

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: Tuesday 22 July 2014
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

Councillor Ann Bonner (Chairman)	Councillor David Hughes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Claire Bell	Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Diana Edwards	Councillor Jon O'Neill
Councillor Lynn Pratt	Councillor Neil Prestidge
Councillor Dan Sames	Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Bryn Williams	Councillor Sean Woodcock

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 - 6)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2014.

5. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

6. **Customer Insights** (Pages 7 - 20)

Report of Head of Transformation.

Purpose of report

The report provides an annual update on customer feedback, including customer complaints.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the position and information provided regarding customer complaints.
- 1.2 To review the Customer Insight Report and identify any areas where further information is required and to request any improvements for future versions of the document.

7. **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme** (Pages 21 - 36)

Report of Head of Law and Governance

Purpose of Report

This report presents the Overview and Scrutiny work programme 2014/15 for consideration.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.
- 1.2 To note any items of interest in the Executive Work Programme and consider whether to include them on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work programme 2014/15.
- 1.3 To consider if there are any other items Members would like to include on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

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@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk or 01327 322365 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

Evacuation Procedure

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

Access to Meetings

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

Mobile Phones

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

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections
dave.parry@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk, 01327 322365

Sue Smith
Chief Executive

Published on Monday 14 July 2014

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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 17 June 2014 at 6.30 pm

- Present: Councillor Ann Bonner (Chairman)
Councillor David Hughes (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Claire Bell
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Bryn Williams
- Substitute Members: Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Sean Woodcock)
- Also Present: Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and IT
Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
- Apologies for absence: Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Diana Edwards
Councillor Jon O'Neill
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Neil Prestidge
Councillor Sean Woodcock
- Officers: Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections
Louise Tustian, Senior Performance & Improvement Officer
Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

5 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 February and 16 June, 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 **Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed Members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and particularly those serving on the Committee for the first time.

The Chairman advised Members of the key functions of the Committee: Policy development and review, External Scrutiny, Performance Management and Review and Holding the Executive to account.

All Committee Members could suggest topics for review, and that the key consideration for undertaking any review was always on what outcomes could be achieved for the benefit of Cherwell residents. It was important that potential reviews were scoped to ensure that the remit and outcomes of the review were clearly identified. She was confident the Committee would enjoy another busy, interesting and successful year.

7 **Annual Performance Report 2013/2014**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and IT (formerly Lead Member for Performance and Customers), and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer to the meeting

The Lead Member for Lead Member for Joint Working and IT and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer presented the report of the Head of Transformation which detailed the Annual Performance Report for 2013 – 2014, as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

The Committee welcomed the report, noting the positive overall performance of the Council in meeting challenging performance targets. Particular consideration was given to a number of service areas:

Planning Appeals (CBP1 3.5c) – Although showing as below target, the Committee acknowledged the volatility of this area and the particular reasons the target being missed.

Delivering 500 new homes (CBP1 2.1) – Although still below target, the Committee welcomed the improvement and direction of travel, and it was acknowledged that, whilst the Council might grant sufficient planning consents to achieve the target, problems occurred when developers did not subsequently commence construction. The Committee was particularly pleased to note the Council had exceeded its target with respect to the percentage of houses developed on previously developed (brown field) land (CBP1 3.5f).

Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill (CBP2 1.2) and **Number of Flytips** (CBP2 2.3) – Acknowledging the negative impact of a change in the Regulations regarding street sweepings, the Committee nevertheless identified recycling as an area that might be the subject of a scrutiny review. Regarding flytipping, the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer advised that further information was being sought with a view to identifying trends, and additional commentary would be included in future reports. Noting

this, the Committee emphasised the need to ensure prosecutions received media attention.

Car Parking Revenue (CBP4 3.3i) – The Committee noted the reduction in income and that the budget had not been adjusted to take into account the impact of free parking with the new Sainsbury's store in Bicester. The Bicester tariffs had also remained at the reduced rate, originally implemented for the duration of the towns' redevelopment. The Committee suggested that where future developments included the provision of free parking facilities, the potential impact on income to the Council should be identified earlier and budgets adjusted accordingly.

The Leader of the Council reminded the Committee that Performance Management had only been introduced to the Council relatively recently, but had already reached the point where improvements and efficiencies were generating further performance improvements. There was, however, always room for further improvement, and the Councils approach meant that even areas currently rated as green were scrutinised for improvements.

Noting that Councillor Turner was attending his last meeting in his former Lead Member for Performance and Customers role (Councillor Mallon henceforth taking the role), the Chairman thanked him for always attending meetings of the Committee when discussing performance reports, and giving valuable background information.

Resolved

- (1) That it be noted that, despite tough performance targets, a challenging economic environment, and on-going policy and organisational change, Cherwell District Council has met or made satisfactory progress on 95% of all the performance targets outlined in its performance management framework.
- (2) That Recycling be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme as a potential item for a future scrutiny review.

8 Equalities Self-Assessment and Action Plan for 2013/14

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer to the meeting.

The Leader of the Council and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer presented the report of Head of Transformation reviewing the completion of the annual Self-Assessment undertaken by the Council against the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.

Welcoming the report, the Committee identified youth engagement as an area for potential scrutiny review, whilst recognising the work already being done through the 'Connecting Communities' events.

Resolved

- (1) That the evidence and information submitted in the Council's Self-Assessment against the 'Achieving Standard' under the Equality Framework for Local Government be noted.
- (2) That the equalities action plan for 2014/15 be agreed, and the areas of good practice upon which it builds and the areas for development that it addresses be noted.

9 **Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance which presented the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14.

Noting the report, it was suggested that former members of the Committee be asked for their comments and the report reformatted to list the activities under the corporate priority headings.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the inclusion of a schedule listing the activities against the corporate priorities, the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14 be noted.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to complete the foreword and to make any minor amendments to the annual report before submission to Council.

10 **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance, which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15.

Executive Work Programme

The Committee agreed that there were no additional items in the Executive Work Programme for July to October, 2014 that they wished to include on their Work Programme in 2014/15.

Committee Work Programme

The Committee gave consideration to its current Work Programme, and agreed the following:

New items for inclusion: Recycling and Youth Engagement. Councillors Hughes and Bell to complete a scoping document with respect to recycling, and Councillors Sames and Williams to complete a scoping document with respect to Youth Engagement.

Items for removal: Electronic Document and Records Management project; Wind Turbines and their locations (to be included in Review of Local Plan

Process item); CDC Employment Initiatives; Contract Scrutiny: Landscape Maintenance Contract; Application of Fracturing ('Fracking') mining technique (to be included in Review of Local Plan process item); Commission and introduce a new Asset Management Strategy; Five Year Business Strategy item – Develop the role of the Cherwell Investment Partnership to provide a hub for inward investment.

Amendments to current items: Commissioning of Services to Banbury CAB; including Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride – reschedule to September meeting;

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the amendments detailed in resolutions (2) and (4), the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 be noted.
- (2) That recycling and youth engagement be added to the Work Programme as potential scrutiny review topics.
- (3) That Councillors Hughes and Bell be nominated to work with Democratic and Elections Officers to complete a scoping document for the potential scrutiny review of recycling for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.
- (4) That Councillors Sames and Williams be nominated to work with Democratic and Elections Officers to complete a scoping document for the potential scrutiny review of youth engagement for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.
- (5) That the following items be removed from the Work Programme: Electronic Document and Records Management project; Wind Turbines and their locations (to be included in Review of Local Plan Process item); CDC Employment Initiatives; Contract Scrutiny: Landscape Maintenance Contract; Application of Fracturing ('Fracking') mining technique (to be included in Review of Local Plan process item); Commission and introduce a new Asset Management Strategy; Five Year Business Strategy item – Develop the role of the Cherwell Investment Partnership to provide a hub for inward investment.
- (6) That no items in the current version of the Executive Work Programme (July to October 2014) be included on the Work Programme for 2014/15.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Customer Insight Report

Report of Head of Transformation

This report is public

Purpose of report

To provide an annual update on customer feedback, including customer complaints.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the position and information provided regarding customer complaints.
- 1.2 To review the Customer Insight Report and identify any areas where further information is required and to request any improvements for future versions of the document.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Customer Insight Report is a new approach to ensuring that complaints and customer feedback is reported, reviewed and that any issues are addressed.
- 2.2 The Customer Insight Report brings together various elements of customer feedback (including complaints) into a single report with the aim of improving access to this information, which was previously held in a number of service areas, and highlighting any themes or issues of concern.
- 2.3 This second quarter Customer Insight Report was the first report since the Council adopted a new two stage complaints process and centralised complaints management. Quarter 4 will be the first received figures since Corporate Complaints Management was centralised within the Performance & Insight Report.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 The Customer Insight Report for quarter 4 is included as Appendix 1 which contains detailed information on the following areas:-

- Latest News / Consultation Results;
- GovMetric Customer Feedback;
- Customer Complaints;
- Media Enquiries and Social Media;
- Website Interaction;

3.2 Overall satisfaction with Council services measured through the GovMetric system is from 848 responses is at 55%, with 34% saying they received a poor service.

3.3 Responsibility for complaints management was centralised as of 1st January 2014 within the Performance and Insight Team. This year the Council has received 227 complaints within quarter 4 receiving a total of 54.

39% of the complaints received during quarter 4 were recorded as valid. 54% of complaints were against services not being delivered or delivered at a lower standard, 26% of these complaints were valid.

3.4 Local Government Ombudsman complaints have continued to be managed by the Democratic Services team. 13 ombudsman complaints were received for year.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The Customer Insight Report brings together various elements of customer feedback (including complaints) into a single report with the aim of improving access to this information, which was previously held in a number of service areas, and highlighting any themes or issues of concern.

5.0 Consultation

No consultation has taken place on the Customer Insight Report itself; however the report provides a summary of consultations undertaken by the Council during the previous quarter.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

- N/A - report is a for review/information item.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Comments checked by: Tim Madden, Interim Head of Finance and Procurement,
Tel: 0300 003 0106, E-mail: tim.madden@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Comments checked by: Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance,
Tel: 0300 0030 107, Email: kevin.lane@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

None

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Link to Business Plan Priority: An accessible, value for money Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	CDC Customer Insight Report – Quarter Four
Background Papers	
• None	
Report Author	Caroline French, Corporate Policy Officer Shirley Vaughan, Performance Officer
Contact Information	Tel: 01295 221586 Email: caroline.french@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

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Cherwell District Council

**Customer Insight
Report**

1st January – 31st March 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 What is customer insight?

Customer insight is the broad term used to describe the process of using data and information about our residents to help improve our understanding of their needs, expectations, behaviours and experiences. This information can then be used to target services and communications around the needs of different customer groups.

1.2. What information is available about our residents?

Information about our customers (our residents) is available from a variety of sources. The results of the 2011 Census provides a vast amount of demographic data on those living within the district. This information is summarised in a number of profiles currently available on the Cherwell website and detailed ward profiles are currently in development.

However, information about our customers is also collected through our interactions with residents. This can be through formal consultations, focus groups, customer feedback, customer complaints, and our website and through social media. Elected Members also provide officers with an important source of customer insight, often being the first to hear of issues impacting local areas.

1.2. What is the purpose of this report?

The purpose of this report is to pull together various customer insight sources available to the Council on a quarterly basis and to attempt to highlight trends and areas of importance to our customers.

2. Latest News / Consultation Results

During this period, the Council carried out the Budget consultation with Cherwell residents with no comments or responses.

There was also a joint CDC/SNC staff consultation on travel which resulted in 301 responses.

All consultations were available on our Online Consultation Portal

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

For more information on consultations or community engagement events please contact Michal Gogut, Consultation and Engagement Officer on 01295 221575 or




michal.gogut@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk.

3. GovMetric Report

The Council uses GovMetric as a mechanism for capturing customer feedback about its services. GovMetric asks customers to rate their experience as either 'Good', 'Average' or 'Poor' based on a system of smiley faces. Feedback can be provided by telephone and via the website.






Overall satisfaction




			
Number Of Respondents	469	87	292
Percentage Of Respondents	55%	10%	34%
Trend (compared to Q1)	↓ 3%	↓ 2%	↑ 5%

There were 848 responses in the period 1 January – 31 March 2014 compared to a total of 788 responses during the previous quarter. Overall satisfaction with Council services was down on the previous quarter at 55% compared to 58%, while 34 % of respondents said the service they received was poor.

1.1 Overall satisfaction by channel

<u>Telephone Satisfaction</u>			
Number Of Respondents	185	13	6
Percentage Of Respondents	91%	6%	3%




Telephone satisfaction rates remained good and higher than the previous quarter.

<u>Website Satisfaction</u>			
Number Of Respondents	284	74	286
Percentage Of Respondents	44%	11%	44%

Website satisfaction rates are considerably lower than those for telephone satisfaction; however this is to be expected. Equal split between those who were satisfied and those who were not.

1.2 Service satisfaction

The following tables provide a breakdown of the GovMetric responses by service areas.

Service	Number Of Respondents			
Benefits	17	65%	6%	29%
Council Tax	55	42%	15%	44%
Environmental Services	54	67%	9%	24%
Housing	46	54%	4%	43%
Planning & Building Control	52	29%	15%	56%
Streets & Parking	33	36%	9%	55%
Waste & Recycling	120	58%	7%	36%
Other Services*	24	12%	29%	58%
Uncategorised**	149	43%	9%	48%

* Service areas with fewer than 25 responses are included in 'Other Services' along with responses that cannot be attributed to one specific service area.

Service areas receiving the most number of responses were, Council Tax and Waste and Recycling. Satisfaction

Planning and Building Control and Streets and Parking again received the highest percentage of respondents stating that the service they received was poor.

3. Complaints Report

A new Corporate Management Process for both Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Council was introduced on 1 July 2013. Both councils have now moved to a more effective two phase approach, replacing the old three stage complaints system. From the 1st January 2014 the responsibility of complaints policy, management and reporting transferred into the Performance and Insight Team.

4.1 Total number of complaints

	Quarter 1 (Apr – June)	Quarter 2 (Jul – Sept)	Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)	Quarter 4 (Jan-March)
Stage 1 Complaints	56	66	36	47
Stage 2 Complaints	5	5	5	7

Stage 3 Complaints	2	n/a (new 2 stage process)	n/a (new 2 stage process)	n/a (new 2 stage process)
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A total of 54 complaints were received and recorded during the period 1st January to 31st March 2014. There were 47 'Stage 1' complaints and 7 'Stage 2' complaints.

No of Complaints Received	Acknowledged within 3 working days		Responded to with 10 working days		Unknown (No response date logged)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
54	54	100%	44	81%	1	2%

Of the 54 complaints received, 100% were acknowledged within 3 days. The majority of these complaints were acknowledged on the same day that they were received.

81% of complaints were recorded as being responded to within 10 working days; although against 8 of these 10 the complainant had agreed to investigation response extensions due to site visits.

No of Complaints Received	Valid Complaints		Invalid Complaints		Unknown	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
54	21	39%	32	59%	1	2%

21 out of 54 complaints (39%) were recorded as valid during this period, with well over half (59%) being recorded as invalid.

4.2 Complaints by service area

Complaints are logged in LAGAN in line with the new reporting process. However, there is a need to update the service categories that complaints are recorded against. This issue is being addressed and service categories will be updated to reflect the new service structure.

Service Area	No of Complaints Received	Acknowledged within 3 working days		Responded to within 10 working days		Valid Complaints	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Waste Services	8	8	100%	8	100%	5	62.5%
Council Tax	9	9	100%	9	100%	3	33%
Benefits	6	6	100%	5	83%	1	16%
Planning	10	10	100%	2	20%	2	20%

4.3 Reasons for complaint

The following table provides a breakdown of the reasons for each complaint received.

Reason for complaint	Number of complaints	% of all complaints	% Valid Complaints
Services not being delivered / Delivered at a lower standard	29	54%	26%
Disagreement about a decision	10	19%	4%
Attitude of staff	7	13%	4%
Neglect or delay in responding to customer	3	6%	100%
Failure to follow agreed policy and/or procedure	2	4%	0%
Policy decision	3	6%	0%

The main reason for complaints received during this period was for services not being delivered or delivered at a lower standard.

4.4 Identifying Trends

19% of complaints received in Quarter 4 were in relation to planning although only 2 of those 10 complaints were recorded as valid.

Planning - Reason for complaint	Number of complaints	% of service complaints	% Valid Complaints
Services not being delivered / Delivered at a lower standard	3	30%	33%
Attitude of staff	0	0%	0%
Disagreement about a decision and policy	6	60%	17%
other	1	10%	0%

4.5 Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Complaints

Service Area	Quarter 1 (Apr – June)	Quarter 2 (Jul – Sept)	Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)	Quarter 4 (Jan-March)
Benefits	0	1	0	2
Planning & Building Control	1	1	2	0
Highways & Transport	1	0	-	1

Housing	0	0	1	0
Other	0	2	1	0

Three further ombudsman complaints received in Q4 bringing the total to thirteen received in year.

The outcome of the 10 LGO complaints received so far in 2013/14 is summarised below:

- 2 x *“Not Investigated (LGO Discretion)”*
- 1 x *“No Maladministration (letter only)”*
- 3 x *“Not in jurisdiction & discretion not exercised”*
- 1 x *“Premature”*
- 4 x *still awaiting outcome from LGO*
- 1 x *Investigation complete and satisfied with authority actions*
- 1 x *Discontinued investigation*

4. Media Enquiries

The Communications Team produces a monthly media monitoring report, detailing how the Council has been reported on in the local news, whether the news item was positive or negative and what media enquiries and news releases occurred during the month. This section is a high level summary of those reports for the period 1st January to 31st March 2014..

	Total number of media items	Positive	Neutral	Negative
January	205	37%	61%	2%
February	160	46%	48%	6%
March	192	48%	47%	5%
Total Quarter 4	557	43%	52%	4%

During this period, the Council received 261 enquiries and issued 50 press releases. For further detail on the nature of these enquiries and press releases please contact the Communication Team on 01295 227941 or communications.team@cherwell.gov.uk.

5. Social Media

Social Media is a powerful tool for engaging and communicating with



customers. The Council has a Facebook page and a Twitter account which allows us to communicate directly with any residents who have decided to 'like' or 'follow' us on these social media sites. They also allow residents to communicate directly with the Council. The Communications Team manages the Council's social media presence.

5.1 Twitter

The council currently has 4214 followers on Twitter, an increase of 279 since the Quarter 2 report. The Council has tweeted 1906 times. Follow us on Twitter [@Cherwellcouncil](#)

The Council's Waste and Recycling department also has its own Twitter account with 916 followers and have tweeted 2,010 times. Follow them on Twitter on [@CherwellRecycle](#)

5.2 Facebook

The Council is also on Facebook and currently has 3,324 likes, which is significantly higher than the 1,394 likes reported on in Quarter 2. Take a look and start following us - click on the link to our page:

<https://www.facebook.com/cherwelldistrictcouncil>



6. Website Interaction



The following provides an overview of how customers access the Cherwell website and how they behave on the site.

6.1 Visitor Statistics

	01/01/14 – 31/03/14	Compared to Quarter 3
Number of visitors	181844	+60615
Number of unique visitors	99134	+26685
Number of page views	797035	+ 162293

6.2 How customers access our website (search engine terms)

The following are the top 5 search terms that have been used across all search engines and referred visitors to the website during the period 1st January– 31st March 2014.

Rank	External Search Term	Number of visits
1.	Cherwell District Council	5858
2.	Cherwell District Council planning	636
3.	Cherwell Council	465
4.	Cherwell	300
5.	Cherwell .gov.uk	287

6.3 What customers search for on our website (search function on website)

The following are the top 5 search terms that have been used on the website during the period 1st January– 31st March 2014.

Rank	External Search Term	Number of visits
1.	Apprenticeship	8
2.	Graven Hill	5
3.	Recycling & Waste landing page http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1760	4
4.	Recycling & Waste landing page http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1760	4
5.	Ease End Lane Adderbury	4

6.4 Most popular pages

Rank	External Page	Page Views
1.	Public access search results	49667
2.	Homepage	45392
3.	Public access homepage	38150
4.	View/comment on a planning application	30178
5.	Site search results	23522
6.	Planning landing page http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1717	14205
7.	Contact us	11258
9.	Job vacancies	8613
9.	Public access weekly list page 1	8450
10.	Recycling & Waste landing page http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1760	6557

Planning is still one of the most visited areas of the website

7. Summary

Customer Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with Council services was down on the previous quarter at 55% compared to 58%, while 34 % of respondents said the service they received was poor.

Complaints

21 out of 54 complaints were recorded as valid during this period with a high proportion (43) being responded to within 10 working days.

Website Interactions

'Planning' or information related to planning applications remains the most popular area on the website for visitors.

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

22 July 2014

Work Programme 2014/15

Report of Head of Law and Governance

This report is public

Purpose of report

This report presents the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme 2014/15 for consideration.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.
- 1.2 To note any items of interest in the Executive Work Programme and consider whether to include them on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work programme 2014/15.
- 1.3 To consider if there are any other items Members would like to include on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The work programme report identifies the topics and issues under consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and allows an opportunity for additional subjects to be identified and included on the programme.

3.0 Report Details

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 is attached at appendix 1.

- 3.2 Members are invited to make any suggestions to improve the appearance of the work programme.
- 3.3 Each future agenda item includes an overview of the item and reason for consideration by the Committee.
- 3.4 In determining the work programme for 2014/15, the Committee will wish to take into account the terms of reference as laid out in the Constitution (Appendix 3).

Executive Work Programme

- 3.5 As part of the monthly work programme report, the Committee reviews the Executive Work Programme to consider whether there are any issues which they would wish to look at in more detail in advance of the Executive discussion and decision. To facilitate a thorough consideration of the topic the Committee will need to identify the Executive Work Programme items at an early stage of the decision making process.
- 3.6 The Executive Work Programme is updated and published monthly; an electronic copy is available on the council’s website and all councillors are sent a prompt containing the website link. Members of the Committee are encouraged to review the Executive Work Programme outside the committee meetings and to contact the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Democratic Services Officer if there is a topic that they wish to review.
- 3.7 The Committee will wish to note any items of interest in the current version of the Executive Work Programme and consider whether to include them on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2014/15.
- 3.8 At the time of writing this report, the current version of the Executive Work Programme is August to November 2014 and can be found at: www.cherwell.gov.uk

Updates on Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Items

- 3.9 Update on Empty Homes – Update on progress in bringing empty homes and other empty property back into use - Briefing Note attached (appendix 2).

Future meetings Schedule

- 3.10 The future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are listed below:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2014/15 22 July, 2014, 6.30pm 02 September, 2014, 6.30pm 14 October, 2014, 6.30pm 25 November, 2014, 6.30pm 13 January, 2015, 6.30pm 24 February, 2015, 6.30pm 31 March, 2015, 6.30pm
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4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendations as set out in the report are believed to be in the best interests of the Council.

5.0 Consultation

None

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

Option 1: To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

Option 2: To amend the recommendations.

Option 3: Not to agree the recommendations.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific legal issue.

Comments checked by:

Kelly Wheeler, Service Accountant, 01327 322224,
Kelly.wheeler@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 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:

James Doble, Democratic and Elections Manager,
01295 221587, james.doble@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk Management

- 7.3 If too many items are included on the work programme there is a risk that scrutiny agenda 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 reports of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific risk issues.

Comments checked by:
James Doble, Democratic and Elections Manager,
01295 221587, james.doble@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

Each scrutiny review will identify the wards affected.

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Each Scrutiny Review will identify the relevant Corporate Plan and Policy framework links.

Lead Councillor

None

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15
Appendix 2	Briefing Note – Update on Empty Homes
Appendix 3	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections Officer
Contact Information	Tel: 01327 322365 Email – dave.parry@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme items - 2014/2015

(Updated: July 2014)

Item	Description	Reason for / Date of next Consideration	Contact Officer	Further Action / Note
Customer Insight (Q4 July)	To undertake regular review of customer complaints and feedback, and ensure issues are addressed.	Committee decision arising September, 2013. Next consideration due – July, 2014.	Caroline French, Corporate Policy Officer	Councillor Mallon (Lead Member for Performance and Communications) invited to attend the Committee.
Commissioning of services to Banbury CAB; including Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride (September)	Undertake monitoring of new service arrangements (Volunteering / coordinating role; giving advice; Voluntary Driver scheme) to ascertain value received following addition contribution.	Committee request. Next consideration due – September, 2014.	Chris Stratford, Head of Regeneration & Housing; and Chris Rothwell, Head of Community Services	The Housing Needs Manager, Countryside and Communities Manager, OCC Transport Coordinator and Banbury CAB Chief Executive to be invited to attend a future meeting to advise further on the various elements of the contract.

Key to Reason for Consideration:

Scrutiny review – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings; Policy development – to support the development of Council Policy; Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations; Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny; Information/Standing Item – to update/advise members on issues related to overview and scrutiny or regular committee item

Appendix 1

Item	Description	Reason for / Date of next Consideration	Contact Officer	Further Action / Note
Q1 Performance Monitoring Report (September)	Regular review of Performance	Monitoring by Committee. Next consideration due – September, 2014.	Louise Tustian, Senior Performance and Improvement Officer	Lead Member for Performance and Communications to be invited to attend.
Annual Customer Insight Report (November)	To receive the annual Customer Insight Report, reviewing customer complaints and feedback, and ensuring issues are addressed.	Regular monitoring by the Committee. Next consideration due – November, 2014.	Caroline French, Corporate Policy Officer	Relevant Lead Member for to be invited to attend.
Q2 Performance Monitoring Report (November)	Regular review of Performance	Monitoring by Committee. Next consideration due – November, 2014.	Louise Tustian, Senior Performance and Improvement Officer	Relevant Lead Member for to be invited to attend.
Draft Business Plans / Service Plans (2015/16) (January, 2015)	Review of process and identification of specific Service area to scrutinise.	Committee decision. Next consideration due – January, 2015.	Louise Tustian, Senior Performance and Improvement Officer	Relevant Lead Member for to be invited to attend.

Page No

Key to Reason for Consideration:

Scrutiny review – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings; Policy development – to support the development of Council Policy; Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations; Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny; Information/Standing Item – to update/advise members on issues related to overview and scrutiny or regular committee item

Appendix 1

Item	Description	Reason for / Date of next Consideration	Contact Officer	Further Action / Note
Review of Local Plan process (to include consideration of wind turbines and their locations, and the application of the fracturing ('Fracking') mining technique. (January, 2015)	Upon completion of the Local Plan examination, to review the process, and consider lessons learnt for future, similar projects.	Request from Cllr Woodcock with support of Executive. Committee decision to incorporate consideration of wind turbine and fracturing issues – June, 2014. Date of next consideration – January, 2015.	Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy.	The Local Plan inquiry has been suspended for 6 months pending a request for further information. This review should not take place until after the examination is complete (December, 2014).
Q3 Performance Monitoring Report (February, 2015)	Regular review of Performance	Monitoring by Committee. Next consideration due – February, 2015.	Louise Tustian, Senior Performance and Improvement Officer	Relevant Lead Member for to be invited to attend.
Air Quality (TBC)	To review monitoring across the District, and review progress of Hennef Way Action Plan objectives.	Report to future meeting advising on how objectives being met and measures Council would consider appropriate if current monitoring shows action needed - following consideration by O&S Committee - October, 2012, May, 2013 and Jan 2014. Next consideration to take place following consideration	Sean Gregory Environmental Protection Officer	Relevant Lead Member to be invited to attend. Subject raised with Oxfordshire County Council's Cherwell Localities Meeting as possible item for consideration.

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Key to Reason for Consideration:

Scrutiny review – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings; Policy development – to support the development of Council Policy; Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations; Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny; Information/Standing Item – to update/advise members on issues related to overview and scrutiny or regular committee item

Appendix 1

Item	Description	Reason for / Date of next Consideration	Contact Officer	Further Action / Note
		by Oxfordshire County Council's Cherwell Localities Meeting.		
Management of the self-build element of the Graven Hill Development (TBC)		Committee request arising February, 2014. Next consideration – TBC.	Karen Curtin (Director (Bicester)) and Helen Town (Delivery Manager)	Committee Members to be identified to complete scoping document.
Recycling (TBC)	To consider a scoping document regarding a potential review of the Councils recycling activities	Committee request arising June, 2014. Next consideration – TBC.	TBC	Cllrs Bell and Hughes to prepare scoping document for consideration by the Committee.
Youth Engagement (TBC)	To consider a scoping document regarding a potential review of the Councils Youth Engagement activities.	Committee request arising June, 2014. Next consideration – TBC.	TBC	Cllrs Sames and Williams to prepare scoping document for consideration by the Committee.
Items retained on Work Programme for update via Briefing Notes				
Update on Empty Homes (July)	Update on progress in bringing empty homes and other empty property back into use	Originally considered by former Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March, 2013. Update via Briefing Note – July 2014	Chris Stratford (Head of Regeneration and Housing)	Regular update as requested by Committee members – for information only.

Key to Reason for Consideration:

Scrutiny review – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings; Policy development – to support the development of Council Policy; Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations; Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny; Information/Standing Item – to update/advise members on issues related to overview and scrutiny or regular committee item

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing Note



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Subject: Re-use of empty properties

Head of Service / Chris Stratford
Officer Responsible / Tim Mills

<p>Background and Reason for Briefing Note</p>	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously considered reports on empty homes in January 2012 and March 2013, and has confirmed its desire to see empty homes brought back into use and to monitor progress made. The Committee has requested this briefing note to provide it with an update.</p>
<p>Head of Service's update</p>	<p>2012 In 2012 the Committee endorsed an approach based on the principles that the council wished to see empty homes re-used, would facilitate and encourage that where possible but was prepared to use its enforcement powers where appropriate. Both the Delivery Team (DT) and the Private Sector Housing Team (PSHT) are involved in this work and have worked jointly on a number of schemes, although the PSHT primarily focuses on individual empties whilst the DT is primarily concerned with strategic sites and opportunities to deliver affordable housing (as well as possibilities involving non-residential buildings)¹.</p> <p>2013-14 This was a successful year with completion of a number of schemes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A renovation and leasing scheme that brought 4 self-contained flats in Broughton Road, Banbury, back into use as affordable housing. • The leasing, renovation and management of 5 bedsits in a house in Dashwood Road, Banbury. • The purchase and renovation of a long-term empty, former HMO, which has been brought back into use as 5 bedsits. • 2 further long-term empty homes returned to use as a result of engagement with their owners. <p>Agreement was also gained towards the end of 2013 to use New Homes Bonus to fund a part-time post (on a 12-month contract) to help with identification and follow-up visits to empty homes. Unfortunately we were unable to recruit a suitable person and, given the progress made with visiting undertaken by the Customer Services Team on behalf of the Service Assurance Team (to check Council Tax records). We are not proposing to seek to recruit again at this stage.</p>

¹ A list of schemes was included as an appendix to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report of March 2013.

2014-15

For 2014-15 the Housing Service Plan includes a target that 16 homes should be returned to use. Good progress is being made including:

- A further 4 self-contained flats in Broughton Road, Banbury, brought back into use as affordable housing through the renovation and leasing scheme (see above).
- 5 self-contained flats in Golden Villa, Banbury, renovated and restored to use (with nomination-rights for 4 years each) by means of our Landlords Home Improvement Grant (LHIG).
- 2 further flats with nomination-rights expected to be completed and re-occupied in a matter of weeks, again by means of LHIG. (These are ‘flats above shops’ in Church Lane, Banbury)
- Contractors appointed for complex redevelopment schemes at 1 West Street, Juniper Court and 2 Broughton Road, Banbury.

An enforcement budget of £100k was secured for 2014-15 through the Council’s Capital Appraisal Bid process. This is in effect a reserve budget that will be used to pay both for work-in-default² and for bringing empty properties back into use through the Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMOs) process³.

Officers have been working on what will be the Council’s first Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) and expect to submit the application for approval to the Residential Property Tribunal shortly. (The house in question is a long-term empty property that will require significant repair, but which can provide a good family home.) A successful application will provide opportunity to promote and publicise our empty-homes work and our preparedness to use enforcement to deal with problematic long-term empty homes, and should add positive emphasis to our conversations with their owners.

In addition we are exploring a newly identified power to enforce the sale of empty properties where the Council has incurred costs in resolving issues such as rubbish accumulation and rodent infestation. This may provide a swifter, more certain and less costly means of getting some long-term empty homes onto the market than does compulsory purchase.

Future work

Members have been asked to consider the use of Empty Homes Premium⁴ when the annual review of Council Tax discounts and exemptions is undertaken, since use of this power has the potential to provide a further means of encouraging the re-use of certain properties that have been empty for in excess of 2 years.

Summary

The renewed focus on empty properties has already had some positive results

² Work-in-default is the term given to work undertaken by the Council if a notice recipient fails to carry out required actions. The costs incurred are recoverable with interest and (in most cases) can be secured by means of a charge made against the property in question. The work does however have to be paid for initially, hence the need for a budget.

³ EDMOs allow the Council to take effective control of certain long-term empty property, to undertake remedial work and to arrange for them to be let and managed. The rental income is used to reimburse the costs incurred by the Council.

⁴ Empty Homes Premium is a discretionary power to charge a premium of up to an additional 50% on the Council Tax payable for certain long-term empty properties.

	<p>and officers are continuing to seek to take advantage of development opportunities and also to use enforcement powers (some for the first time). The results of these initiatives is expected to bear further fruit in due course. Members should have confidence that the Council's commitment to the use of the Principles approved in January 2012, and the work which is being undertaken to encourage, facilitate and, where necessary, to enforce re-use, will continue to reduce the number of long-term empty properties in the district.</p>
<p>Completed by: Tim Mills</p> <p>Presented to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>Date: 10 July 2014</p> <p>Date: 22 July 2014</p>

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will:

- Innovate and challenge the way the Council operates
- Exercise the call in powers contained in the Constitution
- Add value to the Council through in-depth studies
- Add value to the Council through selective studies of external crosscutting issues
- Promote more informal smaller group working.
- Open up the local democratic process to greater public involvement.
- Add value to the Council through pre-decision scrutiny of Key Decisions through using the 28 day notice
- Be involved in performance management on a selective and strategic basis.
- Develop effective and positive channels of communication between itself and the Executive.
- Adopt a Select Committee style and approach wherever possible.
- Require effective and reliable officer support
- Be involved in the development of Policy
- Scrutinise areas of interest or concern and make recommendations to Executive and where appropriate full Council following the completion of such scrutiny

Terms of Reference

The Committee will be appointed to discharge the functions conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 or Regulations under Section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000

Scrutiny Committee

Co-ordinating and managing the scrutiny Work Programme and ensuring that there is effective and timely scrutiny of Council Policy and authority wide performance as well as holding the Executive to account.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have a membership of 12 Councillors who are not members of the Executive, appointed on a Proportional Representation basis by Council.

Functions

Within its scope and terms of reference, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will:

- (a) review and monitor the performance of the Council's services;
- (b) review and/or scrutinise policies, proposals, decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- (c) make reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions;
- (d) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
- (e) exercise the right to Call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made, but not yet implemented by the Executive.

- (f) consider matters arising from a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) under Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Regulations thereunder; and
- (g) undertake the functions of the Council's crime and disorder committee for the purposes of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, including CCfA relating to crime and disorder matters.

Specific Functions

- (a) **Scrutiny** - Within its scope and terms of reference Scrutiny may:
- (i) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Executive and/or Committees and the appropriate Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
 - (ii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service area;
 - (iii) question Members of the Executive and/or Committees and appropriate Officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
 - (iv) make recommendations to the Executive and/or appropriate Committees and/or Council and/or any external bodies arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
 - (v) review and scrutinise the performance of major partnerships and other public bodies in the area and invite written reports and/or request them to address the Committee and local people about their activities and performance;
 - (vi) require Members of the Executive, the Chief Executive, Directors and Service Heads to attend to answer questions and give evidence on receipt of at least 5 days' written notice.
 - (vii) question and gather evidence from any person, not a Member or an Officer of the Council, with their consent;
- (b) **Advisory and Review** – Within its scope and terms of reference the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may:
- (i) assist the Council and the Executive in the development of its Policy Framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues, excluding those policy areas which fall under the remit of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Committee;
 - (ii) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options
 - (iii) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options,
 - (iv) make recommendations to Executive and/or appropriate Committees and/or Council and/or any external bodies arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.
 - (v) review and scrutinise the performance of major partnerships and other public bodies in the area and invite written reports and/or request them to address Councillors and local people about their activities and performance.
- (c) **Annual Report** – The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will report annually to Council on function on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.
- (d) **Work Programme** – The Overview Scrutiny Committee will exercise overall responsibility for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and for ensuring that

this is sustainable with regard to the support and resources that are available to it and that is considered in conjunction with other committees of the Council and their respective work programmes in order to minimise duplication of effort.

Proceedings of Overview and Scrutiny

The Overview Scrutiny Committee will conduct their proceedings in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in this Constitution.

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