



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Meeting of Council

Monday 24 February 2025

Members of Cherwell District Council,

A meeting of Council will be held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA on Monday 24 February 2025 at 6.30 pm, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Monitoring Officer

Friday 14 February
2025

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3 Communications

To receive communications from the Chairman and/or the Leader of the Council.

4 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

Addresses may be presented by:

- A Local Government elector for the area,
- A person who is wholly or mainly resident in the area,
- A Council Taxpayer or National Non-Domestic Ratepayer for the area

Addresses must be on an item on the agenda before the meeting and not exceed 5 minutes. No person may address more than one meeting on any particular issue.

Requests to address the meeting (including the agenda item and reason for the address) should be submitted to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk. The deadline for requests to address this meeting is noon on Friday 21 February 2025.

The deadline to present a petition to this meeting has passed.

Full details of public participation at meetings is available in the Constitution.

5 Urgent Business

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

Council Business Reports

6 Members' Allowance Scheme 2025/2026 (Pages 9 - 38)

Report of Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Purpose of report

To determine the levels of the allowances to be paid to Members for the forthcoming 2025/2026 financial year and proposed changes to the Members Allowance Scheme, following the consideration of the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (the "Panel") attached at Appendix 1.

Recommendations

Council resolves:

- 1.1 To consider the levels of allowances to be included in the 2025/2026 Members' Allowances Scheme, and whether the Panel's recommendations (as set out at paragraph 3.1 of this report and section 2) should be adopted or modified in any way.
- 1.2 To authorise the Assistant Director Law and Governance to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2025.
- 1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director of Law and Governance to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2024/2025) Scheme and to publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

- 1.4 To thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for its report and set a fee of £300 for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review and propose the same level of fee for any reviews carried out in 2025/2026 capped at a maximum of £1200 per person, which can be funded from existing budgets.

7 Budget 2025/2026 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (Pages 39 - 256)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance

Purpose of report

To consider and approve the Budget Setting for 2025/26 and MTFS 2029/30 as per the recommendations.

Recommendations

The Council resolves to:

- 1.1 Have regard to the statutory report of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 25 report) at Appendix 3 in approving recommendations 1.2 – 1.9.
- 1.2 Approve the proposed Fees and Charges schedule for 2025/26 (Appendix 7) and statutory notices be placed where required.
- 1.3 Consider and note the Equality Impact Assessments of the Budget (Appendix 8)
- 1.4 In relation to the Corporate Plan (Section 4.1) to:
 - 1.4.1 Approve the Corporate Plan set out in Appendix 1.
 - 1.4.2 Note the Internal Perspectives set out in Appendix 2.
- 1.5 In relation to the Revenue Budget Strategy (Section 4.2) and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (Section 4.5) to approve:
 - 1.5.1 The net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2025, as set out in Table 4.2.1, and further analysed in the Budget Book provided at Appendix 12.
 - 1.5.2 The MTFS and Revenue Budget 2025/26 (Sections 4.5 and 4.2 respectively), including the Savings Proposals and Investments included at Appendices 4 and 5, respectively.
- 1.6 In relation to Council Tax to approve:
 - 1.6.1 An increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2025 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £158.50 per annum.
 - 1.6.2 For long term empty properties, from 1 April 2025 an additional council tax premium will be charged of 100 per cent for properties empty for one year or more, replacing the current 100 per cent premium that

begins after 2 years of a property being empty. All other empty property premiums will remain.

1.6.3 It be noted that the Council Tax Base 2025/26 was determined at the Executive meeting held on 6 January 2025:

- a) for the whole Council area as 59,853.6 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (“the 1992 Act”)]; and
- b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the attached Appendix 21.

1.6.4 That the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2025/26 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) is £9,486,796.

1.6.5 That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2025/26 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the 1992 Act:

- a) £140,304,768 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the 1992 Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.
 - b) £124,192,690 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the 1992 Act.
 - c) £16,112,078 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the 1992 Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the 1992 Act).
 - d) £269.19 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).
 - e) £6,625,282 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act as per the attached Appendix 21.
 - f) £158.50 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by Cherwell District Council the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates.
- 1.6.6 It be noted that for the year 2025/26 the Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the 1992 Act, for each category of dwellings in the Council’s area as indicated below:

Valuation Band	Oxfordshire County Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley
	£	£
A	1,274.27	188.85
B	1,486.64	220.33
C	1,699.02	251.80
D	1,911.40	283.28
E	2,336.16	346.23
F	2,760.91	409.18
G	3,185.67	472.13
H	3,822.80	566.56

1.6.7 The Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the 1992 Act, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 22 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2025/26 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

1.6.8 The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2025/26 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the 1992 Act.

1.7 In relation to the Capital Programme and related strategies (Section 4.3) to approve:

1.7.1 The Capital Bid(s) and Capital Programme at Appendices 17 and 18 respectively.

1.7.2 The Capital and Investment Strategy 2025/26 (Appendix 19), including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy.

1.7.3 The Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2025/26 (Appendix 20).

1.8 In relation to reserves (Section 4.4) to approve:

1.8.1 A minimum level of General Balances of £7.8m as supported by Appendix 15.

1.8.2 The Reserves Policy (Appendix 14).

1.8.3 The medium-term reserves plan described in Appendix 16.

1.9 In relation to the Pay Policy Statement to approve:

1.9.1 The Pay Policy Statement, as required by the Localism Act 2010, detailed in Appendix 9.

For information

Please note:

Members are advised that written questions and motions for the next scheduled Council meeting on Monday 17 March must be submitted to the Assistant Director

Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer, democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, by noon on Wednesday 5 March.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

Evacuation Procedure

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

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

Webcasting and Broadcasting Notice

The meeting will be recorded by the council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the council's website. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except when confidential or exempt items are being considered. The webcast will be retained on the website for 6 months.

If you make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed by the council to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or joining virtually, you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

The council is obliged, by law, to allow members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record, and report on proceedings. The council will only seek to prevent this should it be undertaken in a disruptive or otherwise inappropriate manner.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk,
01295 221534