



Meeting of Council

Monday 20 October 2025

Members of Cherwell District Council,

A meeting of Council will be held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD on Monday 20 October 2025 at 6.30 pm, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

**Monitoring Officer
Friday 10 October 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 (Pages 7 - 8)

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

4 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chair 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 17 October.

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

6 Minutes of Council (Pages 9 - 22)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of Council held on 21 July 2025.

7 Minutes

- a) Minutes of Executive, Portfolio Holder Decisions and Executive Decisions not included in the 28-day notice

The Leader of the Council to formally propose that the minutes of the meetings of the Executive and Portfolio Holder Decisions as set out in the Minute Book (circulated separately) be received and to report that since the last meeting of Council held on 21 July 2025 no key or exempt decisions have been taken by the Executive which were not included in the 28 day notice.

- b) Minutes of Committees

The Leader of the Council to formally propose that the minutes of committees as set out in the Minute Book (circulated separately) be received.

8 Questions

- a) Written Questions

No written questions have been submitted. In

No written questions have been submitted with advance notice in accordance with the Constitution. The deadline for written questions has now passed.

- b) Questions to the Leader of the Council

The Chair to invite questions to the Leader of the Council (including any matters arising from the minutes).

Following a response to their question being provided Members will be entitled to a follow up or supplementary question.

c) Questions to Committee Chairs on the Minutes

The Chair to invite questions to Chairs of Committees on any matter arising from the minutes of their Committee (if any).

Council Business Reports

9 Review of Proportionality and Committee Membership (Pages 23 - 30)

Report of Monitoring Officer

Purpose of report

To note the amendments to the constitution of political groups and amendments to the proportionality calculations and committee membership arising from a change to political Group membership.

Recommendations

Council resolves:

- 1.1 To note the amended constitution of Political Groups (paragraphs 3.2 and 4.2).
- 1.2 To note the amended allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Table 1.
- 1.3 To note the amended allocation of seats on committees that are not subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Table 2.
- 1.4 To note the amendments to committee membership, as advised by the respective Leaders of the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance and Labour Group (paragraphs 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9).

10 Motions (Pages 31 - 32)

To receive the following motions which have been submitted with advance notice, in accordance with the Constitution (to be considered in the order submitted). Please note that the deadline to submit motions has passed.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.18, as the detail of both submitted motions fall within the remit of Executive, there will be no Council debate on the motions.

The proposer of the motion will propose the motion, the seconder will confirm, the Leader of the Council response and the motions will stand referred to Executive for consideration.

Topic	Proposer	Secunder
Supporting young women's community action for safe public spaces	Cllr Dr Kerrie Thornhill	TBC
Planning support for Town and Parish Councils	Cllr David Rogers	TBC

For information

Please note:

Members are advised that written questions and motions are not included on the agenda for the Special Council on Monday 10 November.

The next scheduled Council meeting at which written questions and motions are included on the agenda is Monday 15 December. Motions and written questions must be submitted to the Assistant Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer, democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, by noon on Wednesday 3 December.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members' Lounge 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

If you hear the fire alarm, please leave the building via the nearest available exit. The fire assembly point is outside the Premier Inn, adjacent to the canal.

Access to Meetings

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

Mobile Phones

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

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

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Chair Attendance Report July – October 2025¹

31 August

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended the laying up service of the Bodicote Branch Standard at Bodicote Church.

5 September

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended the Playzone opening at Chandos Close Recreation Ground in Banbury. The facility has been delivered through partnership with CDC, Banbury Town Council and The Football Foundation.

14 September

The Vice-Chair, Cllr Nigel Simpson, attended the Bicester Town Council Civic Service and parade. Parade starting at St Edburg's Church leading to Market Square for an inspections of the troops, followed by a civic service at St Edburg's Church.

23 September

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended the Oxfordshire Scouts AGM at Beckley Village Hall.

30 September

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker attended the Banbury Larder. The Banbury Larder runs a weekly community food larder every Tuesday. With the support of its volunteers, it offers hot lunches and companionship to people in need, as well as supplies of nutritious food for them to take away. It also aims to reduce food waste from the local retail network

4 October

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended the Banbury Canal Festival. Banbury Canal Festival was organised by Banbury Town Council in collaboration with some of the town's biggest and most well-known organisations. These include The Mill Arts Centre, Banbury Museum and Gallery, Castle Quay Shopping Centre, Tooley's Boatyard, The Village Butty, Lock.29 and Bridge Street Community Garden.

9 October

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, together with Cllr Lesley McLean and Cllr Chris Brant, participated in the Oxford CEO Sleepout. This is an annual event, one of several CEO Sleepouts taking place in other UK cities. The event's aim is to raise awareness of the homelessness crisis across Oxfordshire, as well as funds for local homeless charities and projects.

12 October

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended, Cllr Andy Gilbert, The Mayor of Thames Civic Service at St Mary's Church.

14 October 8

Th Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended The Court Sermon and Glove Ceremony at Christ Church in Oxford. The event was arranged by the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire, Mr John May CVO OBE DL.

¹ Correct at time of publication, 10 October 2025

15 October

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended the Golden Key Ceremony at Banbury Town Fair.

17 October

The Chair, Cllr Dorothy Walker, attended The Princess Diana Park Opening in Banbury.

Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 21 July 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Dorothy Walker (Chair)
Councillor Nigel Simpson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Fiaz Ahmed
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Besmira Brasha
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE
Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Dr Henry Elugwu
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Zoe McLernon
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Julian Nedelcu
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Edward Fraser Reeves
Councillor David Rogers
Councillor Alisa Russell
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill
Councillor Linda Ward
Councillor Amanda Watkins
Councillor John Willett
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Tom Beckett
Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Grace Conway-Murray
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Robert Parkinson
Councillor Dom Vaitkus
Councillor Douglas Webb

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Christina Cherry, Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager
Maria Dopazo, Principal Planning Policy Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation
Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Denzil Turbervill, Head of Legal Services

17 **Declarations of Interest**

15. The Granting of a New Lease at 36/37 Bridge Street, Banbury.

Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill, Other Registerable Interest, as a trustee of Banbury Charities and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

Councillor Ian Harwood, Other Registerable Interest, as a trustee of Banbury Charities and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

Councillor Rob Pattenden, Other Registerable Interest, as a trustee of Banbury Charities and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

18 **Communications**

Chairman's Engagements

A copy of the events attended by the Chair or the Vice-Chair was published with the agenda.

The Chair advised that she would be attending the funeral procession of Firefighter Martyn Sadler the following week. The Vice-Chair attended the

funeral procession of Firefighter Jennie Logan. The Firefighters had sadly lost their lives at the tragic fire at Bicester Motion in May.

In support of the Chair's Charity, Homeless Oxfordshire, together with Councillor McLean and Councillor Chris Brant, she would be participating in the Oxford CEO Sleepout. This was an annual event to raise awareness of the homelessness crisis across Oxfordshire, as well as raise funds for local homeless charities and projects.

That Chair reported that she had also visited O'Hanlon House, operated by Homeless Oxfordshire, which was the largest provider of accommodation for people experiencing homelessness in Oxfordshire as well as a wide range of specialist support services

The Chair advised that her Charity lunch would take place on 30 November. Further details would be circulated in due course.

Meeting Etiquette

The Chair reminded Members that all requests to address the meeting should be through the Chair. Members should remain in their seat during items and, if needed, she would adjourn the meeting to allow for a comfort break at a suitable point.

Members' Pigeon Holes

Members were reminded to check their pigeon hole and take any post.

19 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

20 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

21 Minutes of Council

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22 Minutes

a) Minutes of the Executive, Portfolio Holder Decisions and Executive Decisions made under Special Urgency

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive and Portfolio Holder decisions as set out in the Minute Book be received and that it be noted that since the last meeting of Council at which it was reported, on 16 December 2024, no decisions have been taken by the Executive which were not included in the 28 day notice.

b) Minutes of Committees

Resolved

That the minutes of Committees as set out in the Minute Book be received.

23

Questions

a) Written Questions

There were no written questions.

b) Questions to the Leader of the Council

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Cherry: Renewal of fencing by The Hill Community Centre

Councillor Dr Okeke: Initiative to address anti-social behaviour in Banbury
Ruscote

Councillor Clarke: Support to employees of JDE, Banbury

Councillor Parsons: Use of additional Government funding to support
implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Policy

Councillor Watkins: Attendance at All Member Seminars

Councillor Sibley: Review to introduce 2-hour free parking in CDC operated
car parks in Bicester

Councillor Crichton: Adoption of the Hanwell Fields Landscaping Area, "Y5"
by Cherwell District Council

Councillor Sibley: A4095 Realigned Howes Lane Bicester

c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes

There were no questions to Committee Chairman on the minutes of meetings.

24

Submission of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042

The Assistant Director Planning and Development submitted a report to present the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (draft) and to seek approval for its submission to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination. Executive has considered and had recommended Council approve the submission of the Plan at its meeting on 1 July 2025.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, Councillor Conway, explained that the adopted Local Plan was the main part of the statutory Development Plan, the starting point for considering development proposals. The review of the Cherwell Local Plan had commenced in 2020 with three public consultations were undertaken prior to the publication of the Proposed Submission Local Plan in December 2024. Following Executive approval in December 2024, consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan commenced on 19 December 2024 and closed on 25 February 2025.

The 345 consultation responses had been considered by officers in reviewing whether the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (the 'Plan') was 'sound' and legally compliant, the tests of the independent examination of the Plan started when the Proposed Submission Local Plan was submitted.

The view of officers was that the Plan was sound but that a number of 'proposed changes' and 'minor modifications' should be suggested to the examining inspector(s) in the interests of its improvement, clarification and updating and to address minor presentational, grammatical and typographical issues.

In considering the report, Members commended all council officers involved in the Local Plan process and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development for their work on the Local Plan as well as the cross party working through the Member Advisory Group and Group Leaders to reach submission stage for a sound Plan.

Councillor Wood proposed that a recorded vote be taken. This was duly seconded by Councillor Mawer. Having been proposed and seconded, a recorded vote was taken. Members voted as follows:

Councillor Fiaz Ahmed	For
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	For
Councillor Chris Brant	For
Councillor Besmira Brasha	For
Councillor John Broad	For
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	For
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE	For
Councillor Jean Conway	For
Councillor Gemma Coton	For
Councillor Nick Cotter	For
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed	For
Councillor Andrew Crichton	For
Councillor Dr Henry Elugwu	For
Councillor Donna Ford	Abstain
Councillor Ian Harwood	For
Councillor David Hingley	For
Councillor Frank Ideh	For
Councillor Harry Knight	For
Councillor Simon Lytton	For

Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Fiona Mawson	For
Councillor Lesley McLean	For
Councillor Zoe McLernon	For
Councillor Ian Middleton	For
Councillor Julian Nedelcu	For
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	For
Councillor Lynne Parsons	For
Councillor Rob Pattenden	For
Councillor Chris Pruden	For
Councillor Edward F Reeves	For
Councillor David Rogers	For
Councillor Alisa Russell	For
Councillor Les Sibley	For
Councillor Nigel Simpson	Abstain
Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill	For
Councillor Dorothy Walker	For
Councillor Linda Ward	For
Councillor Amanda Watkins	For
Councillor John Willett	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For

Resolved

- (1) That the submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination with all necessary prescribed and supporting documents be approved.
- (2) That the Schedule of Proposed Changes and Minor Modifications to the Proposed Submission Local Plan draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review be approved.
- (3) That the responses to the consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 summarised in the Statement of Consultation be noted.
- (4) That the supporting documents relevant to the preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042: Sustainability Appraisal (November 2024) - Non-Technical Summary; Sustainability Appraisal (November 2024); Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (May 2025); Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (November 2024); Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (November 2024); Consultation Statement (June 2025); Officer responses to representations received (June 2025); Duty to Co Operate Statement of Compliance (June 2025); and, Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 2025), be noted.

25

Gambling Act Statement of Licensing Policy 2025

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety submitted a report which sought approval of the draft Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy.

Consultation on the draft Policy was undertaken from 12 January 2025 until 14 February 2025. All representations received were considered and some amendments made to the draft Policy post consultation. The Policy was considered and approved by the Licensing Acts Committee on 9 July 2025, which recommended it to Council for adoption.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Gambling Act Statement of Licensing Policy 2025 be approved for adoption and publication by Cherwell District Council be approved.

26

Treasury Management Report - Annual Performance Report 2024/25

The Assistant Director Finance (S151 Officer) submitted a report to provide information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy for 2024-25 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

The report demonstrated that all treasury management activities undertaken during the reporting period complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the council's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee had considered and recommended this report to Council at their meeting of 28 May 2025.

Resolved

- (1) That the Treasury Management Annual Performance Report and the Capital Prudential indicators be noted.

27

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2024-25

The Assistant Director Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer submitted a report for Council to consider and note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for the 2024-25 municipal year.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Hingley, thanked the Overview and Scrutiny for their work and valuable contributions during 2024-25.

Resolved

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2024-25 be noted.

28 **Amendment(s) to Committee Membership**

The Chair advised that the Monitoring Officer had been not been notified of any changes to Committee membership by Group Leaders.

29 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

30 **The Granting of a New Lease at 36/37 Bridge Street, Banbury**

The Assistant Director Property submitted an exempt report in respect of the granting of a new lease at 36/37 Bridge Street, Banbury.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

31 **Readmittance of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

32 **Motions**

The Chair advised that three motions had been submitted. The motion "Cherwell Affordable Housing Emergency" was deferred from the cancelled March Council meeting. One amendment had been accepted as a friendly amendment by the proposer. A further amendment had been submitted. In line with the Constitution no further amendments were now permitted.

The motions "Primary Care Facilities in North Oxfordshire" and "Government Review of Local Authority Funding" would be dealt with in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.18, the revised procedure agreed at the May Annual Council meeting. In accordance with the procedure, the proposer of the

motion would propose the motion and address Council, the seconder would confirm their seconding, and the Leader, Councillor Hingley, would respond to the motion. They would then be referred to Executive for consideration as the detail of the motions fell within the remit of Executive.

Motion One: Cherwell Affordable Housing Emergency

It was proposed by Councillor Creed and seconded by Councillor Crichton that the following motion, as amended by a friendly amendment, be adopted.

“The Office for National Statistics data suggests that the average house price in Cherwell is £362,000 in December 2024, a 9% rise in cost since December 2023.

The cost of housing means that for many young people the costs are too high to realistically get on the housing ladder. Rents in the District are also extremely high, in December 2024 the average cost was £1215 up from £1121 in December 2023, making even renting in the district unaffordable for many residents

Cherwell District Council has an ever-increasing housing waiting list, which has increased by 10% in the last year alone. The waiting times are significant ranging from 243 days for 1-bedroom properties to 991 days for 4-bedroom properties, leaving many families waiting up to several years for appropriate accommodation.

In the last financial year alone, the council has spent £332,800 on housing residents in temporary accommodation. The need for housing in Cherwell is greater than ever.

This Council resolves that Cherwell District Council declares it has an affordable and social housing emergency and recognizes that the way forward is to focus on housing delivery in the context of the emerging Local Plan 2042, the approved housing strategy 2025-30 and the housing delivery action plan.”

The Monitoring Officer advised that the further amendment to the motion had been withdrawn by the amendment proposer and would therefore not be debated by Council.

The motion, as amended by the friendly amendment, was debated. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

Motion Two: Primary Care Facilities in North Oxfordshire

Councillor Rogers proposed and presented the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councillor Reeves. Councillor Hingley, Leader of the Council, responded to the motion.

“This Council considers that more needs to be done to expand and improve Primary Care facilities across North Oxfordshire.

Following a productive cross-party meeting between members and representatives of the Integrated Care Board (ICB), together with a careful review of representations from local stakeholders in recent weeks, this Council resolves to request that the Executive facilitates the expansion of Primary Care provision via any reasonable means, which may include, where appropriate and reasonable, the following:

- i. issuing standing advice on planning matters to the ICB to assist it in its place and facilities planning;
- ii. producing evidence to the ICB to support the well understood assertion that Primary Care is now at capacity across this district;
- iii. supporting the ICB to create a plan for the delivery of new and expanded primary care facilities across North Oxfordshire;
- iv. requesting that the ICB estates team better supports its 'drive to digital' by encouraging developer contributions into, inter alia, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) projects; and
- v. review, in conjunction with the ICB, why the proposed facilities at Longford Park, Hanwell Fields and Graven Hill have proven unsuccessful in recent years to avoid failures in new developments elsewhere.
- vi. consider Primary Care needs as widely as reasonably possible in future supplementary planning documents to encourage a greater number of capital projects coming forward and encouraging the ICB to request developer contributions on all applications of 10+ homes without limiting such bids to bricks-and-mortar projects alone."

Motion Three: Government Review of Local Authority Funding

Councillor Reeves proposed and presented the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councillor Rogers. Councillor Hingley, Leader of the Council, responded to the motion.

"This Council regrets the consequences of the government's plans to:

- (i) end the Business Rates Retention scheme that has contributed to the strength of local public finances since its introduction in 2013/14; and
- (ii) institute a Fair Funding model for local government that redistributes wealth from districts like Cherwell to other parts of the country.

This Council notes that the government's consultation on its Business Rates Reset policy has now ended and further notes that the government's Fair Funding consultation ends soon on 15 August 2025.

Moreover, a report to this Council's Budget Planning Committee meeting on 8 July 2025 concluded that:

"The impact of these changes is expected to reduce the council's funding by up to 40%."

Such a cumulative impact would reduce this Council's expenditure to such an extent that it could be forced to end all discretionary funding and revert to providing statutory services only.

Given the disastrous impact of such cuts, this Council requests as a matter of urgency that the Leader:

- (i) writes to our Members of Parliament with a view to their raising these concerns with Ministers;
- (ii) works through the District Councils Network, the Local Government Association and/or other relevant organisations to ensure that there is the strongest possible lobbying of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, highlighting the plight of a high-growth district like Cherwell;
- (iii) issue as strong an individual submission to the government's Fair Funding consultation as possible with a view to mitigating the effects of these cuts."

Resolved

- (1) That the following motion, as amended by a friendly amendment, be agreed:

"The Office for National Statistics data suggests that the average house price in Cherwell is £362,000 in December 2024, a 9% rise in cost since December 2023.

The cost of housing means that for many young people the costs are too high to realistically get on the housing ladder. Rents in the District are also extremely high, in December 2024 the average cost was £1215 up from £1121 in December 2023, making even renting in the district unaffordable for many residents

Cherwell District Council has an ever-increasing housing waiting list, which has increased by 10% in the last year alone. The waiting times are significant ranging from 243 days for 1-bedroom properties to 991 days for 4-bedroom properties, leaving many families waiting up to several years for appropriate accommodation.

In the last financial year alone, the council has spent £332,800 on housing residents in temporary accommodation. The need for housing in Cherwell is greater than ever.

This Council resolves that Cherwell District Council declares it has an affordable and social housing emergency and recognizes that the way forward is to focus on housing delivery in the context of the emerging Local Plan 2042, the approved housing strategy 2025-30 and the housing delivery action plan."

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm

Chair:

Date:

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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This report is public	
Review of Proportionality and Committee Membership	
Committee	Council
Date of Committee	20 October 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Not applicable
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	Not applicable
Report of	Monitoring Officer, Shiraz Sheikh

Purpose of report

To note the amendments to the constitution of political groups and amendments to the proportionality calculations and committee membership arising from a change to political Group membership.

1. Recommendations

Council resolves:

- 1.1 To note the amended constitution of Political Groups (paragraphs 3.2 and 4.2).
- 1.2 To note the amended allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Table 1.
- 1.3 To note the amended allocation of seats on committees that are not subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Table 2.
- 1.4 To note the amendments to committee membership, as advised by the respective Leaders of the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance and Labour Group (paragraphs 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 On 19 September 2025 Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke advised the Proper Officer that he had left the Labour Group and had joined the Conservative Party.
- 2.2 On 19 September 2025, Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke and Councillor Eddie Reeves, Leader of the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance, advised the Proper Officer that Councillor Okeke had joined the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance.
- 2.3 A Member changing political group requires a review of the allocation of seats on committees and changes to committee membership to be made if required. This is

reported to the next scheduled Council meeting and effective from the date of that meeting.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications		Commentary		
Finance		There are no financial implications arising directly from the report. Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer), 9 October 2025		
Legal		The allocation of seats to the Political Groups is in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1989 and related regulations mentioned in the report. Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer, 9 October 2025		
Risk Management		In ensuring the legal requirements are met risk to the authority is mitigated. Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer, 9 October 2025		
Impact Assessments		Positive	Neutral	Negative
Equality Impact			X	
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?			X	
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?			X	
Climate & Environmental Impact				
ICT & Digital Impact				
Data Impact				
Procurement & subsidy				

Council Priorities	None, this report is pursuant to a statutory requirement
Human Resources	N/A
Property	N/A
Consultation & Engagement	Political Group Leaders

Supporting Information

3. Background

3.1 The current constitution of the Council (48 Members) is:

- 17 Liberal Democrat (35.42%)
- 12 Conservative (25.00%)
- 11 Labour / Labour & co-operative party (22.92%)
- 4 Green (8.33%)
- 4 Independent (8.33%)

3.2 As a result of Councillor Dr Okeke leaving the Labour Group and joining the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance, the current political groupings of Council for committee allocation is:

- Liberal Democrat (17 Members, all Liberal Democrat party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor David Hingley
 - Deputy Group Leader: Councillor Lesley McLean
- Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance (13 Members, all Conservative Group members and 1 Independent Member, Councillor Ford)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Eddie Reeves
 - Deputy Group Leader: Councillor David Rogers
- Labour (11 Members, all Labour and Labour & Co-operative party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Amanda Watkins
 - Deputy Group Leader: Councillor Andrew Crichton
- Green and Independent Alliance (5 Members, comprising 4 Green members and 1 Independent Member, Councillor Broad)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Ian Middleton
 - Deputy Group Leader: Councillor Tom Beckett
- Independent (2 Members, comprising 2 Independent Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Les Sibley

- 3.3 The Labour Group and Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance no longer have the same number of members. The Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance is now the official opposition.

4. Details

Proportionality

- 4.1 The political balance of committees has been reviewed in accordance with the principles of political proportionality set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989:
- Where there is more than one political group, all seats must not be allocated to the same group.
 - The majority of seats must be allocated to the group with the majority on the Council.
 - When considering all seats available for allocation the total of those given to each group should match their representation on the Council overall.
 - The number of seats on each individual committee allocated to groups should match their representation on the Council overall.
- 4.2 Under the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 made pursuant to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, allocations of committee seats are made to political groups and any member not in a political group is consequently not automatically entitled to seats on committees. There are no such members currently and the committee allocations take account of the Groups notified to the Proper Officer as set out below.
- Liberal Democrat Group (17 Members) – 35.4%
 - Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance (13 Members) - 27.1%
 - Labour Group (11 Members) – 22.9%
 - Green and Independent Alliance Group (5 Members) – 10.4%
 - Independent Group (2 Members) – 4.2%
- 4.3 Table 1 sets out the revised allocation of Seats to proportional committees. The figures show the adjustments which are necessary to achieve the balance across and within committees to comply with the rules. There is no change to the adjustment agreed at the Annual Council meeting whereby the Independent Group gives a seat to the Liberal Democrat Group. The adjustment required is for the Labour Group to give a seat to the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance on the General Licensing Committee.

Table 1: Allocation of seats to non-proportional committee

	Liberal Democrat Group	Labour Group	Cherwell Conservative & Independent Alliance	Green & Independent Alliance Group	Independent Group	Total
% entitlement	35.4%	22.9%	27.1%	10.4%	4.2%	100%
Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee	3	2	2	1	0	8
Appeals Panel	4	2	3	1	0	10
Budget Planning Committee	4	3	3	1	1	12
General Licensing Committee	5 (+1)	2 (-1)	4 (+1)	1	0 (-1)	12
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4	3	3	1	1	12
Personnel Committee	4	3	3	1	1	12
Planning Committee	6	4	5	2	1	18
Standards Committee	3	2	2	1	0	8
Proportional Entitlement by Committee	32	22	24	9	5	92
Aggregate Entitlement	33	21	25	9	4	92
Adjustment Required	+1	-1	+1	0	-1	0

4.4 The Constitution sets out that the Planning Committee has 12 named substitutes. These appointments are not included in the main committee proportionality calculations above but the number of substitutes per Group should reflect the political makeup of the Committee with the adjustment to ensure each Group has a named substitute. Groups should appoint the number of named substitutes as set out below:

- Liberal Democrat Group - 4
- Labour Group - 3
- Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance - 3
- Green and Independent Alliance Group - 1
- Independent Group - 1

4.5 Political Groups must have regard to the following when nominating Committee members:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee must not include any members of the Executive
- Personnel Committee must include at least one member of the Executive and may not include members of the Appeals Panel
- Appeals Panel members must not include any members of the Personnel Committee

- 4.6 The Licensing Acts Committee allocation of seats is not subject to the political balance requirements. Due to the crossover with the functions of the General Licensing Committee, Members resolved at the Annual Council meeting that the make-up of the Licensing Acts Committee reflect the make-up of the General Licensing Committee, and the same Members are appointed to both Committees. It therefore follows that the adjustment in Table 1 to the General Licensing Committee also applies to the Licensing Acts Committee. This is set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Allocation of seats to non-proportional committee

	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance	Green and Independent Alliance	Independent	Total
Licensing Acts Committee	5	2	4	1	0	12

Committee membership changes

- 4.7 The following adjustments are required by the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance:

- General Licensing Committee (also applicable to Licensing Acts Committee)
 - ADD Councillor Doug Webb
- Planning Committee
 - ADD Councillor David Rogers as a full committee member (currently a named substitute, therefore creating a named substitute vacancy)
 - ADD Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke as named substitute (vacancy arisen as per above)

- 4.8 The Leader of the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance has notified the Proper Officer of the following changes to committee membership (not required by the review of proportionality):

- Budget Planning Committee
 - REMOVE Councillor David Rogers
 - ADD Councillor Zoe McLernon
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - REMOVE Councillor Zoe McLernon
 - ADD Councillor David Rogers

- 4.9 The seats Councillor Dr Okeke occupied as a member of the Labour Group (Appeals Panel, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Planning Committee named

substitute) ceased when he left the Labour Group are indicated below, in addition to the adjustments required by the Labour Group arising from the review of proportionality:

- Appeals Panel
 - ADD Councillor Mark Cherry (currently Labour Group vacancy)
- General Licensing Committee (also applicable to Licensing Acts Committee)
 - REMOVE Councillor Andrew Crichton
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 - ADD Councillor Dom Vaitkus (currently Labour Group vacancy)
- Planning Committee
 - REMOVE Councillor Rebecca Biegel as full committee member
 - ADD Councillor Rebecca Biegel as a named substitute (currently Labour Group vacancy)

- 4.9 The revised proportionality calculations do not require the Liberal Democrat Group, the Green and Independent Alliance Group or Independent Group to make any amendments to committee membership. However, should a Group Leader notify the Monitoring Officer of a change, this will be notified to Council.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

Option 1: Not to amend appointments to committees. This is rejected as the change of political group membership has resulted in amended entitlement to seats on committees for the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance and Labour Group .

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 A change in political group membership has resulted in a review of the allocation of seats on committees that are both subject to and not subject to the political balance requirements with amendments to committee membership. The Constitution requires Council to agree each of these aspects.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	N/A

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	None
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Report Author contact details	demcoracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01292 221535
Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Report of statutory officer, Monitoring Officer

Council

Monday 20 October 2025

Motions

Topic	Proposer	Seconder
Supporting young women's community action for safe public spaces	Cllr Dr Kerrie Thornhill	TBC
Planning Support for Town and Parish Councils	Cllr David Rogers	TBC

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.18, as the detail of both submitted motions fall within the remit of Executive, there will be no Council debate on the motions. The proposer of the motion will propose the motion, the seconder will confirm, the Leader of the Council response and the motions will stand referred to Executive for consideration.

Motion Proposer: Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill

Motion Secunder: TBC

Topic: Supporting young women's community action for safe public spaces

Motion

"Young women in Cherwell District have reported long-standing concerns related to their right to be free and safe in public spaces, especially after dark. In 2025, local women have started organising, both formally and informally, to put a stop to gender-targeted harassment and assaults. Some emerging initiatives include: young women who work at night clubs organising to make their industry better at preventing harassment and assault, young women setting up peer support networks in the community, and women seeking the creation of dedicated spaces in town centres for peer support for young women and LGBTQ+ residents and visitors.

Community action from young women leaders is commendable. It benefits all of society, and it deserves strong support from Councils.

Cherwell District Council recognises that our goal to promote a thriving night-time economy must be inclusive of young women's safety and freedom in these spaces. We will ensure young women leaders are consistently engaged as stakeholders in implementing this aspect of the 2042 Local Plan.

Cherwell District Council pledges to encourage local businesses and other private sector stakeholders to support and sponsor young women's community initiatives for safety.

Cherwell District Council will identify low cost out-of-use sites that are suitable for proposals from women-led initiatives for the community benefit, and ensure these sites are financially accessible for community-based initiatives.”

Motion Proposer: Councillor David Rogers

Motion Seconded: TBC

Topic: Planning Support for Town and Parish Councils

Motion

“Council notes with concern the significant development pressures arising from recent announcements, including: the proposed new town at Heyford Park, the Puy du Fou theme park, large-scale warehousing at Baynard’s Green, and the rail freight interchange.

Council recognises that these proposals will have far-reaching impacts on local communities, infrastructure, and the environment, and that Town and parish councils play a vital role in representing residents’ views.

However, these councils often lack the specialist planning expertise and resources required to respond effectively to complex applications of this scale. Council therefore resolves:

1. To provide accessible planning-related advice and support to councils within the affected areas, ensuring they are equipped to understand, scrutinise, and respond to major development proposals.
2. To establish a dedicated point of contact within the Planning Department for councils seeking guidance on strategic developments.
3. To explore options for training sessions and briefing notes tailored to councils, delivered in advance of key planning consultations.

This Council believes that empowering town and parish councils with expert advice will strengthen democratic participation, improve the quality of local input into the planning process, and help ensure that growth is managed responsibly and sustainably.

This officer-time could be funded from the unused heating fund which was in the Conservative budget amendment.”