

Public Document Pack

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 1 December 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Norman Bolster, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy

Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Banbury Brighter Futures

Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning

Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Clean and Green

Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Developments,

Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Housing

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and IT

Also Present: Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Chairman, Budget Planning Committee

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Karen Curtin, Commercial Director (Bicester)
Ian Davies, Director of Community and Environment
Martin Henry, Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy
Jo Pitman, Head of Transformation
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

Declarations of Interest

Members and officers declared interests in the following agenda items:

16. Graven Hill Update.

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Declaration, as he had put his name forward expressing an interest in a plot of the site but had heard nothing yet.

Karen Curtin, Declaration, as a Director of Graven Hill Village Holdings Limited and Graven Hill Village Development Company Limited.

Sue Smith, Declaration, as a Director of Graven Hill Village Holdings Limited.

79 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

80 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

81 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcement:

1. Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public were permitted to film, broadcast and report on the meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being affected.

83 **Workplace Travel Plan 2015**

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report which updated the Executive on progress in completing the joint Workplace Travel Plan 2015 and to approve and formally adopt the final draft Travel Plan.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Planning reported that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered and endorsed the report at their 25 November 2014 meeting. The Committee had stressed the importance of encouraging conference and video calls to reduce travel.

Resolved

- (1) That the work of officers in their ongoing efforts to introduce a new joint Workplace Travel Plan for Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council by January 2015 be supported.
- (2) That, as recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the final draft Travel Plan (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for adoption.

Reasons

The existing Workplace Travel Plans of the two authorities have reached the end of their intended plan period (published by SNC in 2010, CDC in 2011). The new Plan will supersede and replace both documents.

Alternative options

The alternative to not preparing a new Workplace Travel Plan is to leave SNC and CDC without a current Travel Plan.

84

Bicester Sports Village Update

The Director of Community and Environment submitted a report which updated the Executive with the latest project position in delivering the pavilion, car park, access requirements, floodlighting and 3G synthetic sports pitch.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress in delivering phase 2 of the Bicester Sports Village project be noted.

Reasons

The Bicester Sports Village project is now being progressed in the agreed form albeit slightly later than expected. The planning application will now be presented in time for determination post May elections which moves the anticipated project completion date to early 2016.

Alternative Options

The project has been approved and is progressing in accordance with these approvals. There are no other options being considered at this time other than proposals to remain within the approved funding envelope.

85

Performance Report 2014-15 Quarter 2

The Head of Transformation submitted a report which presented the Council's performance for the period 01 July 2014 – 30 September 2014 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Banbury Developments, Performance and Communications reported that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting of 25 November 2014 at which it had referred to the "red" rating for the number of fly tip enforcement cases be noted.

The Lead Member for Clean and Green explained that the number of fly tipping incidents had decreased and that there were around five prosecutions of big cases every year.

Resolved

- (1) That the following many achievements be noted:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Promote inward investment and support appropriate economic growth within the district is reporting as Green. New marketing material for Local Plan sites is due to be prepared. Existing marketing material maintained on Cherwell Investment Partnership's (CHIP) website - www.cherwell-m40.co.uk. News stories added and e-newsletters sent to all businesses on the database every month. Development of a self-search database of available commercial property also available through website. Distribution of leaflets to promote the Velocity business grants to Cherwell businesses together with an information day for businesses held at Bodicote in June.
- Develop a whole Council 'Better Business' approach to support new and existing businesses is reporting as Green. Progress continues to embed the Regulatory code. Briefing sessions for regulatory staff took place in November. The draft Enforcement Policy has been approved by Executive and is out for consultation. Work continues with the Economic Development Team to improve support to businesses. A successful first workshop resulted in a number of innovative ideas including a checklist for pop-up shops to enable them to "get it right" first time. Economic Development and Environmental Health officers are now meeting through SEMLEP to develop this initiative further. This will include exploring the Better Business for All Initiative across the SEMLEP region and implementation in Cherwell.

Safe, Green and Clean

- Customer satisfaction with Household Recycling services is reporting as Green; this has increased by 5% to a satisfaction rate of 88%. Food and garden waste collection and dry recycling have both increased as reported through the annual satisfaction survey. Our Waste Collection service has recorded customer satisfaction at 82% which is the highest level achieved to date.
- Number of All Domestic Burglary incidents reported is reporting as Green*. Burglary has continued to fall over the year as against last year. Burglary initiatives and communication packages have lifted community awareness. However the most likely positive effect has been the lack of cross border offending. YTD: 86 incidents reported against target of 105 - reduction on same period 13/14 of 20.4%.

Thriving Communities

- Processing of major applications within 13 weeks is reporting as Green*. A figure of 95% has been achieved this quarter. This figure represents sustained and significant progress, compared with historic performance.
- Processing of minor applications within 8 weeks is reporting as Amber, an improvement from last quarter. Performance this quarter is below target but this does not represent a long term trend and is

expected to recover by the end of quarter three. Year to date performance is 73.88%. The figure for October was 75%.

Sound Budgets and Customer Focussed Council

- Increase our use of social media to communicate with residents and local businesses is reporting as Green. Facebook and Twitter are now an integral part of the communications function. A wide range of service areas are using the social media channels to promote their messages and generate sales, with a limited budget. In the last quarter the Communications Team were announced the winners of the APSE (Awards for Public Service Excellence) for the campaign they delivered through Facebook 'A Rubbish Guide to Christmas'. Other successes include the uptake in the Summer Holiday Hubs – which reached a record high attracting 2609 bookings.
- Deliver a new approach to communications for the Bicester Master Plan is reporting as Green, an improvement on the last quarter. A draft marketing and communications strategy for Bicester has now been developed, bringing together all of the different aspects we are trying to promote under the banner of www.all-about.bicester.com. A multi-functional team will now be formed to ensure the delivery of this plan.

- (2) That the following performance related matters be identified for review or consideration in future reports:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Bicester town centre regeneration including the Council Community Building is reporting as Amber. Since July 2014 there has been a prolonged period of seeking clarification and reduction in the construction costs for the Community Building, which have substantially increased due to construction inflation and specification. A report was submitted on 20 Oct to confirm the way forward with a start on site expected in Jan 2015.

Safe, Clean and Green

- Number of fly tips enforcement actions are reporting as Red for this quarter. Despite the number of fly tips to date this year, little evidence has been found thereby reducing the opportunity for enforcement actions. During the quarter, there were two successful prosecutions, one fixed penalty notice and three formal cautions. However performance year to date is on a par with last year. Year to date 123 against target of 120
- Tonnage of waste sent to landfill is reporting as Amber this quarter. Quarter 2 saw a small increase in waste sent to landfill although still on track for the year thanks to good performance in Quarter 1. Year to date: 12,911 tonnes against target of 12,926

Thriving Communities

- Number of visits to Woodgreen Leisure Centre (WGLC), North Oxfordshire Academy (NOA) and Cooper School is reporting as Red for this quarter. Overall an exceptionally good performance for both Quarter 2 and full year to date. Performance was up 45,159 against target in Quarter 2. Full year 739,163 visits up by 90,834 on same

period in 2013 (648,329). This is due to an all-round good performance at the District Leisure Centres but particularly a good performance at Bicester Leisure Centre as a result of the reopening of the play and teaching pool. All centres have seen an increase generally with Health and Fitness performing particularly well. This is a positive position to be in the contract year 5 benchmarking test period. Visits to North Oxfordshire Academy and Cooper are on track but are affected by continued fall in visits to Woodgreen Leisure Centre during Quarter 2.

- This is due to a reduction in several areas:-
 - 3607 less pool users particularly in August due to the inclement weather
 - less event and party bookings, particularly weddings - this year has dropped by c6670
 - Boxing Club has relocated to a dedicated facility with a loss of approximately 2,100 throughputs
 - 250 less on bowling due to a later season start attributed to heater replacement works

Officers are working with Parkwood Leisure to develop the programme to address the fall in throughputs. YTD 62,952 against target of 75,604.

- Processing of minor applications within 8 weeks is reporting as Red for this quarter. Performance this quarter is below target but this does not represent a long term trend and is expected to recover by the end of the next quarter. Year to date performance 73.88%. The figure for October was 75%.

Sound Budgets and Customer Focussed Council

- Identify and remove unnecessary work from service delivery processes to help deliver savings and efficiencies is reporting as Amber this quarter. The planned corporate project to co-ordinate a shift to online channels and with it remove unnecessary work from service delivery processes remains on hold pending decisions about three way service delivery although additional services may be implementing their own process changes and reporting these separately.

- (3) That the feedback from the 25 November 2014 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during which it considered the quarter two performance report and referred to the “red” rating for the number of fly tip enforcement cases be noted.

Reasons

This report presents the Council's performance against its corporate scorecard for the second quarter of 2014/15. It includes an overview of successes, areas for improvement and emerging issues to be considered.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To note the report

Option 2: To request additional information on items and/or add to the work programme for review and/or refer to Overview and Scrutiny.

86 **Quarter 2 2014/15 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

The Head of Finance and Procurement submitted a report which summarised the Council's Revenue and Capital position, treasury management and procurement performance for the first six months of the financial year 2014-15 and projections for the full 2014-15 period.

The report also presented information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2014-15 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Resolved

- (1) That the projected revenue and capital position at September 2014 be noted.
- (2) That the quarter 2 (Q2) performance against the 2014-15 investment strategy and the financial returns from the funds be noted.

Reasons

This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2014-15 Financial Targets for Revenue, Capital and Procurement Monitoring. In line with good practice budget monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis within the Council. The revenue and capital position is reported monthly to the Joint Management Team and formally to the Budget Planning Committee and Executive on a quarterly basis.

Alternative Options

Option 1: As this is a monitoring report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information.

87 **Draft Budget and Business Plan 2015-16**

The Head of Finance and Procurement and Head of Transformation submitted a report which presented the first of two opportunities that the Executive had to shape and refine the draft budget before the final budget is presented to Full Council on 23 February 2015. The report also detailed the draft strategic priorities, the underpinning key objectives, and deliverables for 2015-16 which sit alongside the draft budget and are to be the subject of wider consultation if approved in principle at this meeting.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Financial Management reminded Executive that the Council had to adopt a budget as the basis for calculating its level of Council Tax. It had to base this budget on its plans for

service delivery during the year, recognising any changes in service demand that may arise in future years.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft revenue budget (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted and it be agreed that it be subject to a period of consultation with the public and other key stakeholders.
- (2) That it be noted the final implications of the local government finance settlement would need to be fully considered once the announcement has been made.
- (3) That Executive is not aware of any other matters that need to be taken into consideration in producing a balanced budget for its meeting on 2 February 2015 at this stage.
- (4) That the passporting of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) grant to local preceptors be endorsed.
- (5) That agreement be given for the proposed medium term strategic priorities, key objectives and key deliverables for 2015-16 to be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation prior to the 2 February 2015 meeting of the Executive.

Reasons

The Council has to adopt a budget and business plan for 2015/16 as the basis for calculating its level of Council Tax and has to base that budget on its plans for service delivery during the year, recognising any changes in service demand that may arise in future years.

Alternative Options

This is the draft budget and options for the overall budget for the Council will be considered at its meeting in February.

88

Asset Management Strategy Action Plan

The Commercial Director (Bicester) submitted a report which sought approval to allocate funds from windfall income streams secured in 2014/13 in order to progress the priority actions arising from the Asset Management Strategy Review.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed priority actions arising from the asset management plan be noted (those in bold indicate a 2014/15 priority):
 - 1) Asset Strategy Resource Plan**
 - 2) Data and Systems Plan
 - 3) Operational Offices Plan**
 - 4) Operational Depot Plan

- 5) **Car Parks Plan**
- 6) Leisure Buildings Plan
- 7) **Community Buildings Plan**
- 8) **Local Centres Plan**
- 9) Commercial Investment Plan

- (2) That it be noted the monitoring of the asset management strategy was currently undertaken by the Accommodation Asset Strategy Board who would be asked to review terms of reference and membership as a result of the asset review.
- (3) That the allocation of up to £125k from 2014/15 windfall income which would allow the progression of the key activities which focus on the priority actions arising from the Asset Management Strategy Review be approved.
- (4) That it be noted a comprehensive action plan was being developed that would ensure the vision set out in the review document would be delivered by 2019. This action plan will be presented to the Executive in March 2015.

Reasons

It is important that a number of specialist reviews are commissioned in this financial year in order to inform the work programme, capital programme and current strategic development projects. It has been estimated that the resources required total £125k in 2014/15 and these costs can be met from windfall income subject to Executive approval.

The draft action plan will be presented to the governing board in Jan 2015 and then to Executive in March 2015.

Alternative Options

There is an option not to provide funding during 2014/15 and submit bids for the 2015/16 budget process. This is not recommended as a number of priority actions require resources now as they impact on other Council projects and priorities.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

90 **Draft Budget and Business Plan 2015-16 - Exempt Appendix**

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Chairman of the Budget Planning Committee, presented exempt appendix B to agenda item 11, Draft Budget and Business Plan 2015-16.

In introducing the exempt appendix, Councillor Mawer explained that members of the Budget Planning Committee had considered the draft capital programme 2015/16 at an informal briefing and would be reviewing at a future meeting of the Committee to agree recommendations for submission to the February meeting of Executive.

Resolved

- (1) That it be noted that final recommendations still needed to be made by the Budget Planning Committee on the Capital Bids.

Reasons

The Budget Planning Committee reviews the Capital Programme and will make recommendations to the Executive.

Alternative Options

The Executive could choose not to receive the recommendations of the Budget Planning Committee. This is not recommended as the Committee undertake a detailed review and submit informed recommendations to Executive and it has yet to meet formally to consider this matter.

91 **Joint Fraud Investigation Team Business Case**

The Head of Finance and Procurement submitted an exempt report which provided an update on the Single Fraud Investigation Service and sought approval for a Joint Fraud Investigation team initially for South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council (phase 1) and incorporating Stratford on Avon at a later date (phase 2).

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the introduction of a Joint Fraud Investigation Team be approved.

Reasons

Since 2010 the Government has been committed to the creation of a single integrated fraud investigation service which will investigate welfare benefit fraud across Department for Work and Pension (DWP), HMRC and local authorities.

In early 2013 pilots were established to test a number of proposals and options and by the end of 2013 it was confirmed that a single organisation would be established and that the new Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) would be part of the DWP.

The transfer of Housing Benefit fraud investigation from local authorities to DWP is happening on a phased approach from 1 July 2014 until March 2016. In May 2014 the transfer dates were confirmed. The implementation date for SNC and CDC will be 1 February 2015.

Alternative Options

Option 1: Retain no fraud prevention and detection resource.

This option would see no fraud prevention and detection resource retained across the three Councils following the implementation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS). This option has been considered and rejected by officers on the basis the three Councils have a duty to protect the public purse and ensure that fraud and error is minimised.

Option 2: To 'buy in' to one of the regional fraud hubs.

This option would see the three Councils purchase the service from a regional fraud hub following the implementation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS). This option has been considered by officers and is not recommended as plans for the regional hubs are very much in the development stage. Officers are also concerned that the hub approach could mean reduced control over resources and outcomes. It should be noted that the hubs could be used to provide resilience to a retained local service if required.

Option3: Implement a Joint Fraud Investigation Team covering SDC/CDC/SNC from 1 February 2015.

This option was considered in detail, and would see a joint team established to cover CDC, SNC and SDC from 1 February 2015, rather than the phased implementation approach proposed in this business case. This option was rejected due to the fact that Housing Benefit fraud investigation at SDC does not transfer to SFIS until February 2016.

92 Woodgreen Leisure Centre Improvements and New Leisure Management Contract

The Director of Community and Environment submitted an exempt report relating to Woodgreen Leisure Centre improvements and the new Leisure Management Contract.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed that a three lot procurement approach be adopted in conjunction with South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) to maintain the option of individual decisions by each council whilst exploring the opportunity for mutual benefit through a combined contract.

- (2) That it be agreed that Lot 1 be based on an operating plus investment contract for Woodgreen, Lot 2 be a contract determined by SNC and Lot 3 be the combined option with SNC as a Design Build Operate and Maintain contract subject to further SNC consideration.
- (3) That a whole site annual lifecycle maintenance approach through the use of a mandatory contract variant be considered.
- (4) That tenders for an 18 year operating contract term to align with the end of the Council's main leisure centres contract be sought
- (5) That the requirement for a *very good* BREEAM rating for new internal areas be incorporated in the tender documents.
- (6) That the output specification for the contract be prepared based on the approach outlined in the exempt report.
- (7) That the use of the residual Sports Centres Modernisation capital budget to fund the appropriate specialist support and technical surveys in 2014/15 be noted and supported.
- (8) That a building condition survey be undertaken in 2015/16 as part of the capital investment scheme if approved.
- (9) That the joint procurement with SNC of the relevant external technical support and surveys for the project be supported.
- (10) As set out in the exempt decisions.
- (11) That some flexibility be offered and a non-prescriptive delivery structure within tender documents to seek opportunities for maximum cost efficiency and value for money options from bidders within an agreed overall capital and revenue financial envelope be supported.
- (12) That authority be delegated to the Director of Resources and the Director of Community and Environment in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Lead Member for Resources to take urgent decisions when these are needed and they fall outside the scheduled Executive meetings.
- (13) That, subject to the prior seeking of legal and procurement advice as to feasibility, the contract be structured to enable other partner Councils to opt to join the contract during its term.

Reasons

Clarity of the market's appetite for risk, practicable timeframes and different contract options has been achieved through a soft market testing exercise. The conclusions from this are as set out in the exempt decision notice.

Swift decision making will be required throughout the procurement process to adhere to the project plan and meet the tight tender time lines. Although major key decisions and updates will be presented to the Executive regularly, it is

recommended that delegated powers are given to the Director of Resources and Director of Community and Environment in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Lead Member for Resources to take lesser decisions quickly when required and when the need for these falls outside the scheduled Executive meetings.

A DBOM contract is the market's preferred procurement approach as it provides the operator with design input to maximise income potential and to minimise operating costs. However, this will be dependent on whether one joint contract or separate lots are awarded as the preferred separate option for Woodgreen is an operating contract plus investment. It is therefore recommended that a three lot approach is taken in order to ensure best value for money, test the market and encourage operator innovation. To do this, the procurement documentation should be structured into Lot 1 - based on an operating plus investment contract for Woodgreen, Lot 2 a contract determined by SNC and Lot 3 the combined option.

As the tender preparation process progresses, a number of key factors have emerged which require a Council direction to enable further preparation to continue. Those identified in this report include - the adoption of an annual lifecycle maintenance approach as a mandatory contract variant so that the Council can assess the financial implications as part of its final decision making process - a contract term of 18 years is proposed to align with the end of the Council's main leisure centres contract and to provide improved value for money along with sufficient annual lifecycle maintenance benefit - to factor in the corporate energy efficient objective of 'very good' BREEAM rated facilities - to incorporate contract flexibility to seek opportunities for maximum cost efficiency and value for money options from bidders within an agreed overall capital and revenue financial envelope - and to be clear on the basis of the output specification to define what the Council wants over the term of the contract which in turn influences what needs to be monitored and measured.

To meet Project Plan timescales and to inform the tender documentation, the procurement of both the Technical Advisors and survey works is recommended now to be funded from the balance of the 2014/15 Sports Centres Modernisation budget given its suitability and sufficiency for the 2014/15 part of this process.

It is recommended that some flexibility be offered and a non-prescriptive delivery structure within tender documents to seek opportunities for maximum cost efficiency and value for money options from bidders within an agreed overall capital and revenue financial envelope. It is also recommended that, if feasible in legal and procurement terms, scope be offered within the proposed contract to enable other partner Councils to opt in at a later date during the contract term.

Alternative Options

Option 1: Three different contract lots

Option 2: Two different SNC investment strategies to address cost risk

Option 3: The inclusion or not of annual lifecycle maintenance

Graven Hill Update

The Commercial Director (Bicester) submitted an exempt report which provided an update on the work being undertaken by the Graven Hill Development Company ahead of finalising the Delivery Plan and sought authorisation to take part in a media production to promote self-build on the site.

Resolved

- (1) That the work being carried out by the Graven Hill Development Company be noted.
- (2) That it be noted the Delivery Plan and Financial model were being updated to reflect latest market intelligence, final S106 position and infrastructure programme and that in accordance with the governance arrangements, the Updated 2015 Delivery Plan and financial appraisal would be presented to the Partnering Board in Jan 2015 for consideration and then onwards to Executive.
- (3) That the proposed marketing opportunity be noted and the proposal from the Directors of the Graven Hill Holding/Development Company supported by the Partnering Board to take part in this media production recognising the implications of such an activity be endorsed.

Reasons

As at 19 November 2014 (latest Delivery Team Meeting) the work programme for Graven Hill is on track in terms of programme, budget and risk management.

This is a significant investment for the Council and one that is innovative and delivers many positive benefits to the District. It is therefore imperative that the strong governance that has been put place continues to actively manage the work programme, budgets, risks and mitigations.

Exempt Appendix 2 details an exciting media potential to promote the site and taking into account all risks and mitigations it is recommended that the Company should take part in this programme in order to raise profile and boost the sale of plots.

After the Partnering Board scheduled for January 2015 has taken place an update on the Graven Hill 2015 Business Plan will be presented to the Executive in Q4.

Alternative Options

There is an option not to take part in the media production.

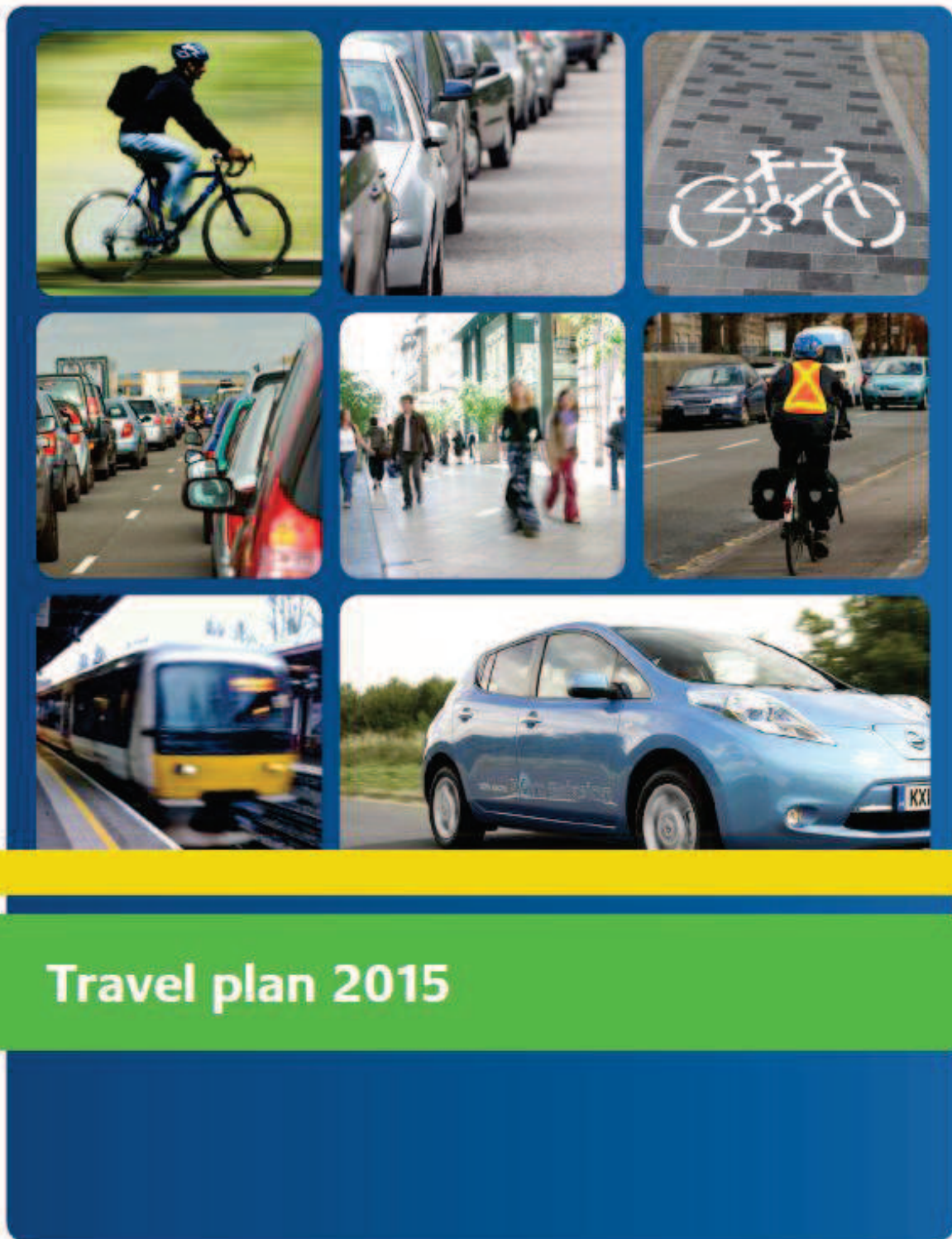
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The meeting ended at 7.40 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Travel plan 2015

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1. Introduction

“South Northants Council and Cherwell District Council are fully committed to improving the environment at its five principle sites. We have set ourselves ambitious targets to encourage all staff (including those employed by others) and our customers to consider whether it is necessary to travel in order to provide or access our services. And where travel is necessary, to seek more sustainable options, i.e. walking, cycling, public transport and/or car-sharing, to reach our sites or those places where we do business”

This document outlines the joint Travel Plan for South Northants Council (SNC) and Cherwell District Council (CDC). The overall objective of the Plan is to seek to ensure that staff, members and visitors consider, and where possible use more environmentally friendly alternatives to private cars.

Northamptonshire County Council and Oxfordshire County Council were consulted during its preparation and all staff based at the five sites covered by this Travel Plan will be expected to support the objectives and contribute to achieving the targets.

The Plan links with the corporate Transformation Agenda and contains six specific objectives:

1. To reduce unnecessary travel by offering alternative ways to access and deliver services
2. To encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport where travel is essential
3. To support the corporate priorities ‘protecting our quality of life’ (SNC) and ‘to make Cherwell a cleaner and greener place’ (CDC).
4. To set out measures that will contribute to satisfying planning condition 16* prior to occupation of the Forum
5. To set out measures that will contribute to satisfying BREEAM** requirements prior to occupation of the Forum
6. To ensure that all staff, members and visitors are aware of the Travel Plan

It is anticipated that the document will be valid for a period of five years from January 2015 to December 2019 inclusive. The Plan will be reviewed annually and only superseded should there be a significant change in the working/travel patterns of either local authority (or staff employed by others based at one or more of the sites) prior to the drafting of the next Travel Plan in Spring 2019.

** Planning Condition 16 requires a comprehensive travel plan to be submitted and approved prior to occupation.*

*** BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology), first published by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) in 1990, is the world's longest established and most widely used method of assessing, rating, and certifying the sustainability of buildings.*

A monitoring strategy is being defined to assess our achievements. This travel plan covers all staff and visitors travelling to our four sites for commuting journeys, business travel and deliveries.

1.1 What are the benefits of the Travel Plan?

Corporate responsibility: This Travel Plan aims to make significant changes to the way people travel to their place of work. This will result in a better local environment for pedestrians and cyclists and result in cleaner air and less congested local streets.

Positive Publicity: Implementing this Travel Plan in full will generate positive publicity and improve South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council's environmental image. It will contribute to the corporate priorities, namely, 'protecting our quality of life' (SNC) and 'to make Cherwell a cleaner and greener place' (CDC).

Increased travel choice: A wider range of travel options, savings and benefits may enhance the recruitment and retention of staff working at sites operated by SNC and CDC. This Travel Plan will contribute to greater social inclusion by enabling those who do not have access to a car to travel to work or visit the site more easily.

Health Benefits: Many alternative forms of travel include an element of exercise that will lead to a healthier workforce, possibly leading to improved morale and a reduction in health-related absences.

More accessible sites: A decrease in the number of cars arriving at the five workplaces will contribute to reducing congestion on the approach roads to the sites and the sites themselves. The sites should become more accessible and safer for all staff and visitors. The sites should also become a more attractive place for staff to work and nearby residents to live.

Financial Savings: A Travel Plan can reduce corporate transport overheads by minimising business mileage and has the potential to reduce the number of parking spaces required at each site.

Better Time Management: The automatic use of the car for business travel is not always the most cost effective or efficient option. Alternatives can be cheaper, faster (particularly for long journeys) and provide additional time in which to prepare for meetings or carry out work that would not be possible when sat at the wheel of a car.

Reduction of Carbon Footprint: A reduction in staff traveling and smarter travelling will have a positive impact upon both councils' plans to meet their targets on carbon emissions reduction.

1.2 The Scope of the Travel Plan

This Travel Plan replaces the South Northamptonshire Travel Plan (2010) and the Cherwell District Council Travel Plan (2011).

The plan covers the five principal sites operated by South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council, namely:

- The Forum (Towcester)
- Tove Depot (Towcester)
- Bodicote House (Banbury)
- Thorpe Lane Depot (Banbury)
- Highfield Depot (Bicester)

A small proportion of staff from partner organisations, including Oxfordshire County Council and Northamptonshire County Council are based at these sites (less than 10% in all cases). Staff based at each of the five sites was consulted during the preparation of this Travel Plan and will be expected to support the objectives and contribute to meeting the targets set.

The Forum is the new main office building in Towcester for South Northamptonshire Council. It covers a floor area of approximately 3900 m² and will accommodate in the region of 150 staff on a daily basis, approximately 90% being SNC staff and 10% NCC. The building has 13 parking spaces for disabled visitors immediately outside, with additional on-street and off-street car park in the vicinity anticipated to provide 207 public spaces (Northampton Road and The Shires). It is anticipated to have 25 cycle racks. This Travel Plan incorporates the stated needs of the staff employed by NCC whom will be based at the Forum.

Tove is the main depot building in Towcester for South Northamptonshire Council. It covers a floor area of approximately 820 m² and accommodates in the region of 50 staff on a daily basis, 100% employed by SNC. The building has 47 parking spaces for staff and visitors including 2 dedicated for disabled drivers. Daily occupancy levels are approximately 80%. Cycle parking is currently only available for staff. Cycle parking for visitors is being explored at the time of writing (July 2014).

Bodicote House is the main office building in Bodicote, Banbury for Cherwell District Council. The floor space of the two buildings is:

- New Bodicote House - 7862m² (of which Sanctuary occupy 492m²)
- Old Bodicote House - 632m² (of which OCC occupy 108m²)

The entire site accommodates in the region of 370 staff on a daily basis with more than 90% being CDC staff, the remainder employed by Oxfordshire County Council and Sanctuary Housing. The building has 281 parking spaces, with 227 dedicated for staff and, 26 spaces for Sanctuary Housing and 28 for visitors including four dedicated disabled. The cycle parking consists of 4 single uncovered stands at the entrance for visitors, 5 stands capable of storing 10 bikes, 5 cycle lockers including two pool bikes

for staff and 6 covered stands capable of storing 12 bikes for staff.

Thorpe Lane is the main depot building in Banbury for Cherwell District Council. It covers a floor area of approximately 303 m² and accommodates in the region of 76 staff on a daily basis, 100% employed by CDC. The building has 50 parking spaces, with 35 dedicated for staff, 8 for fleet vehicles (including an electric vehicle) and 4 for visitors. It has 6 cycle racks for both staff and visitors.

As travel between Banbury and Towcester is common for members of the Joint-Management team and officers employed by both authorities, travel between the sites was identified and analysed as part of the Travel Survey.

Highfield Depot is the main depot covering Bicester, it is mainly used by the environmental services crews and supervisors with no specific workers based and working at this depot full time. It has 26 specific parking spaces for staff and fleet vehicles, and no designated cycle parking.

1.3: Travel Survey and consultation summary

A comprehensive survey of staff and members based at all sites was carried out in March 2014. Staff from Northamptonshire County Council and Oxfordshire County Council who are, or will be, based at one of the five sites were also surveyed. In total 301 responses (38%) were received from across the five offices.

More details can be found in Appendix 1, but below are some headline figures with comparisons, where available, from previous surveys:

- Private car use for commuting purposes 82%
- Walking/Cycling for commuting purposes 9%
- Public transport for commuting purposes 6% (5%, 2010)
- Car sharing for commuting purposes 6%

Future demand:

- Support for condensed working hours (9-day fortnight) 78%
- Support for Home Working 76%
- Support for use of Teleconferencing 59% (11%, 2008)
- Support for Car Sharing 55% (32%, 2008)
- Support for Pool Cars 50%
- Support for discounted bus/train travel 47%

Consultation

The staff/member consultation took place between 4th August and 15th September 2014. As with the Travel Survey, all staff currently based at, or anticipated to be based at, the five sites were consulted.

The respondents highlighted a number of minor grammatical errors and points of clarification and explanation, but the general consensus was in support of the objectives and targets (68% in support). Of those not fully supporting the targets (six respondents), these were evenly split between those feeling that that targets were too ambitious (public transport) or not ambitious enough (public transport). The high level of support for home working was also reaffirmed as an option for appropriate posts.

As a direct result of the consultation feedback, the following changes have been made:

- A revised target in relation to homeworking – up from 20% to 25% (2.1 page 11)
- A new target in relation to reducing emissions from the Grey Fleet (vehicles owned and run by staff/members). This can be found at 2.2 on page 11.
- A new specific objective in relation to BREEAM (See 2.5 on page 12).

1.4: Benchmarking

In order to set realistic targets, it is important to understand how we compare nationally and regionally, but at the same time appreciate the unique nature of our rural setting and the need for private car use by employees, members and customers in areas not well served by public transport.

Modes of Travel

Area	Staff travelling to their workplace by different modes			
	Walking/Cycling	Public Transport	Car - Shared	Car – Solo
ONS 2011 Census Data. National (2013)	14%	12.5%	5%	57%
ONS 2011 Census Data. East Mids. (2013)	13%	8%	2%	73%
SNC/CDC - Mar 2014	9% (target 12%)	1.3% (target 3%)	6% (target 9%)	82% (target 73%)

From this data, targets have been set to reduce solo car use and increase the use of sustainable modes (targets in brackets).

The public transport target will be reviewed should the current downward trend in investment in public transport cease or even reverse. Significant housing growth within the two districts towards the end of the life of this Travel Plan (December 2019) may also provide the opportunity to exceed this target (and bring it closer to the benchmark) through securing developer contributions towards public transport improvements.

Staff Vehicles

A 'grey fleet' vehicle is one which is employee owned and is used for work related journeys. Vehicles tend to be older and have higher emission figures than a company-owned fleet.

The national average emission figure for a 'Grey Fleet' is 169 g/kg CO₂*. The combined Grey Fleet for SNC/CDC has an average emission figure of 166 g/kg CO₂ (September 2014). A target to reduce this by 15% within the life of the Travel Plan has been set. Achieving this figure will reduce the average emissions for our combined Grey Fleet to 141 g/kg CO₂.

Mileage Rates

All four local authorities based at sites covered by this Travel Plan currently pay broadly in line HM Revenues & Customs (HMRC) rates, with any payments in excess of the annual limit being taxable. The table below compares the four authorities.

Vehicle	Business Miles	HMRC Rate	NCC	OCC	SNC	CDC
Car or Van	First 10K miles (exceeding 10K)	45p (25p)	HMRC	HMRC	52.2p (14.4p after 8500 miles)	60p
Motorcycle	All	24p	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC
Cycle	All	20p	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC

SNC and CDC also pay an additional 5 pence per mile for car-sharing on business. The person claiming must identify those who shared to ensure that one claim for the journey is made.

Homeworking

The national average figure for homeworking is 10.3% (ONS 2011 Census). The current level of homeworking is estimated at 12%, with a target of 25% over the life of the five-year plan.

* Figure from Fleet News (June 2014)

2. Objectives

The objectives of this multi-site Travel Plan are:

2.1. Objective 1: To reduce unnecessary travel

- To reduce the proportion of visitors driving to the site by offering alternative means of accessing and delivering services
- To reduce staff and member business mileage by actively promoting teleconferencing and car-sharing where appropriate and possible
- To encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport for work related journeys
- To increase the level of Homeworking from 12% to 25% over 5 years

2.2 Objective 2: To encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport

As part of the overall target, we are setting ourselves the following targets:

- To increase the proportion of employees travelling to work by public transport by 100% over 5 years (from 1.5% to 3.0%)
- To increase the number of car sharers by 50% over 5 years (from 6% to 9%)
- To increase the proportion of employees cycling/walking to work by 30% over 5 years (from 9% to 12%)
- To reduce annual business mileage claims by 7.5% over 5 years
- To reduce the level of solo car use for commuting by 10% over 5 years (from 82% to 73%)
- To reduce the average CO₂ of our Grey Fleet by 15% over 5 years (from 166g/kg Co₂ to 141g/kg CO₂)

2.3 Objective 3: To support the corporate priorities ‘protecting our quality of life’ (SNC) and ‘to make Cherwell a cleaner and greener place’ (CDC)

- To report progress against targets as part of quarterly corporate performance monitoring

2.4 Objective 4: To set out measures that will contribute to satisfying planning condition 16 prior to occupation of the Forum

- To ensure that this Travel Plan is complementary to others measures being prepared to satisfy planning condition 16
- To provide monitoring information as required by SNC Development Control
- To ensure that managers from SNC and NCC are fully committed to implementing this Travel Plan and achieving the targets set
- To ensure that staff based at our sites, but employed by partner organisations, embrace the objectives of the Travel Plan and contribute to meeting the targets

2.5 Objective 5: To set out measures that will contribute to satisfying BREEAM requirements prior to occupation of the Forum

- BREEAM is the most widely used method for assessing, rating, and certifying the sustainability of buildings
- Appendix 2 details where this Travel Plan contributes to the specific requirements of this assessment

2.6 Objective 6: To ensure all staff and members are aware of the Travel Plan

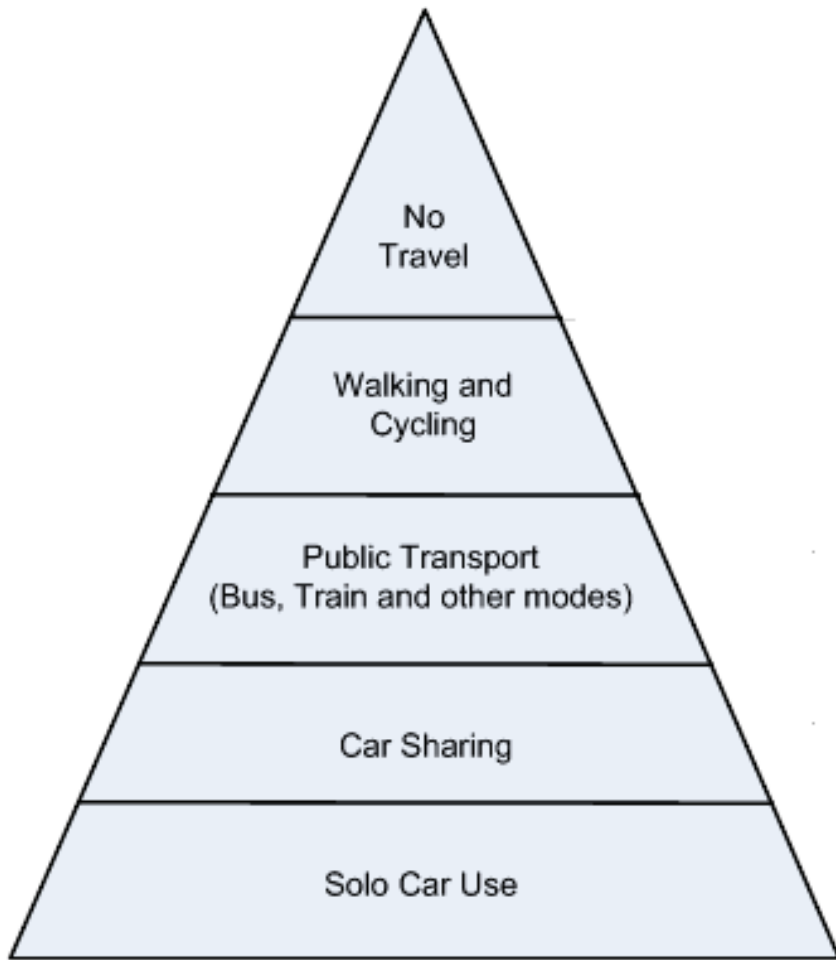
All staff and members will be made aware of this plan in five different ways:

- An internal consultation exercise prior to the adoption of the Travel Plan (*this included those staff employed by NCC, OCC and partner organisations based at SNC and/or CDC offices*)
- Formal adoption of the Travel Plan by Cabinet at SNC and Executive at CDC
- Launch of the Travel Plan in January 2015
- Quarterly reporting to committee (Performance Plus data)
- Annual survey of staff

As the Plan develops it will be appropriate to consider the adoption of further objectives and where appropriate the setting of further targets.

To assist in achieving these targets, all staff based at the five sites will be expected to use the 'Travel Hierarchy' before planning or making every journey. The aim is to be as high on the pyramid as practicable for each journey.

Journeys will be analysed regularly and staff may be asked to justify why a journey was made by a particular mode.



The Travel Hierarchy

3. Implementation

In order to implement the Plan the following will be established:

3.1. A Travel Plan Co-ordinator

The role of Travel Plan Co-ordinator will be met from existing resource and led by the SNC Lead Officer Transport Policy with support from SNC, CDC, NCC and OCC officers where appropriate as follows:

- To oversee the development and implementation of the Travel Plan
- To obtain and maintain commitment and support from senior managers, staff, members and union representatives
- To design and implement effective marketing and awareness raising campaigns to promote the Travel Plan
- To facilitate the establishment of steering groups, working groups, etc.
- To co-ordinate the necessary data collection exercise required to develop the Travel Plan
- To act as a point of contact for all staff requiring information
- To liaise with different departments, e.g. human resources, estates, facilities, etc. and external organisations, e.g. transport operators
- To co-ordinate the monitoring programme for the Travel Plan

3.2. The Travel Plan Working Group

The Travel Plan Working Group was established in 2013. It comprises of representatives from across the two organisations (SNC and CDC). Northamptonshire County Council was fully involved in developing aspects relating to the Forum.

The group is responsible for developing the Action Plan, implementing initiatives and the overall monitoring and review of the Travel Plan. Their role is to:

- Allocate staff to implement the schemes
- Set clear dates for action
- Ensure that the Travel Plan makes progress by holding twice yearly review meetings
- Report progress to Management
- Develop future initiatives
- Expand objectives and targets, and monitoring strategies as initiatives are developed and agreed.

3.3. Staff and Member Focus Groups

The key to the success and implementation of this multi-agency Travel Plan is to involve staff and members at all stages. Following consultation, this will be partly achieved by the formation of staff and member focus groups to develop proposals for

implementation. The focus groups that are formed will depend on the actions agreed by the Travel Plan working group.

3.4. Partnerships

SNC and CDC will endeavour to strengthen evolving partnerships with:

- National organisations such as Sustrans, Association of Commuter Transport, Cycle Touring Campaign, The Pedestrians Association, Environmental Transport Association.
- Regional public transport providers such as Stagecoach, Arriva and Chiltern Rail
- The sustainable transport teams of Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire transport authorities (NCC & OCC)
- Developers through the application process and Section 106
- Local organisations such as employers, appropriate local retailers (for discounts on items such as bicycles, outdoor clothing and footwear)

SNC and CDC will also seek to ensure that links are established with other relevant activities, e.g. the induction process, work-life balance, recruitment and retention strategies.

4. Monitoring

4.1. Monitoring requirements

Both SNC and CDC will monitor the targets within this Travel Plan and report them as part of the wider quarterly performance update.

SNC will be expected to monitor additional targets in relation to planning condition 16 in relation to occupation of the Forum. NCC will also provide monitoring data where appropriate.

4.2. Staff and member survey

SNC and CDC will carry out annual monitoring at all five sites by using a survey based on the comprehensive Travel Survey in March 2014.

The annual monitoring survey will cover:

- Where people come from
- What mode of transport they use to get to work
- How often they need their own car for work purposes
- Suggestions to improve facilities/ initiatives at the site
- Awareness of the Travel Plan

4.3. Specific monitoring strategies

A range of monitoring strategies will be used to ensure that the plan is on target. The following demonstrates the techniques to be used, but is not an exhaustive list.

Quarterly:

- The number of people on the car-share database
- Counts at all car parks (same time/day of the week)
- Counts at all cycle stands (same time/day of the week)
- Monitoring of business mileage
- Monitoring of the 'average' CO2 emissions for the Grey Fleet
- Pool bike usage levels

Annually:

- All-staff/member travel survey to assess effectiveness of the Travel Plan
- Survey of the number of people working from home
- Comparison of car mileage claims vs. train/bus/cycle mileage claims
- Report to the Joint Management Team and Committee

5. Site Audits

5.1. Car Parking

This Travel Plan relates to five distinct sites.

The Forum:

This site has one entrance for car users. The main entrance is approached from Northampton Road. There is anticipated to be a total of 207 public car parking spaces in Northampton Road and the Shires site approximately 300m from the Forum. There are 13 spaces for disabled parking, and 37 on-street spaces for visitors on Northampton Road close to the front entrance. Demand for car parking space is likely to be high. A decision has been made by the Moat Lane Project Board that dedicated member parking will not be included on site.

Tove Depot:

This site has one entrance for car users. The main entrance is approached from Old Tiffield Road. There are currently a total of 47 car parking spaces. There are 45 spaces available for staff and visitors and 2 dedicated spaces for disabled parking. Demand for car parking space is moderate with a typical daily occupancy rate of 80%.

Bodicote House:

This site has one entrance for car users. The main entrance is approached from White Post Road. There are currently a total of 281 car parking spaces. There are 227 spaces available for staff, 30 spaces for visitors including four spaces for disabled parking. Demand for car parking space is high.

Thorpe Lane Depot:

This site has one entrance for car users. The main entrance is approached from Thorpe Lane. There are currently a total of 50 car parking spaces. There are 35 spaces available for staff, 2 spaces for disabled parking, 4 spaces for visitors, 7 spaces for fleet vehicles and 1 space for an electric vehicle. Demand for car parking space is very high.

Highfield Depot:

This site has one entrance for car users. The main entrance is approached from George Street. There are currently a total of 26 car parking spaces for use by primarily fleet vehicles and where available staff users. Demand for car parking space is very high.

5.2. Car Sharing

There is currently no dedicated car parking for car sharers, although this will be addressed through the Travel Plan actions (section 9.4).

5.3. Rail

Rail is a much more realistic option for staff and visitors to Bodicote House and Thorpe Lane Depot (both in Banbury) than for The Forum and Tove (both in Towcester)

Banbury (Bodicote House and Thorpe Lane)

The railway station is approximately 2 miles from either Site. The service from Banbury to Bicester North runs approximately every hour. Services also run from Bicester Town, Heyford and Islip. A new station is planned at Oxford Parkway on the new line built between Oxford and Cambridge.

Towcester (The Forum and Tove Depot)

The nearest railway station is approximately eleven miles from the Site (Northampton), although Milton Keynes (13 miles) is more popular for journeys southwards. Services from Northampton and Milton Keynes run frequently. Services also run from Kings Sutton every hour to Banbury and Bicester North.

Bicester (Highfield Depot)

The nearest railway station is approximately 1 mile from the site. The service operates from Bicester North to Banbury approximately every hour. Services also run from Bicester Town.

5.4. Bus

Banbury (Bodicote House and Thorpe Lane)

A range of bus services from around the county run through Banbury bus station, these services are B1, B2, B5, B8, 50/50A, 488/489, 500, S4, 81/ 81A/ X81, 90/90A, B7, B10, 499, 269/270.

Towcester (The Forum and Tove Depot)

A range of bus services from around the county operate through Towcester – these are the numbers 8, 86, 87 and 89.

Bicester (Highfield Depot)

A range of bus services from around the county operate through Bicester – these are the S5, NS5, X5, 8, 37, 81, 81a, 118, 25, 25a, 94, 18, 21, 30 and 95

5.5. Cycling

Banbury (Bodicote House and Thorpe Lane)

- The sites are accessible by bicycle, but improvements are required

- The cycle parking consists of
 - Bodicote House: 4 single uncovered stands at the entrance for visitors, 5 stands capable of storing 10 bikes, 5 cycle lockers including two pool bikes for staff and 6 covered stands capable of storing 12 bikes for staff
 - Thorpe Lane: 6 cycle racks
- A Sustainable Travel Group is to be established
- Using a bicycle on business is reimbursed at the maximum HMRC tax-free rate of 20ppm

Towcester (The Forum and Tove Depot)

- The sites are accessible by bicycle, but improvements are required
- The cycle parking consists of
 - The Forum: 25 cycle racks
 - Tove depot: staff facilities only
- A Sustainable Travel Group is to be established
- Using a bicycle on business is reimbursed at the maximum HMRC tax-free rate of 20ppm

Bicester (Highfield Depot)

- The site is accessible by bicycle, but improvements are required
- The cycle parking consists of
 - Highfield Depot: staff facilities only
- A Sustainable Travel Group is to be established
- Using a bicycle on business is reimbursed at the maximum HMRC tax-free rate of 20ppm

5.6. Information

A “Travel information” section on both the SNC and CDC intranet will be established in early 2015 with details of bus routes, telephone information lines, pool bikes, the Travel Board and cycle facilities. This information will be accessible to partner staff based at the five sites. It will also be reproduced on the external websites later in 2015.

5.7. Visitors

Visitor numbers at each site vary considerably with the exception of Highfield Depot, which is an operational depot with no visitor facilities.

Each site will be monitored in early 2015. In response to the findings, the Travel Plan Working group will develop and later implement a plan to reduce the number of visitors arriving by car.

6. Staff Details

6.1. Employees

SNC currently employs approximately 220 staff across two sites

CDC currently employs approximately 445 staff across three sites

OCC currently employs approximately 10 staff at Bodicote House

NCC is anticipated to employ approximately 15 staff at the Forum

The number of staff at each site varies considerably on a daily basis and the above figures were correct at the time of writing (October 2014). Surveys carried out by Facilities Management in 2014 indicate that the number of staff 'based on site' on a typical working day is:

- Bodicote House: 350
- Thorpe Lane: 75
- The Forum: 150*
- Tove Depot: 50
- Highfield depot: 40

6.2. Hours of Work

For South Northants Council:

- Core working for the majority of staff are: 9.30am - 12.00pm & 2.00pm - 4.00pm
- Flexible hours are recorded between 8.00am and 6.00pm
- Time-in-lieu is recorded outside flexi hours

For Cherwell District Council:

- Core Working hours for each service is 8:45am – 5.15am with every department providing cover during these hours
- Flexible hours are recorded between 7.00am and 10.00pm
- Time-in-lieu is recorded outside flexi hours

*October 2014 estimate based on survey at Springfields. This figure takes into account staff relocating to Tove plus 15 NCC staff

Oxfordshire County Council:

- Staff work broadly similar hours to CDC

Northamptonshire County Council:

- The two services based at The Forum work outside standard office hours
- The Registrar service is part-time and by appointment only
- The Library hours are 9.00am - 6.00pm from Monday to Friday; 10.00am - 4.00pm on Saturday; and 1.00pm - 4.00pm on Sunday

6.3. Business Mileage

In the twelve months to 31st May 2014, the following journeys were made by staff in the course of their work.

Local Authority	Total business miles travelled (01.06.13 to 31.05.14)	Average no. of business miles travelled per claiming employee
CDC	369,911 miles	1485 miles p.a.
SNC	237,875 miles	1299 miles p.a.
TOTAL	607,786 miles	

These figures are moderate for two rural districts with a mix of market towns and dispersed populations. It should also be noted that South Northants has just one rural train station (Kings Sutton) and public bus services outside the market towns are somewhat limited. Cherwell is better catered for by public transport although away from the key transport corridors, travel by car on business is essential for many staff.

Business mileage by councillors is very low. In addition, a high proportion of members (councillors) at both SNC and CDC do not make any claim for their journeys. As an indication, just 7568 miles was claimed by the 42 members at SNC in the first 4 months of 2015 financial year. This equates to just 10 miles per member per week.

Journeys made by the small number of Oxfordshire County Council staff based at Bodicote House had not been collated at the time of writing (October 2014). Journeys made by Northamptonshire County Council staff to be based at the Forum from March 2015 were unknown at the time of writing (October 2014). Data from both organisations in relation to staff based at Bodicote House and the Forum respectively will be collated from April 2015 and will be analysed to contribute to the targets.

Savings in the order of 60 tons of CO₂ and financial savings in excess of £100,000 could be made in the five-year life of the Plan by meeting the 7.5% target set for a reduction in miles travelled.

6.4. The Grey Fleet

A 'grey fleet' vehicle is one which is employee owned and is used for work related journeys. Vehicles tend to be older and have higher emission figures than a company-owned fleet. The latest analysis (29 September 2014) indicates 415 vehicles are recorded for business use by staff at SNC and CDC combined. Of these, 108 (26%) are low emission vehicles (those with a CO2 emission figure of 120g/kg or below). The 'average' across the two fleets is 166g/kg (typical for 2007 registered Vauxhall Astra 1.6 petrol). A target has been set to reduce this by 15% to 141g/kg (typical for 2012 Vauxhall Astra 1.4 petrol). In-vehicle monitoring of the Grey Fleet is being investigated at the time of writing (October 2014).

6.5. Mileage Rates

All four local authorities based at sites covered by this Travel Plan currently pay broadly in line HM Revenues & Customs (HMRC) rates, with any payments in excess being taxable. The table below compares the four authorities.

Vehicle	Business Miles	HMRC Rate	NCC	OCC	SNC	CDC
Car or Van	First 10K miles (exceeding 10K)	45p (25p)	HMRC	HMRC	52.2p (14.4p after 8500 miles)	60p
Motorcycle	All	24p	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC
Cycle	All	20p	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC	HMRC

Reduction in the car reimbursement rate at SNC and CDC to the HMRC tax-free allowance of 45ppm (to align them to NCC and OCC) would reduce expenditure and administration costs (in splitting the taxable and non-taxable element).

However, this specific issue falls outside the scope of this Travel Plan and will be reviewed as part of the wider 'Harmonisation Project'.

7. Travel Survey

A travel survey of all staff and members was undertaken in March 2014. The survey 301 responses, which was approximately 38% of the workforce based at the four sites. SNC and NCC staff anticipated to be based at the Forum were also surveyed.

A summary of the results is below. For further information, please see Appendix 1.

7.1. How Staff currently travel to work?

- 82% of staff mainly travel into work by car (single occupancy)
- 6% mainly use a car shared with others
- 8% mainly walk to work
- 1.3% mainly cycle
- 1.3% mainly used public transport

7.2. Why do they choose to travel this way?

Distance from home to work and the need for the car for work purposes were the main reasons given. Lack of public transport provision/ public transport taking too long and use of the car for other purposes after work also scored highly.

7.3. Where are they travelling from?

Respondents were asked to provide their home postcode. These are shown on the map in the appendix, but are mapped in postcode sectors so as not to identify individual properties.

7.4. What measures would be most popular / effective?

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| • Support for condensed working hours (9-day fortnight) | 78% |
| • Support for Home Working | 76% |
| • Support for use of Teleconferencing | 59% (11%, 2008) |
| • Support for Car Sharing | 55% (32%, 2008) |
| • Support for Pool Cars | 50% |
| • Support for discounted bus/train travel | 47% |

Please see Appendix 1 for the full survey results.

8. Communication and Marketing

This Travel Plan is integral to the wider process of organisational change within the transformation agenda. This plan contributes to a number of aspects this wider programme.

The target audiences for this Travel Plan are all staff, members and visitors. It is essential that all aspects of this Travel Plan be effectively communicated to all those based at the five principal sites. A vital part of the success of this Plan will also be in letting people know how we are doing. This will be done through the following means:

8.1. Posters

Posters on notice boards around the buildings will be used to highlight transport information and to keep staff informed of special days and events that are being organised.

8.2. Email

Quarterly emails will be sent out to key people (such as the Sustainable Travel Group) to help promote special days and events.

8.3. Staff/Member Induction Training

The Induction Training programme will be updated to inform new staff and members of the key aspects of the Travel Plan. This is especially useful, as research indicates that the best time for people to change travel habits is when they are changing jobs or moving house. Travel to Work information will be included during Induction Training sessions.

8.4. The Launch Event

The Travel Plan will be launched to all staff based at the five sites in early 2015 to promote the work that SNC and CDC have carried out, and to inform people of their new travel choices. Following this, we aim to send regular media releases of how the Travel Plan is progressing to help raise awareness with general public.

8.5. Recruitment information

Alternative travel details regarding how to get to the site via public transport, walking and cycling will be sent out either with application forms or with information about coming to interviews.

8.6. The Intranet

The intranet will be used to promote the 'tax-free' bicycle purchase scheme and outline specific promotional activities going on (such as Bike 2 Work day) and to provide staff

with key information. The intranet will include relevant and up to date bus and train information, the cost of bus passes, maps of walking and cycling routes, information about getting to other destinations for meetings by train or bus, details of the cycle business mileage allowance, guidance on home-working and flexible working and regular updates of the Travel Plan progress.

8.7. The Website

Public transport information and map of walking and cycling links will be included in greater detail and more prominently on the two websites, which can be found at www.southnorthants.gov.uk and www.cherwell.gov.uk.

8.8 Internal Publications/ Newsletters

Press releases with quarterly updates on Travel Plan measures that have been implemented will be supplied to internal publications and newsletters. This method of communication will also be used for general transport information and to promote any internal transport related activities.

9. Action Plan

The following measures will be implemented within the timescale for action:

Short (S)	=	achievable by September 2015
Medium (M)	=	achievable by September 2016
Long (L)	=	achievable by September 2018
Ongoing (O)	=	ongoing

9.1. Measures to increase walking

- 9.1.1. Erect a signs showing the direction and distance or time it takes to walk to each site on key walking routes (e.g. town centre, bus stop). (M)
- 9.1.2. On-going promotion of walking, e.g. internal newsletters promoting health/ environmental benefits. (O)
- 9.1.3. Promote walking on special days, e.g. car free day, TravelWise week. (O)
- 9.1.4. Set up a Sustainable Travel Group which will meet twice a year (S)
- 9.1.5. Provide incentives for people to walk e.g. free fluorescent gear, pedometers, umbrellas, and discounts at walking/ shoe shops, prize draws. (M)
- 9.1.6. Introduce a regular “casual clothes” day (e.g. last Friday of every month). (S)

9.2. Measures to increase cycling

- 9.2.1. Promote the 20ppm rate for using a bicycle on business (S)
- 9.2.2. Promote the tax-free bicycle purchase scheme (S)
- 9.2.3. Erect signs showing the direction and distance or time it takes to cycle to the site on key cycling routes (e.g. town centre/bus stop). (L)
- 9.2.4. Provide a range of secure cycle stands close to the main entrance for staff and visitors. (S)
- 9.2.5. Provide / improve facilities for those arriving by bicycle to include consideration of changing rooms, lockers and drying facilities for wet clothes. (M)

- 9.2.6. Provide incentives for people to cycle e.g. free fluorescent gear, cyclometers, wet weather gear, discounts at cycle shops and prize draws (M)
- 9.2.7. Introduce a regular “casual clothes” day (e.g. last Friday of every month). (S)
- 9.2.8. On-going promotion of cycling e.g. internal newsletters promoting health/ environmental benefits. (O)
- 9.2.9. Promote cycling on special days e.g. bike2work day, car free day, TravelWise week. (O)
- 9.2.10. Set up a Sustainable Travel Group which will meet twice a year (S)
- 9.2.11. Investigate low-cost or free cycle training for staff. (M)
- 9.2.10. Extend the existing pool bike scheme (M)

9.3. Measures to increase public transport usage

- 9.3.1. Investigate subsidies for bus/train tickets for staff to try the bus/ train. (M)
- 9.3.2. Publicise public transport routes, timetables, travel information lines (Traveline: 0870 608 2 608) for staff and visitors by links to public transport information from intranet and websites and maintaining up to date bus timetables in the main reception area. (O)
- 9.3.3. Encourage staff and members to use public transport for business travel. (O)
- 9.3.4. Seek to secure Section 106 monies from all new developments to increase the availability of public transport options (O)
- 9.3.5. Develop existing corporate arrangements with train companies for ticket purchase. (M)

9.4. Measures to increase number of car sharers

- 9.4.1. Mark a priority space(s) at all five sites for those who car share. (M)
- 9.4.2. Provide a car share database for staff, where employees can view offers and requests for lifts from their colleagues. (S)
- 9.4.3. Targeted promotion during 'TravelWise' week. (S)
- 9.4.4. Offer incentives to car share, e.g. free car wash, free MOT, prize draws etc. (O)

9.5. Measures to manage/ reduce car use

- 9.5.1. Investigate training or offer leaflets on safer and greener driving techniques. Offer courses free of charge or at a subsidised rate to all employees/members. (S)
- 9.5.2. Investigate the introduction low emission pool cars available for employee use. (S)
- 9.5.3. Ensure that those who drive more energy efficient cars receive the same or higher mileage rate than those with less efficient cars. (M)

- 9.5.4. Consider options for vehicle monitoring/tracking with the emphasis on reducing costs and total mileage (S)
- 9.5.5. Review the staff car loan scheme to consider how to incentivise those purchasing low emission vehicles. (S)
- 9.5.6. Promote flexi-time so that:
- staff do not have to start and finish at set times (thus making it easier to travel by alternative modes)
 - staff are encouraged to take full days rather than a half day off (thus reducing the need to travel to the site) (M)
- 9.5.7. Investigate compressed working hours further e.g., work 9 days per fortnight for all staff where it does not impact on the service delivered to the public (M)
- 9.5.8. Promote remote and home working:
- Develop terms and conditions for appropriate posts to formalise opportunities for remote and home working
 - Provide equipment and facilities for remote and home workers e.g. drop in centres at different locations
 - Inform staff of the remote and home working opportunities to encourage staff to join the scheme (where appropriate) (M)
- 9.5.9. Promote on-site or local facilities to ensure that staff can avoid making journeys longer than absolutely necessary to use such facilities:
- day nursery for employees children
 - cash point
 - post office
 - canteen
 - gym/well-being centre. (M)
- 9.5.10. Develop opportunities for telephone and video conferencing:
- Provide a video-conferencing facility within the two main office sites (The Forum and Bodicote House)
 - Provide net-conferencing options with web-cams at the three depots
 - Set up training sessions for staff. (L)
- 9.5.11. Encourage the use of public transport for business use (particularly meetings):
- Encourage managers and staff to routinely question/discuss travel expense claims. Why was the journey not taken by public transport?
 - Produce official guidance on which journeys are appropriate by car, and which should be taken where ever possible by public transport
 - Time meetings to facilitate travelling by public transport , provide information to enable delegates to car share
 - Promote the advance booking of cheaper tickets
 - Promote the use of public transport for business use (particularly

- meetings) and make it easier for staff to use alternative modes
- Provide information on timetables, tickets, prices, routes of public transport services to common meeting destinations
- Publish cost comparison table for staff to be included in the Induction handbook showing the cost by car and the cost by public transport to common destinations, (e.g. Birmingham and London).(M)

9.5.12. Monitor business travel:

- Keep clear records on business mileage to monitor change
- Keep records on CO2 emissions for grey fleet (staff owned and run)
- Which modes of transport were used (including bike, bus, train) for which journey to identify where more efficient modes of transport could be used. (O)

9.5.13. Encourage car sharing for business travel:

- Promote the enhanced mileage rate (payable to the officer/member driving) where a share can be proven
- Develop a more formal system to encourage staff/members attending the same meeting to travel together
- Provide delegate lists for those attending meetings to facilitate car sharing. (S)

9.6. Measures to ensure staff/members/visitor awareness of the Travel Plan

9.6.1. Provide information in a dedicated section of the two intranet sites and websites regarding the Travel Plan. (S)

9.6.2. Travel to Work information at induction training. (M)

9.6.3. Travel Awareness Campaign targeting all staff at site

- Regular updates to go to staff via Intranet
- Use of staff notice board to promote initiatives
- Articles on alternative modes of travel for internal magazine.(O)

9.6.4. Participate in Bike to Work Day & TravelWise week. (O)

9.6.5. Make maps available that give information to visitors on travelling to all sites on foot, by bicycle and on public transport. (M)

9.6.6. Alternative transport information to be updated on the Internet. (O)

9.6.7. Distinct and prominent travel information in main reception. (O)

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1

Travel Survey Results (March 2014)

A comprehensive online survey took place during March 2014. Of approximately 800 staff and members based at the five sites (including those anticipated to be based at the Forum), 301 responded to the survey, representing a sample of 38%.

As the vast majority of staff based at Springfields at the time of the survey will be re-locating to the Forum in March 2015, the data from surveys of staff has been used to guide the requirements for the new building, the Forum.

As the levels of home-working is set to increase and a number of staff (approximately 20) will move from Springfields to Tove in March 2015, it has been assumed that the anticipated requirements at the Forum will be approximately 75% of that stated for Springfields.

10.2 Appendix 2

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology), first published by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) in 1990, is the world's longest established and most widely used method of assessing, rating, and certifying the sustainability of buildings.

The requirements for BREEAM 'Good' in relation to the Forum are identified below with an indication as to where this Travel Plan contributes to meeting TRA 05 (01):

1. *A travel plan has been developed as part of the feasibility and design stages which considers all types of travel relevant to the building type and users.*
2. *The travel plan is structured to meet the needs of the particular site and takes into consideration the findings of a site-specific transport survey and assessment that covers the following (as a minimum):*
 - a. *Where relevant, existing travel patterns and opinions of existing building or site users towards cycling and walking so that constraints and opportunities can be identified*
 - b. *Travel patterns and transport impact of future building users*
 - c. *Current local environment for walkers and cyclists (accounting for visitors who may be accompanied by young children)*
 - d. *Disabled access (accounting for varying levels of disability and visual impairment)*
 - e. *Public transport links serving the site*
 - f. *Current facilities for cyclists*
3. *The travel plan includes a package of measures that have been used to steer the design of the development in order to meet the travel plan objectives and minimise car-based travel patterns. This is demonstrated via specific examples such as:*
 - a. *Providing parking priority spaces for car sharers*
 - b. *Providing dedicated and convenient cycle storage and changing facilities*
 - c. *Lighting, landscaping and shelter to make pedestrian and public transport waiting areas pleasant*
 - d. *Negotiating improved bus services, i.e. altering bus routes or offering discounts*
 - e. *Restricting and/or charging for car parking*
 - f. *Criteria for lobby areas where information about public transport or car sharing can be made available*
 - g. *Pedestrian and cycle friendly (for all types of user regardless of the level of mobility or visual impairment) via the provision of cycle lanes, safe crossing points, direct routes, appropriate tactile surfaces, well lit and signposted to other amenities, public transport nodes and adjoining offsite pedestrian and cycle routes.*
 - h. *Providing suitable taxi drop-off/waiting areas.*
 - i. *Ensuring that rural buildings are located with appropriate transport access to ensure that they adequately serve the local community (where procured to do so e.g. community centre).*

4. Where appropriate to the building type, size and intended operation, the travel plan includes measures tailored to minimise the impacts of operational-related transport e.g. deliveries of supplies, equipment and support services to and from the site.

Where the building's final occupier is known, they confirm that the travel plan will be implemented post construction and supported by the building's management during building operation.

BREEAM Requirement	Comments	Satisfied? Yes/No/Partially
1	The Travel Plan has been prepared following extensive staff/member survey, staff/member consultation and double committee cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Policy & Regeneration & Strategy Committee on 10th July and 29th October 2014 • Cabinet on 10th November 2014 	Yes
2 a	Extensive Staff and member Travel Survey of all staff to be based at the Forum was undertaken in March 2014. 301 responses were received. The Plan has been prepared based on these findings	Yes
2b	Extensive Staff and member Travel Survey of all staff to be based at the Forum was undertaken in March 2014. 301 responses were received. The Plan has been prepared based on these findings	Yes
2c	The Moat Lane Project Board are reviewing signage at the time of writing (October 2014)	Partially
2d	The building has been designed to be fully accessible. The specific details are covered in a separate access audit	Yes
2e	Extensive Staff and member Travel Survey of all staff to be based at the Forum was undertaken in March 2014. 301 responses were received. The Plan has been prepared based on these findings	Yes
2f	Extensive Staff and member Travel Survey of all staff to be based at the Forum was undertaken in March 2014. 301 responses were received. The Plan has been prepared based on these findings	Yes
3a	This is being investigated at the time of writing (October 2014)	Partially
3b	25 bicycle stands are being installed and changing facilities are being investigated at the time of writing (October 2014)	Yes
3c	These issues are being finalised at the time of writing (October 2014)	Partially
3d	This work is being carried out by the Lead Officer Transport Policy at the time of writing (October 2014)	Yes
3e	There are no parking facilities for staff on-site	Yes
3f	Extensive information will be made available in the main lobby/reception. The Customer Service Manager is leading on this aspect	Yes
3g	Improvements to cycling infrastructure are required. Feasibility work is in progress	No
3h	A drop-off/taxi waiting area is being constructed at the time of writing (October 2014)	Yes
3i	This requirement is not relevant as the location is not rural	N/A

4	<p>The impact of deliveries and operational transport is being minimised through shared procurement. Facilities Management are taking the lead on this.</p> <p>Senior management (Joint Management Team) and the Moat Lane Project Board (MLPB) have been involved in the development of the Travel Plan. Formal updates have been made on:</p> <p>JMT on 20th November 2013 (Shaping the Policy) JMT on 16th July 2014 (First Draft) JMT on 15th October 2014 (Committee Draft)</p> <p>MLPB on 12th June 2014 (Shaping the Policy) MLPB on 17th July 2014 (First Draft) MLPB on 16th October 2014 (Committee Draft)</p> <p>The level of support is high and stretching targets have been approved.</p> <p>Progress against targets will be reported quarterly with an annual update to committee</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
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16th October 2014

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Minute Item 87

Appendix A – Draft Revenue Budget

- 1.1 This appendix sets out the latest draft budget position based on the Medium Term Revenue Plan (MTRP) that has been considered by Budget Planning Committee at its meetings during the autumn.
- 1.2 The current MTRP for 2015-16 shows a funding gap of £1.548 million. This is detailed below.

Table 1 – Initial Budget Draft Position

MEDIUM TERM REVENUE PLAN OPENING BUDGET POSITION	2014-15 Approved February £000	2015-16 MTRP November £000
EXPENDITURE (Budget Requirement)		
Approved base budget	14,341	14,341
Unavoidable pressures		
Contract Inflation		63
Demand led increases		50
Pay inflation		240
Pay increments		90
Superannuation increases		67
Investment income		49
NNDR Pressures		6
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	14,341	14,905
FUNDING		
Business Rates Baseline	(3,401)	(3,493)
Revenue Support Grant	(3,864)	(2,629)
Formula grant equivalent	(7,265)	(6,122)
Transfer to Parish Councils for CTRS	349	349
Transfer Homelessness Grant	101	101
S31 Grant	0	0
Collection Fund	(233)	(100)
New Homes Bonus	(1,013)	(1,188)
Business Rates Growth - above baseline	(400)	(400)
Business Rates Pooling	0	0
	(8,461)	(7,360)
Council Tax income	(5,880)	(5,997)
TOTAL INCOME	(14,341)	(15,205)
FUNDING GAP	0	1,548

- 1.3 The draft budget has been prepared using the underlying principles set out in the budget strategy considered by Executive on the 6 October 2014. The MTRP has been updated using a series of changes and assumptions as follows:
- 1.4 **Budget reductions**
The savings identified as “category 1” total £289,000 and these were presented to the Budget

Planning Committee at its meeting of 4 November.

Service	Building Block Budget Reduction	Saving
Service Assurance	Contract price reduction	£89,500
Development Management	Increase Planning Income budget to reflect actual income	£100,000
Development Management	Increase Pre-Application Income budget to reflect actual income	£50,000
Refuse collection	Dissolution of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership	£17,000
Estates and Facilities Management	Caretaking establishment cost saving - provided by Thames Security	£15,000
Estates and Facilities Management	Depot Cleaning establishment cost saving	£2,300
Estates and Facilities Management	Pioneer Square establishment cost saving	£15,000

Total Budget Reductions - Category 1

£288,800

1.5 Unavoidable Growth

The budget includes unavoidable growth of £775,000 which predominantly relates to car park income pressures and an expected reduction in the level of Government subsidy on rent allowances.

Service	Growth Bid	£
Community Services	Car Park income budget reduction.	303,000
Environmental Services	Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Diversion credits - scheduled reduction	52,000
Estates and Facilities Management	Repairs to 38 Market Square - at end of lease	60,000
Revenues	Reinstatement of post (base budget correction)	10,000
Rent Allowances	Correction to base budget from 100% (not netted off against overpayments recovered)	350,000
		775,000

1.6 New Homes Bonus

£1,270,000 of New Homes Bonus monies have been built into the MTRP for 2015-16. This is in line with the CTB 1 form and the Council's current strategy to use 50% of the money to support the base budget.

Excludes Affordable Housing and Admin Fee

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Year 1	439,186	439,186	439,186	439,186	439,186	439,186			
Year 2		237,969	237,969	237,969	237,969	237,969	237,969		
Year 3			562,761	562,761	562,761	562,761	562,761	562,761	
Year 4				665,436	665,436	665,436	665,436	665,436	665,436
Year 5					634,000	634,000	634,000	634,000	634,000
Year 6						634,000	634,000	634,000	634,000
Year 7							634,000	634,000	634,000
Year 8								634,000	634,000
Year 9									634,000
Total	439,186	677,155	1,239,916	1,905,352	2,539,352	3,173,352	3,368,166	3,764,197	3,835,436
Budgeted NHB	219,593	338,578	619,958	952,676	1,269,676	1,586,676	1,684,083	1,882,099	1,917,718

1.7 Business Rates Growth

The MTRP includes business rates growth above the baseline, use of pooled business rates and Section 31 Grant.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	£	£	£	£	£
Business Rates Growth (Above Baseline)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)
Percentage (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Budgeted Business Rates Growth	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)
Pooled Business Rates	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)
Use of pooled returns (%)	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%
Budgeted Pooled Business Rates	(450,000)	(450,000)	(450,000)	(450,000)	(450,000)
S31 Grant - From NNDR 1 form	(1,170,000)	(1,170,000)	(1,170,000)	(1,170,000)	(1,170,000)
Use of S31 Grant (%)	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Budgeted S31 Grant	(1,053,000)	(1,053,000)	(1,053,000)	(1,053,000)	(1,053,000)
Total Budgeted Business Rates	(2,103,000)	(2,103,000)	(2,103,000)	(2,103,000)	(2,103,000)
Best Case Scenario +10%	(2,313,300)	(2,313,300)	(2,313,300)	(2,313,300)	(2,313,300)
Worst Case Scenario -10%	(1,892,700)	(1,892,700)	(1,892,700)	(1,892,700)	(1,892,700)

1.8 Building in all the changes highlighted above gives a revised MTRP showing gap of £186,000.

MEDIUM TERM REVENUE PLAN CURRENT BUDGET POSITION	2014-15 Approved February £000	2015-16 MTRP December £000
EXPENDITURE (Budget Requirement)		
Approved base budget	14,341	14,341
Unavoidable pressures		
Contract Inflation		63
Demand led increases		50
Pay inflation		240
Pay increments		90
Superannuation increases		67
Investment income		49
NNDR Pressures		6
Category 1 savings		(289)
Unavoidable Growth		775
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	14,341	15,391
FUNDING		
Business Rates Baseline	(3,401)	(3,493)
Revenue Support Grant	(3,864)	(2,629)
Formula grant equivalent	(7,265)	(6,122)
Transfer to Parish Councils for CTRS	349	349
Transfer Homelessness Grant	101	101
Section 31 grant (from NNDR1)	0	(1,053)
Council Tax Compensation Grant	0	(63)
Collection Fund	(233)	(100)
New Homes Bonus	(1,013)	(1,270)
Business Rates Growth - above baseline	(400)	(600)
Business Rates Pooling	0	(450)
	(8,461)	(9,208)
Council Tax income	(5,880)	(5,997)
TOTAL INCOME	(14,341)	(15,205)
FUNDING GAP	0	186

1.9 The draft budget still has a funding gap which needs to be addressed. This is intentional as there are still uncertainties and detailed work in progress.

1.10 Further work will be undertaken in order to be able to present a balanced budget for the Executive to consider at its meeting of the 2 February 2015. There will be a number of areas which will be subject to further investigation and these include:

- A further review of income levels
- Identification of the revenue implications of any approved capital projects
- A review of further efficiency / saving options
- Looking at on-going provisions
- Review of investment income

- Tax Base confirmation
- Impact of any growth proposals

1.11 In addition to the measures above, the Council needs to update its Business Rates estimates and complete the National Non Domestic Rates form (NNDR1) in January, this determines the estimate for the level of next year's growth.

1.12 The local government finance settlement will not be announced until mid-December and therefore the assumptions applied have been based on the Medium Term Revenue Plan. These will be reviewed once the settlement is announced.

1.13 **Capital Bids**

These have been considered informally by Budget and Planning Committee on 25 November (Appendix B). They have been grouped in three categories: general bids, asset management review bids and ICT strategy bids. The Council is taking a holistic approach to its assets rather than investing in properties in a piecemeal fashion. There will be a separate report from the Director of Bicester on how to deliver the Council's Asset Management Plan. This will form a separate bid for the capital process. This Committee will formally make recommendations to Executive at the appropriate point in the process.

As the Council is now in the position of having committed all of its capital resources revenue borrowing costs have been included for each bid. The total potential revenue costs for 2015/16 is £130k.

1.14 **Conclusion**

The draft 2015-16 revenue and capital budget will form the basis for consultation with our stakeholders and the output of this consultation will be considered in formulating the final 2015-16 budgets and Corporate Plan.



**DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE**

Draft strategic priorities, key objectives and key deliverables for 2015/16 for consultation.

Summary:

4 strategic priorities

24 key objectives

- **District of Opportunity = 6 key objectives**
- **Safe, Green, Clean = 4 key objectives**
- **Thriving Communities = 8 key objectives**
- **Sound Budgets and Customer Focussed Council = 6 key objectives**

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

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

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

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

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

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

- The extension and improvement of Woodgreen Leisure centre as a better facility for the town
- Prepare a scheme for the redevelopment of the Bolton Road site
- Secure a start on site by the developer subject to the detailed development agreement being completed, and maximise the Council's income and returns from Castle Quay and Castle Quay 2
- Take steps to develop a Masterplan for the redevelopment of Canalside within Banbury Town Centre redevelopment
- Commission and complete a commercial appraisal for Banbury town centre, and subsequently bring forward appropriate redevelopment proposals for urgent consideration
- Develop a car parking strategy for the town
- Review future arts provision
- **Complete and implement the Masterplan for Kidlington, helping to develop a strong village centre afforded by its location.**
- Agree the next steps for the development options for Kidlington against agreed timescales and milestones
- Establish new management arrangements for SBSG on behalf of KPC

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity cont...

Promote inward investment and support business growth within the District.

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

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

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

Cherwell: Safe, Green, Clean

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment.

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

Cherwell: Thriving Communities

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cherwell: Thriving Communities cont.

Provide high quality and accessible leisure opportunities.

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

Provide support to the voluntary and community sector.

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

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

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

Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services.

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

Cherwell: Sound Budgets and Customer Focused Council

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

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

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

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

Cherwell: Sound Budgets and Customer Focused Council cont.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- CDC Council Tax element frozen for 15/16

Section 3: Performance Pledges 2015/16

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

Cherwell: a district of opportunity

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

Cherwell: safe, green, clean

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

Cherwell: thriving communities

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

Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

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

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