overview and Scrutiny element of the work programme for 2011/12 as set out at Appendix 1.
- (3) Determine the agenda items for the 18 October 2011 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### Details

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##### **1 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12**

- 1.1 Appendix 1 sets out the existing work programme for both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board, as agreed at the committee meetings in July 2011.
- 1.2 The Committee will wish to note any items of interest in the current version of the Forward Plan (September 2011 - December 2011) and consider whether to include them on the work programme for 2011/12.

- 1.3 The latest version of the Forward Plan can be found at <http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=135&RP=115>

## **2 Potential Work Programme Items 2011/12**

### **Registered Social Landlords Relationship Policy**

- 2.1 At the July meeting the Committee agreed that Councillors Bonner, Emptage and Mrs R Stratford would work with officers outside the formal meeting programme to develop a briefing pack on the current procedures and policies and to develop the plans for the structure of the review of the Council's relationships with Registered Social Landlords. It is suggested that the Committee take an initial discussion on this topic at their October meeting.

### **Empty Homes Policy**

- 2.2 At the July meeting the Committee noted that the production of the Empty Homes Policy document has been delayed mainly because of external events (changes to national benefit payments and the economic recession) which required a re-prioritisation of resources within the housing team. The Committee requested that, as part of their policy development brief, they be given the opportunity to review the document prior to its submission to the Executive. It is proposed that the Committee take a discussion on this topic at the November meeting which will then inform the drafting of the policy discussion.

### **Shared ICT Services**

- 2.3 The Strategic Director, Environment and Community is aware of the Committee's request to consider any reports on this topic prior to submission to the Executive. He has advised that it will be some months before this report on the business case will be available; he has indicated a provisional earliest date of November 2011. The item has been added to the work programme for the late autumn and will be kept under review.

## **3 Agenda for 18 October 2011**

- 3.1 This is the draft agenda for the meeting in October:
- Registered Social Landlords
  - Work Programme 2011-12 (regular agenda item presented by the Scrutiny Officer).

## 4 Future Meetings Schedule

4.1 The future meeting dates for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board are listed below.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	18 October 2011 15 November 2011 06 December 2011
<b>Resources &amp; Performance Scrutiny Board</b>	11 October 2011 22 November 2011

### Implications

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**Financial:** There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.

Comments checked by Sarah Best, Senior Accountancy Assistant 01295 221736

**Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.

Comments checked by Paul Manning, Solicitor, 01295 221691

**Risk Management:** If the work programme contains too many items there is a risk that scrutiny agendas become overloaded. This undermines effective scrutiny because Members are unable to concentrate on the key issues and officer resources are over-stretched. It may be necessary to hold further meetings during the year if the risk of not achieving the work programme becomes apparent. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific risk issues.

Comments checked by James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager, 01295 221587

### Wards Affected

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Each scrutiny review will identify the wards affected

### Corporate Plan Themes

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Each scrutiny review will identify the relevant corporate plan themes

## Document Information

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<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Work Programme 2011/12
<b>Background Papers</b>	
None	
<b>Report Author</b>	Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
<b>Contact Information</b>	01295 221583 Catherine.phythian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

## Overview &amp; Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12

Title	Sub-committee	Comments	Meeting			
			Sept	Oct	Nov	Later
<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>						
<b>Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny</b>						
<b>Scrutiny – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings</b>						
Equalities policy	<b>OSC</b>	Chairman & Cllr L Stratford to progress with officers. Agenda item for 13 September meeting.	✓			✓
Registered Social Landlords Relationship Policy	<b>OSC</b>	Cllrs Bonner, Emptage and R Stratford to progress with officers. Possible agenda item for 18 October or 15 November 2011		✓?		✓?
Empty Homes Policy	<b>OSC</b>	For review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to submission to Executive. Agenda item for 15 November.			✓	
Options for future provision of ICT - South Northamptonshire Council & Cherwell District Council	<b>OSC</b>	For review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to final decision by Executive			✓?	✓?
<b>Task &amp; Finish Groups – agreed topics for review outside committee meetings</b>						
None						
<b>Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations</b>						
Youth Services	<b>OSC</b>	Monitor developments in OCC and CDC Youth Services.				✓

OSC: Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
T&FG: Task & Finish Group

R&PSB: Resources & Performance Board

FSWG: Finance Scrutiny Working Group  
PSWG: Performance Scrutiny Working Group

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12

Title	Sub-committee	Comments	Meeting			
			Sept	Oct	Nov	Later
<b>RESOURCES &amp; PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY BOARD</b>						
<b>Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny</b>						
Budget Scrutiny 2012/13		Agenda item for September meeting to agree an approach and timescales.	✓			
Partnerships: Bicester Vision		Agenda item for September meeting. Chairman to submit a scoping document for consideration.	✓			
<b>Scrutiny – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings</b>						
The cost and use of external consultants by Cherwell District Council	R&PSB	Agenda item for September. To receive additional information on the complete process of procuring consultants giving examples from each directorate.	✓			
Contracts review – Landscape Maintenance	R&PSB	2 Members nominated to work with officers regarding the Landscape Maintenance contract. Update to be provided on the contract review process and performance in light of the reduction in service.	→	→	→	✓
Concessions Policy	R&PSB	Cllrs Cullip and Tompson to work with officers to develop the policy which will feed into the 2012/13 budget.	→	→	→	✓
Planning Applications Charges	R&PSB	To consider changes to charges for planning applications in line with government guidance and CDC policy – timescale dependent on Government issuing guidance			✓?	✓?
<b>Task &amp; Finish Groups – agreed topics for review outside committee meetings</b>						

OSC: Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
T&FG: Task & Finish Group

R&PSB: Resources & Performance Board

FSWG: Finance Scrutiny Working Group  
PSWG: Performance Scrutiny Working Group

## Overview &amp; Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12

Title	Sub-committee	Comments	Meeting			
			Sept	Oct	Nov	Later
<b>RESOURCES &amp; PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY BOARD</b>						
None						
<b>Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations</b>						
Partnerships: ORCC	R&PSB	Progress against recommendations accepted by Executive in April 2010 reviewed in September 2010 and June 2011. Retain on work programme in light of budget position, to review again				✓
Partnerships: Cherwell Safer Communities	R&PSB	To receive an update on the partnership and to consider the impact of funding cuts and how the CSCP is preparing for these cuts from the Local Police Area Commander	✓?	✓?		
Partnership Scrutiny: Oxfordshire Waste Partnership	R&PSB	Monitor OWP review of Joint Municipal Waste Strategy and financial arrangements				✓
Disabled Facilities Grants	R&PSB	Progress against implementation of policy and any wider implications in light of budget position		✓		
The cost and length of planning appeals	PSWG	The PSWG considered the draft development control VfM report at the July meeting and agreed to monitor performance.	✓			
The cost and use of external consultants by Cherwell District Council	FSWG	Monitor consultancy costs through the information provided to the Finance Scrutiny Working Group				✓
Crime & Anti-social behaviour	R&PSB	Referral from OSC for R&PSB to look at impact of budget reductions on work area				✓

OSC: Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
T&FG: Task & Finish Group

R&PSB: Resources & Performance Board

FSWG: Finance Scrutiny Working Group  
PSWG: Performance Scrutiny Working Group

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