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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday 9 September 2025

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD

Membership

Councillor Lynne Parsons (Chair)

Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke

Councillor Phil Chapman (Vice-Chair)

Councillor John Broad
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Zoe McLernon
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitutes Any member of the relevant political group, excluding Executive members

AGENDA

Overview and Scrutiny Members should not normally be subject to the party whip. Where a member is subject to a party whip they must declare this at the beginning of the meeting and it should be recorded in the minutes.

1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2025.

4. Chair's Announcements

To receive communications from the Chair.

5. Urgent Business

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

6. Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2025 - 2026 (Pages 9 - 34)

Report of Assistant Director Customer Focus

Purpose of report

To report to the committee the council's performance position at the end of Quarter 1 2025-26.

Recommendation

The Overview and Scrutiny resolves:

- 1.1 To consider the contents of the council's performance Quarter 1 report and agree comments to the Executive for consideration.

7. Work Programme Update (Pages 35 - 40)

Update from Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead.

Recommendation

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the work programme

8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following report(s) contain exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1, Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972.

3– Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Members are reminded that whilst the following item(s) have been marked as exempt, it is for the meeting to decide whether or not to consider each of them in private or in public. In making the decision, members should balance the interests of individuals or the Council itself in having access to the information. In considering their discretion members should also be mindful of the advice of Council Officers.

Should Members decide not to make a decision in public, they are recommended to resolve as follows:

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraph 3 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.”

9. Graven Hill Village Development Company Update (Pages 41 - 108)

Exempt report of the Corporate Director – Resources and Transformation.

For Information - Scrutiny Guide

The Scrutiny Guide is attached for information and reference.

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

Information about this Meeting

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 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.

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Webcasting and Broadcasting Notice

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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.

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Emma Faulkner / Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections
democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

Shiraz Sheikh
Monitoring Officer

Published on Monday 1 September 2025

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 15 July 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Lynne Parsons (Chair)

Councillor John Broad
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members:

Councillor Grace Conway-Murray (In place of Councillor Frank Ideh)
Councillor David Rogers (In place of Councillor Zoe McLernon)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Zoe McLernon

Councillor Chris Brant, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Officers:

Denzil Turbervill, Head of Legal Services
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections Officer

15 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

16 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17 **Chair's Announcements**

There were no Chair's announcements.

18 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

19 **Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director Law & Governance on the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2024/25.

The report provided a summary of the subjects covered by the Committee during the previous municipal year, highlighting key observations and outcomes of discussions. The report also provided a summary of work undertaken by four working groups during the course of the year.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the previous Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, the working groups as well as officers for their work the previous municipal year and the interim Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead Michael Carr, for his work compiling the Annual Report.

Members were asked to provide comment on the report prior to submission to full Council., Several amendments were suggested, in addition to those that had already been identified in the addendum paper published as a supplement to the agenda. It was proposed by Councillor John Broad and seconded by Councillor Harry Knight that the report be approved for submission to full Council, subject to the following agreed amendments:

- Paragraph 2.35 Final part of the final sentence '...and if achieved would then result in lower energy costs involved in heating said developments'

amended to read

'would then result in helping to reduce the cost of living'

- Paragraph 2.46 Second line '...to want extent...' amended to read '...to *what* extent...'
- Paragraph 3.14 Final sentence 'This included reducing the District Council's own greenhouse gas emissions, as well as reducing the area of the districts greenhouse gas emissions as a whole'

amended to read

'This included reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of both the Agenda Item No. Agenda Item Decision District Council, and the geographical district as a whole'

Resolved

(1) That subject to the following amendments, the annual report be approved for submission to full Council:

- Paragraph 2.35 Final part of the final sentence ‘...and if achieved would then result in lower energy costs involved in heating said developments’

amended to read

‘would then result in helping to reduce the cost of living’

- Paragraph 2.46 Second line ‘...to want extent...’ amended to read ‘...to *what* extent...’

- Paragraph 3.14 Final sentence ‘This included reducing the District Council’s own greenhouse gas emissions, as well as reducing the area of the districts greenhouse gas emissions as a whole’

amended to read

‘This included reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of both the Agenda Item No. Agenda Item Decision District Council, and the geographical district as a whole’

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Work Programme Update

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for 2025-26.

The Chair explained that since the last meeting, she and the Vice-Chair had met with Corporate Leadership Team on 8 July, to discuss the indicative work programme and suggested timings and format for each item.

The Committee were asked to consider and provide feedback and suggestions on the indicative Work Programme 2025 – 2026 as presented in the supplement to the agenda.

In response to a question relating to the inclusion of Primary Care expansion as a result of Section 106 (s106) contributions within the Performance of s106 item of the work programme, the Chair confirmed that the request would be made to relevant officers.

In response to a question relating to changes in national business rate redistribution as a result of a change in government legislation and the potential impact on service levels within the district, the Committee were advised that this would be covered by the service levels item scheduled for the November meeting. An additional question was asked regarding a briefing for Members in advance of that item, on desired service levels and any

relevant national targets for all of the council services. It was agreed that the query would be raised with relevant officers and an update be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the indicative Work Programme 2025 – 2026 be noted and endorsed.

The meeting ended at 7.01 pm

Chair:

Date:

This report is public	
Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2025-2026	
Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Committee	9 September 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	18 August 2025
Report of	Assistant Director – Customer Focus, Shona Ware

Purpose of report

To report to the committee the council's performance position at the end of Quarter 1 2025-26.

1. Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny resolves:

- 1.1 To consider the contents of the council's performance Quarter 1 report and agree comments to the Executive for consideration.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Performance report presents how the council has performed against its priorities for 2025-26, which are set out in its Outcomes Framework.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	There are no financial and resource implications arising directly from this report. Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance, 11 August 2025
Legal	There are no legal implications arising at this stage. In relation to some of the KPIs which have been missed or not tracked, it is important for the Council to monitor these from a legal perspective to ensure that we are meeting our statutory obligations in relation to these areas. Denzil Turbervill, Head of Legal, 18 July 2025
Risk Management	There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 18 July 2025

Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		There are no direct equalities and inclusion implications as a consequence of this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 18 August 2025
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				N/A
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	This report links to all council's priorities, as it summarises our progress against them during Quarter 1 2025-26			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	N/A			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The council actively and regularly monitors its performance to ensure it can deliver its corporate priorities and respond effectively to emerging issues.
- 3.2 This monitoring takes place at least quarterly for performance, so the council can identify potential issues at the earliest opportunity and put measures in place to mitigate them.
- 3.3 As requested on 1 August 2025 by the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee, section 4.5 and appendix 3 provide a high-level overview on our current KPIS, including how the local targets are determined, how they compare to national targets and who sets national targets.

4. Details

4.1 Performance Summary

- 4.1.1 The council is performing well against its Quarter 1 objectives, which consist of 9 Corporate KPI Measures, and 23 Annual Delivery Plan actions. Reporting as per the table below for this quarter.

Plan	Total number of measures	Red (Behind target)		Amber (Slightly behind target)		Green (Achieved or within tolerance)	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
ADP	23	0	0%	3	13%	20	87%
Corporate KPIs (Targeted)	9	0	0%	4	44%	5	56%
Total	32	0	0%	7	22%	25	78%

4.2 Performance Exceptions

- 4.2.1 Of the 23 milestones set for Quarter 1, 20 were achieved or within the agreed tolerance, and three slightly behind target.

Annual Delivery Plan – Exceptions

Action	Milestone	Status
Strengthen community cohesion	Produce Annual EDI General Duty Compliance	Amber
Deliver Planning Service Improvement	Establish performance improvement indicators, targets and resources needs	Amber

Create Vibrant economic centres and thriving rural villages	Complete asset register and agree future plan for each, with focus on those that are underutilised or suitable for community transfer	Amber
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- 4.2.2 Of the nine targeted corporate key performance indicators, five achieved their Q1 target or reported within the agreed tolerance, and the four below reported slightly behind target

Corporate Key Performance Indicators – Exceptions

Measure	Status
BP1.2.02 No of Homeless Households living in nightly charge (Hotel) Temporary accommodation (TA)	Amber
BP1.2.05 % of Homelessness cases successfully prevented rather than relief/main duty being applied	Amber
BP1.2.10 % of Major Applications overturned at appeal	Amber
BP2.2.03 % Climate Actions Plan delivering to target	Amber

For full details on all ADP milestones and Corporate KPIS, including commentary, please reference Appendices 1 and 2.

4.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Targets 2025-26

- 4.3.1 Cherwell District Council's KPIs' setting process combines national benchmarks, local strategic priorities, and historical performance data to establish meaningful and achievable targets. Where national indicators exist, indicators are aligned accordingly, otherwise, local targets are set through collaboration with service teams, using insights from previous years, anticipated activity levels, and local context. This approach ensures that performance measures are both relevant and responsive, supporting continuous improvement across key areas such as housing, planning, environmental sustainability, financial management, and community wellbeing.
- 4.3.2 Appendix 3 outlines the Key Performance Indicators for the 2025–2026 reporting period, providing a comprehensive overview of performance measures across various service areas, detailing the responsible directors, target thresholds, and whether each measure is nationally mandated or internally set. Where applicable, the rationale behind target setting is explained, offering insight into how historical data, benchmarking, and strategic priorities inform performance expectations.

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: This report summarises the council's financial position up to the end of Quarter 1 2025-26, therefore there are no alternative options to consider.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 To note the contents of the report and approve the recommendations found in section 1.

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	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Business Plan & Monitoring measures Quarter 1 2025-26.
Appendix 2	Annual Delivery Plan Quarter 1 2025-26
Appendix 3	KPI Targets 2025-26
Background Papers	N/A
Reference Papers	N/A
Report Author	Celia Prado-Teeling - Performance Team Leader
Report Author contact details	Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk , 01295 221556
Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director for Resources & Transformation, 30 July 2025

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Delivering quality housing and placemaking - Corporate KPI's 2025-2026

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G
BP1.2.02 No. of Homeless Households living in nightly charged (Hotel) Temporary accommodation (TA)	Cllr N Cotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ian Boll Nicola Riley 	Smaller Is Better	27.00	25.00	●
Commentary At the end of Q1 we had 27 households in B&B temporary accommodation.						
BP1.2.05 % of Homelessness cases successfully prevented rather than relief/main duty being applied	Cllr N Cotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ian Boll Richard Smith 	Bigger Is Better	54.00%	60.00%	●
Commentary At the end of Q1 we had successfully prevented homelessness in 54 cases of which 19 received a final offer of accommodation via the private rented sector						
BP1.2.08 % of Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Peckford Ian Boll 	Bigger Is Better	75.0%	60.0%	★
Commentary 12 Major Planning Applications were determined during Q1 2025/26, 9 of which were determined within the National Indicator target or agreed timeframe.						
BP1.2.09 % of Non-Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Peckford Ian Boll 	Bigger Is Better	79.5%	70.0%	★
Commentary 263 Non-Major Planning Applications were determined during Q1 2025/26, 209 of them within National Indicator target or agreed timeframe.						

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G
BP1.2.10 % of Major Applications overturned at appeal	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Peckford Ian Boll 	Smaller Is Better	16.7%	10.0%	●
Commentary 2 Major Planning Application decisions were overturned at Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate during Q1 2025/26. 22/03873/F - Land North And Adjacent To Mill Lane, Stratton Audley Installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with a switchgear container, inverter/transformer units, Site access, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. Officer recommendation – Approval – overturned at Committee 6/6/2024 22/01293/F - Land At Manor View (West of Manor Park),Hampton Poyle, Kidlington Change of use of land for the creation 2 Gypsy/Traveller pitches, comprising the siting of 1 mobile home, 1 touring caravan, and the erection of 1 dayroom per pitch Delegated refusal.						
BP1.2.11 % of Non-Major Applications overturned at appeal	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Peckford Ian Boll 	Smaller Is Better	1.1%	10.0%	★
Commentary 3 Non-Major Planning Application decisions were overturned at Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate during Q1 2025/26						

Leading environmental stewardship and climate action - Corporate KPI's 2025-2026

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G
BP2.2.01 % Waste Recycled & Composted	Cllr I Middleton	<div><div></div>Ed Potter</div> <div><div></div>Ian Boll</div>	Bigger Is Better	51.97%	54.00%	★
BP2.2.03 % of Climate Action Plan delivering to target	Cllr T Beckett	<div><div></div>Ian Boll</div> <div><div></div>Jo Miskin</div>	Bigger Is Better	59.17%	66.00%	●

Commentary

In Q1, of the 120 Climate Actions, 102 were Ongoing, 11 On-hold, and 7 Completed. RAG ratings showed 71 actions in Green, 39 in Amber, and 10 in Red.

Executive approval was secured for accepting around £1.1 million through a successful PSDS Phase 4 bid to support energy efficiency upgrades in council buildings. We've received a quote from the DNO for an electricity upgrade at Stratfield Brake Sports Ground and are preparing a response, while no upgrades are needed at the other three sites; in parallel, we're engaging stakeholders and exploring the appointment of an external consultant to support project delivery. The Climate Change Programme Board (CCPB) was formally established and held its first meeting, endorsing progression to Phase 2 of the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) and confirming CCPB will serve as the governing body for LAEP Phase 2. CCPB agreed for initiating development of a new Climate Strategy followed by an Action Plan post-study completion. CCPB recognised that service areas are responsible for decarbonisation, with the Climate Team acting as an enabler. Work on LAEP is progressing in partnership with OCC, ARUP, and neighbouring authorities. Phase 1 is set to complete in September, with the baseline report finalised, modelling assumptions agreed, and contributions made to two workshops and a focused investment workshops for CDC scheduled for 5 August. We have contributed to the OCC-led Adaptation Route Map, progressed with Fast Follower on exploring carbon sequestration through nature and marketplace development. We have held multiple workshops supporting local businesses in their decarbonisation journey and participated in the initial mobilisation of the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Partnerships (ZCOP), now preparing to engage actively as it expands into the Cherwell are. Progress and draft reports were received and reviewed for the district's carbon baseline, CDC's fleet decarbonisation, council footprint, and business and industrial emissions, with feedback shared with consultants for further refinement.

Please note there are no Corporate KPIs under this priority due to be reported during Q1 2025-26

Empowering community leadership - Directorate KPI's 2025-2026

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G
BP4.2.04 % of due food hygiene inspections of premises rated A-D completed	Cllr R Parkinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ian Boll Tim Hughes 	Bigger Is Better	95.17%	95.00%	★
Commentary Of the inspections not completed within 28days of the due date, 5 were not open or needed an appointment and unavailable. 1 looks to be closed, letter sent 14 days given to respond before closing record. And one was missed and will be completed as soon as possible.						

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Appendix 2 - Annual Delivery Plan 2025-26

Please note delivery of the actions below could be affected by changes in policy, national and local circumstances, these risks are managed through each service operational risk

Council plan priority	Goals	Aims	Year 1 actions	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	QTR	Milestones Q1-Q4	RAG	Performance
Economic prosperity Page 21	Create vibrant economic centres and thriving rural villages	To foster diverse economic centres and villages that support local businesses, attract investment, and enhance community life.	Ongoing engagement with businesses to support their investment plans. Working together with OCC to plan infrastructure for strategic growth	Julia Harrington Ian Boll	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Agree delivery timescales for Market Square, Bicester. Agree action plans and priorities for Kidlington, Bicester and Banbury		The Market Square project has been progressing throughout Q1. An estimated programme has been developed in Q1, and is included as an Appendix to the Exec report due to be presented on the 2nd September. The Area Priority Plans have been developed in Q1 for all 3 areas, and presented to the relevant Area Oversight Group (AOG).
						Q2	Agree the plan for the 2025/26 Economic Forum Hold annual Business Awards (Sept)		
						Q3	Commission a report on the Future of Cherwell's high streets. Develop and agree an action plan to reflect the findings of Experience Oxfordshire's Economic report on Cherwell		
						Q4	Hold the 2025/26 Economic Forum in order to explore investment opportunities and barriers/challenges to future investment		
		To promote sustainable economic prosperity through innovation, resilience, and strategic growth.	Continue the diversification of tenancies at Council owned commercial properties including key public/third sector partners	Mona Walsh Stephen Hinds	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Launch a campaign to attract a diverse range of tenants at commercial sites		Campaign launched. End Q1 outcome - terms agreed for two new lettings at Castle Quay. Offers received for vacant unit at Pioneer Square being considered and due diligence underway. Updated to Amber following monthly meeting with Property PH on 19 Aug. Good progress made to date but some further actions to be agreed.
						Q2	No milestone		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		
			Maximise the impact of Council-owned and other assets to further enable the regeneration of our Economic Centres	Mona Walsh Julia Harrington Ian Boll	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Complete asset register and agree future plan for each, with a focus on those that are underutilised or suitable for community transfer.		Initial document drafted and discussed with Cllr McLean. Actions agreed include action plan and focus on underutilised and assets suitable to transfer or disposal.
						Q2	No milestone		
						Q3	Complete options appraisal for Castle Quay Bridge Street area site and agree next steps in collaboration with Banbury AOG Agree assets for disposal and delivery plan		
						Q4	Complete an options appraisal for extending PV and wind energy on council assets in support of climate priority.		
	Build an inclusive and green economy	To build an economy that is both inclusive and environmentally sustainable, ensuring equitable opportunities for all while minimising environmental impact.	Delivering the Year 4 programme of UK Shared Prosperity Funding, to focus on pressures in our communities	Julia Harrington Ian Boll	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Agree and Launch the 2025/26 UKSPF programme. Produce report on the outcomes achieved for 2024/25		The UKSPF programme for 25/26 has been agreed by Cllr McLean as Portfolio Holder decision, with delegation to Ian Boll to amend when required, in discussion with Portfolio Holder. The outcomes report for 24/25 has been completed and approved by MF and sent back to MHCLG.
						Q2	Identify implications for Cherwell of Oxfordshire Flood Task Force priorities		
						Q3	Report on area infrastructure gaps/needs (electricity, water, foul) and agree priorities		
						Q4	Produce a report on the outcomes of the final year of the UKSPF programme.		
			Support the Marmot Place Partnership for Oxfordshire.	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr R Pattenden	Q1	Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2		Five villages in Cherwell have been selected for the Marmot Rural Place initiative based on data-driven insights, and the commissioning process is underway to appoint an organisation to deliver community insight profiles in collaboration with the Wellbeing team.
						Q2	Launch Marmot Place Programme with partners		
						Q3	Consult on the Deprivation Remediation Programme for 2026		
						Q4	No milestone		

Community Leadership	Strengthen community collaboration and resilience	To work closely with communities and partners to foster shared solutions to building safe, resilient, and empowered communities.	Review of our Local Strategic Partnership to be more effective in delivering co-produced solutions to community issues	Tim Hughes Ian Boll	Cllr R Parkinson	Q1	Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2		Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2.
						Q2	Work with key partners to identify and agree key community issues for the partnership to consider in year.		
						Q3	Work with key partners to identify and agree community-based solution. Review and re-launch the LSP accordingly.		
						Q4	No milestone		
			Develop parish council toolkit to empower communities	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Launch parish toolkit initiative		Parish liaison meeting considered the first topic for a toolkit should be flooding. The Council will be holding a Parish Flood Workshop in late Summer/early Autumn - Cherwell in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council.
						Q2	Work with parish councils to identify key components required to empower communities and agree next steps		
						Q3	Review and agree Cherwell's Green and Blue Corridors to increase understanding and awareness		
						Q4	Review and implement actions as appropriate from the Oxfordshire Adaptation Route map		
			Transfer existing community assets to community organisations to support collaboration and resilience	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2		
						Q2	Identify and agree potential assets for transferring to community organisations		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		
			Strengthening community cohesion	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr C Brant	Q1	Produce Annual EDI General Duty Compliance Report and agree next steps.		Work has begun on collation but timescale not achieved for report.
						Q2	Agree new EDI Framework and supporting actions		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		
	Q1	Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2					Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2.		
	Q2	Develop and agree new Community Safety Partnership Plan							
	Q3	No milestone							
Q4	Establish baseline metrics for measuring progress towards Community Safety Plan								
Promote health and wellbeing with a focus on inequality	To enhance health, wellbeing, and social cohesion across the district and address inequalities through preventive initiatives and targeted interventions.	Improving access to sports and healthy places by making the most of the external (and developer) funding we receive, improved insight and maintenance of our leisure centres.	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr R Pattenden	Q1	To identify Parishes where significant capital projects are planned and support them with their delivery plans to ensure developer contributions deliver improved outcomes for their communities.		Parishes with s106 allocated for new development of community and sports projects have been consulted with and capital plans have been mapped over the MTFS.	
					Q2	No milestone			
					Q3	No milestone			
					Q4	Confirm which Capital projects will be progressed in 26/27 and how they will be funded			
Environmental Stewardship	Safeguard the environment and promote biodiversity	To implement sustainable policies and practices, protect natural habitats, and support conservation initiatives that enhance ecosystem health and biodiversity while responding to the climate emergency.	Identify pathways for CDC to reach net zero carbon	Jo Miskin Ian Boll	Cllr T Beckett	Q1	Review consultant's report on the costed pathways to net zero and agree next steps / direction of travel		Bioregional is expected to share the draft report for this study by the end of this week. w/c 28 July'25.
						Q2	Produce new draft climate action plan		
						Q3	Consult on draft climate action plan		
						Q4	Agree new climate action plan in light of costed pathway findings		
			Progress decarbonisation of our fleet, including electrifying smaller vehicles and implementation of HVO fuel	Ed Potter Ian Boll	Cllr I Middleton	Q1	Produce report on decarbonising waste fleet and agree next steps		Report gone to CLT.
						Q2	No milestone		
						Q3	Implement HVO fuel plan		
						Q4	No milestone		
		Embed the new Simpler Recycling requirements for kerbside collections and promotion of greater recycling.	Ed Potter Ian Boll	Cllr I Middleton	Q1	Modelling new service delivery options, to include early adoption of kerbside glass recycling		Service delivery options modelled. Simpler Recycling Project Board met 4 times to evaluate.	
					Q2	No milestone			
					Q3	Agree new service delivery design			
					Q4	Implement new service			
		Continue with progress for the provision of a modern and for purpose depot facilities to support activity to minimise waste	Ed Potter Ian Boll	Cllr I Middleton	Q1	Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 3		Planning application likely to be submitted in Q2 but the main features of the design have been completed	
					Q2	No milestone			
					Q3	Approval of outline business case. Submission of Planning Application.			
					Q4	No milestone			

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Quality housing and Place Making	Promote the circular economy of reduce, reuse and recycle to minimise waste	To encourage sustainable consumption, optimise the use of resources, and implement efficient recycling systems that support waste reduction and re-use initiatives.	Reduce waste and food insecurity through community initiatives to reuse and recycle.	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr R Pattenden	Q1	Refresh promotion around district's Growing Spaces		REPF and community food grants have supported eight growing spaces including Cropredy Lock Garden, Sustainable Duns Tew, Horton and Kidlington Parish Councils, as well as edible garden projects at schools including St Leonards, Dashwood, St Joseph's, and West Kidlington. Resources have been updated and shared via the Growing Space leaflet https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/3/leisure-and-wellbeing/1089/connect-with-nature/3
						Q2	Review delivery of Y2 actions of Food Action Plan for CDC		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	Establish a schools-food partnership		
			Promote environmentally conscious communities	Ed Potter Ian Boll	Cllr I Middleton	Q1	Agree the litter blitz programme for 2025/26		Litter blitz carried in Banbury Town Centre. Rest of the programme to be finalised.
						Q2	Develop and agree a Civic Pride campaign to promote cleaner communities and open spaces		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		
	Deliver sustainable and strategic development that meets Cherwell's needs now, and in the future	To ensure the right mix of facilities, services and infrastructure for new developments, to create successful, well-designed communities.	Progress the Cherwell Local Plan 2042	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Activity for this Action starts in Quarter 2		
						Q2	Submit Local Plan for Examination		The draft Local Plan was approved by the Council's Executive on 3 July. On 21 July it will be presented to the Council. Upon approval, it will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination including public hearings.
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		
			Establish a new Programme for a Review of Conservation Area Appraisals	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Confirm new three-year programme of Conservation Area reviews and appraisals		Programme established - Year 1 - Bloxham, Grimsbury, Hanwell; Year 2 - Hook Norton, Chesterton, Hampton Gay - Shipton on Cherwell - Thrupp; Year 3 - Islip, Bodicote, Begbroke, Fritwell. Bloxham is at an advanced stage and Grimsbury is on-going.
						Q2	No milestone		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	Complete year 1 of Conversation Area programme		
			Monitor and manage housing land supply	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Complete and agree Housing Delivery Action Plan		The Housing Delivery Action Plan was approved by the Council's Executive on 10 June 2025. The Executive also resolved that it be kept under review having regard to comments received, and to make any necessary changes in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management. Officers were also instructed to present a comprehensive review of the five year housing land supply position to the Executive, should there be evidence of a significant change.
						Q2	Implement Housing Delivery Action Plan		
						Q3	Implement Housing Delivery Action Plan		
						Q4	Review the progress of the Housing Delivery Action Plan		
			Reducing the percentage of 'major' planning application decisions overturned at appeal	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Complete and agree major applications action plan		An action plan for the management of strategic planning applications was prepared in Q1 and presented to the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee on 28 May 2025.
						Q2	Implement Major Applications Action Plan		
						Q3	Implement Major Applications Action Plan		
						Q4	Review the progress of the Major Applications Action Plan		
			Streamline process for the preparation of 'section 106' legal agreements and associated land transfers which support planning permissions.	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Complete internal s106 process review and agree improvement action plan		A review of the Council's internal processes for 'section 106' legal agreements was completed by the start of Q1.
						Q2	Implement actions from s106 process review		
						Q3	Implement actions from s106 process review		
						Q4	Review the progress of the s106 improvement action plan		
			Deliver Planning Service Improvement	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Establish performance improvement indicators, targets & resource needs		A review of the Council's development management (Planning Committee) decision making processes has been undertaken and included a peer review on 29 May 2025. The final report is awaited and will be published. The recommendations will inform improvement targets together with the defined actions for the management of strategic planning applications and from the section 106 review (see above). A consolidated plan is to be prepared and resourcing needs are being reviewed.
						Q2	Define & implement improvements		
						Q3	Implement improvements		
						Q4	Implement improvements & review progress		

Achieve more high-quality, secure, and affordable housing that caters for the diverse needs of our residents			Introduce national Building Safety Levy	David Peckford Ian Boll	Cllr J Conway	Q1	Preparation for introduction of the Building Safety Levy		On 24 March 2025, the Government advised that implementation of the levy had been delayed to Autumn 2026. This will now be a year 2 action.
						Q2	Establish systems for the introduction of the Building Safety Levy		
						Q3	Introduce the Building Safety Levy		
						Q4	Monitor and Manage the operation of the Building Safety Levy		
			Establish and progress with Partners the Area Oversight Groups for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington	Julia Harrington Ian Boll	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Implementation of Area Oversight Groups for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington		The 3 Area Oversight Groups have been implemented.
						Q2	Identify and report on infrastructure delivery issues (water, electricity, foul, etc), develop and agree action plan		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		
	To help all residents access safe places they can make/call their home, including housing that is affordable through direct ownership, private rental and social rent housing.		Reduce pressure on temporary accommodation capacity in the District through delivery of our Housing Strategy	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr N Cotter	Q1	Commence delivery of new LAHF schemes for temporary accommodation and resettlement, and S106 scheme to provide additional temporary accommodation provision		Grant agreements in place with SOHA. They have begun to identify properties and progress purchase. All properties are on target to deliver in year.
						Q2	Review procurement of temporary accommodation and nightly charged options to ensure we make the best use of our resources, whilst providing suitable standards of temporary accommodation		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	Complete annual review of housing strategy action plan to identify any improvements needed		
			Host a registered providers forum to improve tenant outcomes	Nicola Riley Ian Boll	Cllr N Cotter	Q1	Conduct satisfaction survey of CDC tenants		Completed. Survey took place during May and June 2025 with the shared ownership and rented tenants.
						Q2	No milestone		
						Q3	Establish new monitoring framework for Registered Provider activity and performance and agree objectives and line up for forum		
						Q4	Hold registered providers forum to discuss challenges in meeting obligations		
			Ensure Graven Hill Village Development Company submits Planning Application for Phase 2 at Graven Hill (for completion of the site)	Stephen Hinds	Cllr L McLean	Q1	Ensure Graven Hill Village Development Company submits Planning Application for next phase of development at Graven Hill to LPA		The application for planning permission (25/01768/HYBRID) was received as a valid application by the LPA.
						Q2	No milestone		
						Q3	No milestone		
						Q4	No milestone		

KPI Targets 2025-2026

Below table shows are KPI targets for 2025-2026, where those targets come from and how they are set

Measure	AD/Director	CDC Target	Bigger or Smaller is Better	National or Internally Set	National Target	How internal targets and those that differ from National are set (rationale)
BP1.2.01 Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	Nicola Riley/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP1.2.02 No. of Homeless Households living in nightly charged (Hotel) Temporary accommodation (TA)	Nicola Riley/ Ian Boll	25 quarterly	Smaller is Better	Internally	n/a	In discussion with the Housing Team target threshold is set based on knowledge of previous levels, together with the anticipated activity for the current reporting year. Using this information then enables the team to set a threshold level above which alerts need to be triggered. This is an internal target locally set. There is no national target for hotel usage, but we do have to provide statistical returns to government regarding the number of people in temporary accommodation, what type of accommodation, household compositions etc. All Councils having to provide this information, so some comparisons can be drawn.
BP1.2.04 Number of affordable homes delivered	Nicola Riley/ David Peckford/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP1.2.05 % of Homelessness cases successfully prevented rather than relief/main duty being applied	Nicola Riley/ Ian Boll	60% quarterly	Bigger is Better	Internally	n/a	In discussion with the Housing Team target threshold is set based on knowledge of previous levels throughout the year together with all known/researched factors around housing in the area.

						This is an internal target locally set. There is no national target. We have to report how many homeless duties have been accepted and the compositions/types of households, reasons for homelessness etc to government as part of monitoring. All Councils having to provide the same information. But we don't have to provide this data in this form/measure, it is a way of showing the performance of the service in relation to homeless prevention.
BP1.2.06 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit (HB) New Claims and council tax reduction (CTR)	Michael Furness/ Stephen Hinds	18 days quarterly	Smaller is Better	Internally	n/a	<p>Set internally based on analysis of previous year's performance and benchmarked against the national average which currently is 20 days for HB only and our nearest Neighbour Benchmark are Oxford City average day is 15, West Oxford is 20 days.</p> <p>As the CTR scheme is a local scheme the DWP do not monitor performance on CTR only HB. DWP have an expectation that LAs should be putting new HB claims into payment within 30 days to remains in the upper quartile.</p>
BP1.2.07 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit Change Events and council tax reduction	Michael Furness/ Stephen Hinds	8 days quarterly	Smaller is Better	Internally	n/a	<p>Set internally based on analysis of previous year's performance and benchmarked against the national average which currently is 8 days.</p> <p>As the CTR scheme is a local scheme the DWP do not monitor performance on CTR only HB.</p>
BP1.2.08 % of Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	David Peckford/ Ian Boll	60% quarterly	Bigger is Better	National	60%	<p>Aligned to the National Indicator target set by central government Planning Inspectorate</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics#planning-performance-tables</p>

BP1.2.09 % of Non-Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	David Peckford/ Ian Boll	70% quarterly	Bigger is Better	National	70%	Aligned to the National Indicator target set by central government Planning Inspectorate https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics#planning-performance-tables
BP1.2.10 % of Major Applications overturned at appeal	David Peckford/ Ian Boll	10% quarterly	Smaller is Better	National	10%	Aligned to the National Indicator target set by central government Planning Inspectorate https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics#planning-performance-tables
BP1.2.11 % of Non-Major Applications overturned at appeal	David Peckford/ Ian Boll	10% quarterly	Smaller is Better	National	10%	Aligned to the National Indicator target set by central government Planning Inspectorate https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics#planning-performance-tables
BP1.2.12 Average time taken for new applications to be responded to within 15 working days	Nicola Riley/ Ian Boll	15 days quarterly	Smaller is Better	Internally	n/a	This is an internal target locally set. There is no national target. This is a measure that has been set based on historic data collected to monitor volumes and service standards in relation to housing applications.
BP1.2.13 Net Additional Housing Completions	David Peckford/ Ian Boll	791 biannual (1582 Annual)	Bigger is Better	Local Plan	n/a	Local Plan i.e. the 2015 Local Plan target for Cherwell of 1142, plus the 440 target from the 2020 LP for Oxfords need (2021-2031) Local Target but national tables available on overall delivery https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-net-supply-of-housing
BP1.2.14 % of building control full plans assessed within 5 weeks	David Peckford/ Ian Boll	95% quarterly	Bigger is Better	Internally	n/a	There are essentially two types of Building Regulations application which can be submitted when a new development is proposed:

(or longer with applicant's agreement)

1. A Building Notice

This is for simple and/or minor works and as the name implies is simply a Notice which contains only a Works Description. We receive the Notice and the appropriate fee, then liaise with the applicant/builder as the work proceeds. We visit the site to at pre-set stages to ensure the work is compliant with the Regulations.

2. A Full Plans Application

These are for more complex works where we require to see plans before the work commences. The circumstances where such applications are mandatory are set within the Regulations. This allows us to fully assess compliance before the development starts. The Building Regulations require us when receiving a Full Plans Application to respond to the applicant within 5 weeks of receipt. We have the following choices:

- Accept the application. What is proposed will be compliant
- Reject the application. What is proposed is not compliant
- Request further information or clarification

We very seldom reject an application outright. We prefer to work with the applicant, tell him/her what is not compliant and ask that the proposals are amended. In these cases, we agree an Extension of Time as the to-ing and fro-ing can often take us beyond the 5 weeks.

						We monitor the number of Full Plans Applications we receive against the number we determine within the 5 weeks or within the agreed extended time. This is so that all such applications remain active and on our radar. Without this there could be potentially non-compliant development starting without our knowledge.
BP2.2.01 % Waste Recycled & Composted	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	54% quarterly	Bigger is Better	Internally	n/a	The national rate is set by the national government department (DEFRA) and locally we set the Oxfordshire target under the ORWP (Oxfordshire Resource and Waste Partnership) umbrella. Oxfordshire is the highest performing County and Cherwell currently sit 32 (out of 300ish councils) in the latest result for recycling. I've also attached a link where Oxfordshire is promoted for being the highest performing County. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr781vkrj78o
BP2.2.02 % Reduction in fuel consumption	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	1% Annual	Smaller is Better	Internally	n/a	Fuel management system that supplies fuel data used by vehicle/department. Fuel consumption is closely monitored and tracked via a telematics system. The team look closely at the previous year's consumption as well as considering other factors such as increase or decrease in fleet, electric vehicles etc. Looking at all this information together will enable the team to shape future budgets.
BP2.2.03 % of Climate Action Plan delivering to target	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	66% quarterly	Bigger is Better	Internally	n/a	This is set by the Climate Action team to reflect the Climate Action plan Status that is due to be achieved throughout the year
BP2.2.04 % of missed waste containers	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely

						tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP2.2.05 Total Greenhouse gas emissions for the year	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	3900 tonnes of CO2e Annual	Smaller is Better	Internally	n/a	<p>All results are one year behind, e.g. result for 2022 is from 2021.</p> <p>The UK's national GHG targets are based on territorial emissions, which include all emissions occurring within the UK's borders. This encompasses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emissions from local authority operations 2. Emissions from local area activities (e.g. transport, housing, industry) <p>However, CDC's own organisational emissions are a very small subset (and that would be the case for any other district council as well) of the total emissions counted in the national inventory. They are not separately tracked or targeted by national policy, but they do contribute to the overall total.</p> <p>In summary, CDC's organisational emissions do contribute to the UK's national GHG inventory. They are not separately targeted by national law, but voluntary reporting and reduction are strongly encouraged.</p>
BP2.2.01d Tonne's residual household waste collected	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP2.2.07 % of Recycling Contamination rate	Ed Potter/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely

						tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP3.2.01 % of Council Tax collected, increase Council Tax Base	Michael Furness/ Stephen Hinds	29.00% Q1 56.30% Q2 82% Q3 97.50% Q4	Bigger is Better	Internally	n/a	No national target but has been Benchmarked against other comparative Councils and monthly comparison takes place between us and neighbouring districts and in 2024-25 Cherwell were the top of the collection rates for 2024-25 again across Oxfordshire. 95.9 % Council Tax Collected: Nationally monitored, but not a mandated target Increasing CTAX Base: Tracked for financial planning, but not a performance target.
BP3.2.02 % of Business Rates collected, increasing NNDR Base	Michael Furness/ Stephen Hinds	31.00% Q1 58.50% Q2 86% Q3 98.50% Q4	Bigger is Better	Internally	n/a	No national target but has been benchmarked against other comparative Councils and monthly comparison takes place between us and neighbouring districts and in 2024-25 Cherwell were the top of the collection rates for Oxfordshire 97.3% of Business Rates Collected: Monitored nationally, but not a mandated target. Increasing NNDR Base: Tracked for financial planning, but not a performance target.
BP3.2.04 No. of businesses engaged through UKSPF and REPF funded programmes	Julia Harrington/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP3.2.05 No. of residents engaged through UKSPF and REPF funded programmes	Julia Harrington/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.

BP3.2.06 No of enterprises in the district	Julia Harrington/ Ian Boll	Monitoring Annual	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP3.2.07 Secure non-retail-based key tenants	Mona Walsh/ Stephen Hinds	2 Annual	n/a	Internally	n/a	The measure was set to show progress on securing a wide range of occupiers across all Councils property assets. This includes Castle Quay Banbury becoming less retail focussed and securing a wider range of occupiers, with the aim of improving vitality, footfall and attracting occupiers to vacant space. The Councils move to Castle Quay supports this measure. The measure was set internally by the Council with the aim of securing non-retail-based occupiers for some larger voids, including the space previously occupied by M&S and a vacant unit at Pioneer Square. No national measures or benchmarks exist
BP4.2.01 Number of Visits/Usage of all Leisure Facilities within the District	Nicola Riley/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP4.2.02 Residents who have taken part in programmes contributing to reducing health inequalities	Nicola Riley/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP4.2.04 % of due food hygiene inspections of premises rated A-D completed	Tim Hughes/ Ian Boll	95% quarterly	Bigger is Better	Internally	100%	The national target is set out in the Food Standards Agencies (FSA) Code of Practice. It currently states that all programmed food hygiene visits for premises rated A-D, must be inspected within 28days of their due date. The national target is in effect 100%, however, as officers are sometimes not able to get into premises to complete the inspection they may

						go over the 28day target before they are inspected or we confirm they are permanently closed. We also have to make appointments with home-based food premises, and this can sometimes take time to arrange. 95% was chosen as this takes into account the few which officers may not be able to access, if it was set at 100%, we would be reporting Orange every quarter despite the team being on track with the inspection programme.
BP4.2.05 Number of Illegal Fly Tips	Tim Hughes/ Ian Boll	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.
BP5.1.07 Number of upheld complaints (OFPOG)	Shona Ware/ Stephen Hinds	Monitoring quarterly	n/a	Internally	n/a	No target set as activity is captured on monitoring only. This measure is closely tracked throughout the year and reported only when there are significant changes to trends or peaks.

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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2025-26

(Updated: 29 August 2025)

Items allocated to specific meeting dates		
14 October 2025		
Officers are in discussion with departments to see if other items from the work programme can be brought forward to the October. A verbal update will be given at Committee on 9 September.		
11 November 2025		
Quarter Two (July to September) Performance Monitoring Report	Performance Monitoring To consider the Quarter two performance report, with a focus on amber / red indicators, and provide comments to the Executive.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Safeguarding Annual Return	Performance Monitoring - Annual recurring item Whilst there is no requirement for Committee to sign-off the annual return to the Safeguarding Boards, it is important to have an overview of the work we're doing at this time in training staff, members and the reflect on the number and nature of referrals, and make any recommendations to Executive regarding changes in delivery.	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing Portfolio Holder for healthy Communities, Councillor Rob Pattenden
Service Levels Suggestion from Monitoring Officer	Holding the Executive to account Following on from 'Case for Change' decision, scrutinising possible impact on service levels	Various

Simpler Recycling Projects – Government legislation Suggestion from Corporate Director – Communities	Holding the Executive to account Understanding the implications of national changes to recycling announced by Government. <i>Moved from October meeting – Executive now considering at their October meeting instead of September.</i>	Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Ian Middleton
Flytipping Suggestion from Ian Boll following discussion with Cllr Amanda Watkins	Cllr Watkins has reported flytipping issues in Banbury specifically. Ian has suggested flytipping for the work programme. <i>Moved from October meeting – ties in with Simpler Recycling item, moved back to maintain link.</i>	Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities, and Ed Potter Assistant Director Environmental Services Portfolio Holder - TBC
16 December 2025		
Cherwell Futures Programme (previously Transformation Programme) (may feed into Local Government Reorganisation and Budget Planning) Suggestion from Chief Executive	Holding the Executive to account. To consider regular updates on the transformation programme; initial 'Case for Change' scheduled for Executive in July 2025, OSC involvement during implementation phase. To become an annual item. <i>Moved from October meeting.</i>	Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation & Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus Leader & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership, Councillor David Hingley
Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable Thames Valley Police Attendance	External Scrutiny - Annual recurring item To fulfil the Council's requirement regarding crime and disorder scrutiny to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions no less than once in every twelve-month period. All Members are invited to attend the meeting.	Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, Councillor Rob Parkinson

27 January 2026		
Quarter Three (October to December) Performance Monitoring Report	Performance Monitoring To consider the Quarter three performance report, with a focus on amber / red indicators, and provide comments to the Executive.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Temporary Accommodation (Previously referred to as Homelessness and Rough Sleeping) Suggestion from Cllr Lynne Parsons	Progress against the new Temporary Accommodation Policy Cllr Parsons revised the remit of this suggested topic following the recent approval of the new Temporary Accommodation Policy (Executive 1 July 2025)	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, Councillor Rob Pattenden
24 March 2026		
Draft Performance Outcomes Framework 2026-27	Performance Monitoring. To consider and make comments / recommendations to Executive on the draft Performance Outcomes Framework for 2026-2027 prior to Executive adoption of the framework	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Action Plans stemming from Planning and Development To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAS Review Merton College PR9 Site Appeal Housing Delivery Action Plan (as discussed at 3.6.25 Committee) 	Holding the Executive to account Multiple items across the year; Scrutinising implementation of the various action plans. An initial update on implementation of the various plans.	David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development & Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management, Councillor Jean Conway

Suggestion from Monitoring Officer		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report	To consider the draft annual report of the Committee, prior to submission to full Council	Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
To be allocated – remaining 25-26 Year		
Graven Hill	Holding Executive to Account/External Scrutiny Review planning process for Phase 2 July 2026, then annually – review of previous year’s performance and monitoring of Phase 2 implementation. Timing of this element is dependent on the planning process.	Stephen Hinds, Shareholder Representative Leader & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership, Councillor David Hingley
Follow-up on recommendation relating to Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership Plan	At 11 March 2025 meeting of the Committee it was resolved - “(1) That the Committee recommends that the Executive, as a matter of urgency, ensure that the Cherwell Safer Community Partnership Plan be reviewed and updated and presented to this committee early in the next municipal year” This item could be tied in with the wider CSCP item, dependent on timing of the renewed plan	Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, Councillor Rob Parkinson
Performance of S106 delivery Raised by Cllr Dr Isabel Creed	Many housing developments across the district, particularly in Banbury, are having houses built but then developers appear to not be completing additional infrastructure such as play parks. Could be covered under transformation item in future, due to possible changes to how S106 agreements are monitored. Initial OSC aspect could be current enforcement of S106 Developer Agreements.	David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning and Development Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management, Councillor Jean Conway
NEW	End of inquiry reports and recommendations from the four working groups are being submitted to Executive	Various officers and Portfolio Holders.

Executive Response to working group recommendations	in October. Executive then have two months to provide a response, which will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny	
To be allocated to 2026-27 work programme		
Year end Performance Monitoring 2025/26	Performance Monitoring To consider the year end performance report, with a focus on amber / red indicators, and provide comments to the Executive.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Action Plans stemming from Planning and Development To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAS Review Merton College PR9 Site Appeal Housing Delivery Action Plan (as discussed at 3.6.25 Committee) Suggestion from Monitoring Officer	Holding the Executive to account Multiple items across the year; Scrutinising implementation of the various action plans. Full detailed report on each action plan.	David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development & Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management, Councillor Jean Conway
Cherwell Futures Programme (previously Transformation Programme) (may feed into Local Government Reorganisation and Budget Planning)	Holding the Executive to account. To consider regular updates on the transformation programme. To become an annual item.	Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation & Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus Leader & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership, Councillor David Hingley

Suggestion from Chief Executive		
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Meeting dates 2025-26 (All Tuesday 6:30pm unless indicated)

9 September; 14 October; 11 November; 16 December; 27 January; 24 March.

Members are reminded of the five roles of scrutiny when considering items for the work programme:

Performance Monitoring; Policy Development; Policy Review; Holding the Executive to Account; External Scrutiny

The Executive Forward Plan is [published on the Cherwell District Council website monthly](#).

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Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Guidance

May 2025

This document is designed to be used as a reference guide alongside the detailed section of the Constitution Part 4a.

It builds upon the Cherwell Council Scrutiny Guide February 2025.

Agreed by the Council on 21 May 2025.

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1. Introduction

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

- 1.1. Overview and Scrutiny is a key part of local authority decision making governance arrangements. It was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 which created separate Executive and Overview and Scrutiny functions within local authorities, with an Executive making executive Key Decisions, Overview and Scrutiny Committees to provide a check and accountability and provide an opportunity for non-Executive Members to make reports and recommendations to the Executive and a full Council that sets the overall policy and budgetary framework.
- 1.2. Councils operating executive decision making arrangements are required to create one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees made up of councillors who are not members of the Executive,
- 1.3. Cherwell District Council operates an Executive/Cabinet and scrutiny decision making model, which is broadly, conceptually, based on the Westminster Parliamentary model, which has a government Cabinet executive and parliamentary select committees.
- 1.4. The purpose of Overview and Scrutiny is to ensure that decision-making in local government is transparent, accountable and provides an opportunity for non-executive Members of the Council to contribute to policy making and review. The scrutiny process should help to ensure that all decisions are taken in the interests of the residents of Cherwell.
- 1.5. Scrutiny committees are led by elected Members of the Council, which provides them with a particular democratic mandate and legitimacy.
- 1.6. Scrutiny committees are independent and hold the Executive to account by acting as a “critical friend”, as well as providing a vehicle for the wider membership of the Council to contribute to policy development and review.
- 1.7. Overview and Scrutiny committees have the power to consider any issue which “affects the area or the area’s inhabitants” and to examine cross-cutting issues and context to local decision making, including local partnerships and community wellbeing.
- 1.8. Overview and Scrutiny committees may:
 - require information that is held by the Council (with councillors sitting on overview and scrutiny committees having particular rights to access certain information - for example, information that might be commercially confidential),
 - require attendance at committee meetings by Executive members and Council officers,
 - require from the Executive responses to recommendations made by scrutiny committees.

What are the aims of scrutiny?

- 1.9. At Cherwell District Council the aims of scrutiny are:
- *To contribute to ongoing service improvement*
 - *To hold the Executive to account on behalf of local residents*
 - *To contribute to policy development and review through scrutiny reports and recommendations to the Executive.*
- 1.10. Scrutiny meets these aims by carrying out independent scrutiny inquiries and reviews of Council and community policies and services. These are carried out either as a full Committee or by a small group of Members in a time-limited scrutiny working group.

What are the benefits of scrutiny?

- 1.11. Overview and Scrutiny should help to drive improvement and accountability in local government through the democratic and governance process. It can also help to build a more inclusive decision making process by involving non-executive members, as well as community partner organisations and local people.

How does scrutiny work at Cherwell?

- 1.12. Every local authority is required to put in place arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny; however the particular arrangements for this is for the individual authority to decide. In Cherwell, scrutiny undertakes the majority of its scrutiny inquiries through the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but also via a combination of scrutiny working groups and spotlight reviews.
- 1.13. Cherwell Council has one Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), established by the Council, to carry out the Overview and Scrutiny function.
- 1.14. The OSC is politically proportionate and meets roughly six times a year. The Committee may consider any policy issue across the range of Council services or which affect the wellbeing of the local community. This includes services provided by, or on behalf of the Council; or by external agencies. Scrutiny can consider the impact of Council policies and decisions and outcomes for residents.
- 1.15. It may consider issues before the Executive makes a decision (“pre-decision scrutiny”) and also has the power to Call In any Executive Decision made by the Executive or delegated to an officer, for review.
- 1.16. Regulatory decisions, i.e. those relating to planning or licensing applications, are not within the remit of OSC.
- 1.17. Section 5 of the OSC Constitution provides more detail on the specific functions of Committee.

2. Advice and Support to Scrutiny Committees

- 2.1. Scrutiny committees also receive professional advice from council chief officers and directorates according to their purview. In particular scrutiny committees may draw upon the advice and support of the Council's statutory officers, including the Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Chief Executive.
- 2.2. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny committees receive advice and administrative support from the Democracy and Elections Team.
- 2.3. Scrutiny committees may also be allocated with support from one or more Scrutiny Officers, to provide specialist advice and support on the scrutiny process and provide practical support in drafting scrutiny reports and recommendations, preparing briefings, drafting report requests and acting as an interlocutor between scrutiny committees, the Executive and council departments.

The Monitoring Officer

- 2.4. The Monitoring Officer is the statutory officer responsible for the legal governance of a local authority. As such, this includes providing advice and support on the Council's Constitution, governance and decision making arrangements and relationships, including Overview and Scrutiny.

Scrutiny Officers

- 2.5. Scrutiny officers provide professional impartial advice and support to members of the scrutiny committees leading up to a scrutiny meeting, during the meeting itself and subsequently. They can advise on the scrutiny process, as well as support with analysis and desk research on items being considered by scrutiny and assist in developing questions to witnesses, scrutiny reports and scrutiny recommendations for agreement by the committee.

Democratic Services Officers

- 2.6. The scrutiny committees may also be allocated committee support from the Democracy and Elections Team. Democratic Service Officers provide specialist committee advice and support on committee procedures and provide the committee administration, including agenda preparation, agenda and reports publication, drafting and publishing committee minutes and following up on matters arising from committee meetings. Democratic Service Officers work closely with scrutiny officers to ensure the smooth running of the committee and scrutiny processes.

Departmental Officers

- 2.7. Senior Council officers for each department provide expert advice and support on Council services within their purview, this includes advice and support to Overview

and Scrutiny Committees when scrutiny committees are considering matters within their departmental and service area.

- 2.8. Council departmental officers provide advice and information on issues being considered by Scrutiny to ensure that Scrutiny Members have access to the information and expert advice they need to understand issues they are considering. In the scrutiny process they are key “expert witnesses”, being responsible for the delivery of Council policy and services and also being experts in their respective areas.
- 2.9. Council departments provide information reports to scrutiny committees and other information requested, for matters being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Scrutiny Working Groups. In addition to information requests made ahead of or during a committee, senior officers should review the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme to anticipate reports requested to be provided to scrutiny committees and the deadlines for reports.
- 2.10. Because Council officers also advise and support the Executive and because senior officers also manage services and make decisions (including Key Decisions where delegated to them), their role is also part of supporting Executive accountability by answering questions in committee, along with the Executive.

3. Appointing the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

- 3.1. A special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be scheduled as soon as possible after the Annual Council Meeting, when committee appointments have been approved, to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider any proposals for the appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman from among its members. Any member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may stand to be elected for these positions and any member may propose (and second a proposal) for any other member for to make their case for being appointment as Chairman and Vice Chairman, so long as those persons accept the nomination.
- 3.2. Prior to the meeting, those wishing to stand for Chairman Vice Chairman will have an opportunity address fellow committee members, explaining their reasons for being considered for the role(s). This is also an opportunity for any member wishing to propose another member of the Committee to explain their reasons for the proposal. The expectation is that an informal session will take place shortly before the formal Committee meeting to facilitate discussions between members who wish to be considered for the role of Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- 3.3. The Chairman of OSC has a responsibility for establishing the profile of the committee, its influence across the council and its ways of working, as well as ensuring that the scrutiny process is managed in a fair and balanced environment, is free from political point scoring and allows for effective scrutiny of all issues presented for consideration. Members putting themselves forward for the role may wish to use these points as guidance for the basis of their discussions with the committee.

- 3.4. Committee members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the prospective chairs and vice-chairs before the formal meeting.
- 3.5. The appointment of Chairman will normally take place at the first formal meeting of the Committee in the usual way.
- 3.6. The Monitoring Officer or his representative will call for nominations to the position of Chairman of the Committee, with seconders as appropriate. Voting will take place for each nominated candidate, via a show of hands, in line with section 4, paragraph 4.26 of the Constitution, with steps repeated as necessary until one candidate is successful.
- 3.7. The newly appointed Chairman will then take the Chair, and preside over the appointment of the Vice Chairman, which will follow the same process. Once the Vice Chairman has been appointed, the meeting will be brought to a close.
- 3.8. *Note – those wishing to stand as Chairman/Vice Chairman will be expected to attend in person.*

4. Work Planning

- 4.1. Scrutiny committees should plan their work carefully throughout the year to ensure that the scrutiny process can be effective. At Cherwell Council this includes development of an Annual Scrutiny Work Programme of issues that will be considered throughout the year through its main committee and through commissioned scrutiny working groups, as well as planning ahead of scrutiny committee meetings to plan out the objectives, key information required, key lines of enquiry and possible outcomes for each scrutiny topic.
- 4.2. There are normally six formal committee meetings scheduled throughout the year. In addition, OSC can appoint working groups to carry out detailed research and inquiries on behalf of the formal Committee (as detailed in Constitution section 4a)

The Annual Scrutiny Work Programme

- 4.3. Each year the scrutiny committees consider and agree a programme of work for the municipal year ahead, after considering what the key issues facing the Council and local community where consideration by a scrutiny committee might add value are. Usually, the work programme is for the municipal year period following the Annual Council Meeting, from June to May the following year.
- 4.4. Each year, in drawing up the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme, there is held an informal planning session, where members of the scrutiny committees may consider and discuss proposed topics for inclusion on the work programmes.
- 4.5. This informal session with members of the scrutiny committee allows for the committee to consider key background information and to consult the relevant

Council directorates and other stakeholders on the key issues for the Council and community partners that may usefully be considered by the scrutiny committees and to identify:

- the main topics for consideration throughout the year,
- the purpose and scope of each topic
- when each topic should be considered, and
- which departments, external agencies and expert witnesses should be called as witnesses to provide evidence.

- 4.6. The identified topics can then be developed into a work programme for the scrutiny committee that can be agreed by the next formal meeting of the committee, reported to full Council and used to plan the meetings of the committees throughout the year ahead.

Topic Selection and Prioritisation

- 4.7. Initial subjects for consideration will be requested from members of the Committee at a work programme planning session, with committee members given the opportunity to suggest subjects for inclusion on the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme.
- 4.8. Scrutiny members should consider key background information for the Council and the District to help prioritise and scope its Work Programme topics. This includes key strategic documents such as:
- Cherwell District Council Corporate Plan
 - the Annual Delivery Plan priorities,
 - Cherwell District Council Residents' Survey
 - Annual Corporate Performance reports
 - Budget Performance reports
 - The Executive Forward Plan.
- 4.9. An important document the Committee may wish to refer to during the planning session is the Executive Forward Plan (also known as the Executive work programme), the statutory document that is published on a monthly basis covering a rolling four-month period. More detailed information on the requirements of the Forward Plan can be found in section 6 of the Constitution, paragraph 6.1.
- 4.10. OSC may find it useful to refer to the latest version of the Forward Plan throughout the year, as well as during the work programme planning session, to consider upcoming items for the Executive and whether they would benefit from detailed discussion by OSC.
- 4.11. The OSC should prioritise possible issues carefully to ensure that only a manageable amount of issues are selected for consideration throughout the year; eg no more than twelve substantive issues and ensure that the issues selected are of significance to the Council and local residents and where consideration by the scrutiny committee can add value to the decision making process.

- 4.12. The OSC should be clear on the purpose of consideration by the scrutiny committee. Broadly there are two main rationales for scrutiny review, either:
- To provide accountability – eg performance reports and reviews,
 - Policy development and review – considering policy and service areas before a decision by the Executive – eg “pre-decision scrutiny”.
- 4.13. The proposed Work Programme needs to balance issues throughout the year and ensure that these are timely, appropriate and when scrutiny review can be effective, eg when a policy or service review reaches maturation, when information becomes available and ahead of when the Executive will make a decision on the issue (so that the Executive may receive recommendations from the OSC).
- 4.14. The OSC should review proposed issues for the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme to ensure that work of the Committee remains timely, adds value and does not duplicate activity already underway or undertaken by external regulators.
- 4.15. After the planning session, the Chairman and Vice Chairman will meet with officers from the Democratic and Elections Team to consider which subjects will be taken forward for the formal Annual Scrutiny Work Programme and what style of scrutiny (see the options below) would best suit each subject. The proposed Annual Scrutiny Work Programme will be presented to OSC at the next meeting for approval.
- 4.16. The OSC should review the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme throughout the year to ensure that work of the Committee remains timely, adds value and does not duplicate activity already underway or undertaken by external regulators. The working group scoping document ensures that the key questions that members want to address are listed.
- 4.17. The Chairman of the Committee will be responsible for allocating the Committee’s time to each work programme item, to ensure the best approach to each subject.

“Scrutiny members should accept that shortlisting can be difficult; scrutiny committees have finite resources and deciding how these are best allocated is tough. They should understand that if work programming is robust and effective there might well be issues that they want to look at that nonetheless are not selected.”

Statutory Scrutiny Guidance 2024

How do Committees choose what to scrutinise?

- 4.18. The OSC should ensure that it consults key stakeholders in developing its Annual Scrutiny Work Programme, particularly the main departments and chief officers of the Council and the Executive. Additionally, suggestions can be received from partner organisations or the public.
- 4.19. Effective scrutiny requires a balanced work programme, which examines the most important challenges facing the district and responds to the concerns of residents.

- 4.20. It is important to remember that scrutiny is an independent member-led process and it is ultimately the responsibility of the Chairman and the committee to determine what is scrutinised and when. This should, however, be based upon officer advice.
- 4.21. The *Criteria for selecting scrutiny topics* Guidance Note explains some of the key factors in determining whether an issue should be scrutinised.
- 4.22. Here are a few key points to remember when choosing subjects to scrutinise:
- It is not possible to scrutinise everything that might be suggested. Therefore, a rigorous approach should be taken to prioritising which topics are to be scrutinised.
 - thinking about the work of commissioned organisations and the monitoring other public bodies, and how scrutiny inquiries should involve and engage external witnesses and partner organisations
 - The Committees have to be realistic about what can effectively be scrutinised and needs to be prepared to say 'No' to some suggestions and be able to explain why they will not be scrutinised.
 - It is also important to consider what the best method to deal with any given scrutiny topic is. The choice may depend on the nature of the activity and the capacity of members and officers to conduct further topic groups within the suggested timeframe.
- ❖ If necessary, further items can be added to the work programme during the year, with additional meetings between the Chairman, Vice Chairman and officers being scheduled as necessary.

What methods are there to conducting scrutiny?

- 4.23. Overview and Scrutiny can use a range of different approaches depending on the issue being scrutinised. An important part of the work planning process is deciding on how a topic will be examined. Using the full range of methods open to it, scrutiny will be able to mix in-depth and searching inquiries with concise and effective reviews.
- 4.24. Here are some examples of different methods open to committee, some of which are discussed in more detail below:
- Whole committee scrutiny working groups
 - Scrutiny working groups with other non-executive Members of the Council
 - Single issue meetings ("Spotlight Reviews")
 - Calling witnesses or experts to provide specific information to members at committee
 - Site visits.

5. Scrutiny Pre-Meetings and Agenda Planning

- 5.1. There are normally six meetings of the OSC in each municipal year. Ahead of the main meeting, but after the formal agenda and reports have been published, an

informal meeting of the committee members may be held with the scrutiny officer to plan the key lines of enquiry, questions and possible outcomes for each item, which may include considering possible draft conclusions and recommendations from the committee.

Scrutiny Planning Meetings

- 5.2. Before the start of each formal meeting, an informal meeting of the committee may also be held to organise the key questions and possible outcomes for each item.
- 5.3. The agenda for the informal pre-meetings should include:
 - Introduction by the Chairman (setting out the purpose of the meeting)
 - Briefing on the Meeting Plan – including main agenda items, key witnesses for each item, proposed agenda timetable etc
 - Key Questions in Committee – prioritisation, rationalisation and allocation of questions for each agenda item.
 - Possible Outcomes – including key consultation and scrutiny recommendations. Key questions need to be included for these to ensure that they are evidence based.
- 5.4. These informal meetings can be important to making the scrutiny process effective, as they provide an opportunity for members of the committee to get organised in considering the key information they need to find out, organising their questions for the main meeting and considering possible outcomes from the meeting, such as proposed key conclusions and recommendations. Attendance and participation in these meetings is therefore highly encouraged.
- 5.5. There should be a clear rationale and agenda for the pre-meetings so that it is clear to members what the meetings are for. The meeting also provide an important opportunity for the Chairman and scrutiny officers to discuss the approaches, meeting plan and outcomes with the members of the committee.
- 5.6. These meetings should pay particular attention to the possible key conclusions, observations and recommendations to the Executive which may arise in the main meeting. It can be very challenging to develop appropriate conclusions and scrutiny recommendations in the formal meeting, so this is an important opportunity to consider how these might be framed and worded.
- 5.7. Scrutiny recommendations should be clearly addressed to the relevant decision maker (eg the Executive), and SMART (specific measurable, achievable, realistic and time based). They also need to be clearly linked to evidence received in the report and in questions, so links back to planning the key questions. This usually requires some consideration and forethought.

“Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day.”

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Scrutiny Briefing Plans

- 5.8. Ahead of each meeting, the scrutiny officer will normally provide a short briefing on the meeting, including the expected participants, the items being considered, along with any suggested considerations for the committee. The scrutiny officer will normally provide a specific briefing for the Chair of the committee to provide additional guidance on the main stages and directives from the chair.
- 5.9. The scrutiny officer may also provide advice on suggested key lines of enquiry and suggested questions to witnesses, which may be discussed in committee.

6. Options and Approaches for Scrutiny Reviews

Single item on a committee agenda

- 6.1. This may offer limited opportunity for effective scrutiny, but may be appropriate for some issues or where the committee wants to maintain a formal watching brief over a given issue.

At a single meeting - ‘Spotlight Review’

- 6.2. Either a formal committee meeting or an informal working group or briefing session. This could provide an opportunity to have a single public meeting about a given subject, or to have a meeting at which evidence is taken from a number of appropriate officers or subject matter experts.

A Scrutiny Working Group - ‘light touch’ review (eg two or three meetings)

- 6.3. A shorter scrutiny review may be most effective even for complex subjects. Properly planned and focused, they allow members to swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations, over a short time period such as a couple of months.

A Scrutiny Working Group - longer-term - ‘full length’ review

- 6.4. Multiple meetings spread over a number of months. This is most appropriate when scrutiny needs to dig into a complex topic in significant detail. This may be suited to the most complex subjects, due to the length of time and wider resource implications for a long review.

7. Scrutiny Working Groups

- 7.1. Working groups involve a small number of councillors looking at an issue in greater detail, in some cases over a day. This process is more time consuming for councillors and officers than other scrutiny activities. Consequently, issues for topic groups are carefully prioritised. In order to make sure that the review is as effective as possible, it is vital that the scope of the review is well-defined.

- 7.2. For this reason each review starts with the completion of a scoping template (see *Scrutiny Working Group Inquiry Scoping Document template*) which outlines the key lines of enquiry,, outcomes and constraints, time- scale, key sources of information and principal witnesses.
- 7.3. At its meeting, the working group will hear from a range of witnesses and the lead officer. Depending on the topic, this may include expert witnesses and stakeholders, service users, managers and the relevant executive member/s.
- 7.4. Councillor questioning skills are a significant element of scrutiny and the quality of the questions is instrumental to achieving clear outcomes and strong recommendations.
- 7.5. A short report on the scrutiny inquiry undertaken, its findings, key witnesses and evidence considered and scrutiny recommendations (and the evidence to substantiate those recommendations) is referred to the OSC for ratification and agreement and then published.. The relevant Executive member is required to respond to the report and its recommendations within two months. Six months following the scrutiny, the OSC will monitor implementation of the recommendations.

8. 'Call In' of Executive Decisions

- 8.1. The Local Government Act 2000 allows Overview and Scrutiny Committees to Call In any Executive Key Decision for review (these are Key Decisions taken by the Executive or a key decision made by officers, but not yet implemented).
- 8.2. Unless it meets exemption criteria (detailed in paragraph 13.1 of Part 4a the Constitution), any Executive or officer Key Decision can be called in by noon within four working days of publication of a Key Decision made by the Executive or by an officer (Executive decisions will be published as soon as practicable after the Executive meeting). A key decision can be called in for scrutiny by five Non-Executive members specifying the reason or reasons for the proposed Call In review.
- 8.3. A meeting of OSC will be held within 10 working days. Implementation of the decisions will be delayed while OSC meets and considers the decision.
- 8.4. One of the councillors who submitted the Call In notice are expected to address the committee and, for Key Decisions made by Executive, the relevant Executive Member will respond on behalf of the Executive.
- 8.5. Having reviewed the decision, OSC can:
 - a) Let the decision stand (take no further action).
 - b) Refer the decision back to the Executive or officer (as the case may be) for re-consideration, stating its concerns and the decision that the Committee wish the decision taker to make.
 - c) Determine if the reviewed decision is contrary to the policy framework or to the budget; and in which case refer the matter to Full Council for consideration.Decisions referred for further consideration remain suspended until redetermined.

- 8.6. Call In should not be used on an issue that has previously been considered by OSC.
- 8.7. *Sections 13 to 17 of the OSC Constitution give more detailed information and guidance on the call-in process at Cherwell.*

9. Access to Information and Reports

- 9.1. A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively. This need is recognised in law, with members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information¹
- 9.2. Scrutiny committees normally access information through requesting officer reports to committee for items on the agenda and may also request information at a meeting of the committee.
- 9.3. Where the committee makes requests for information in committee, this is normally made available to all members of the committee thereafter. This should be done before or at the next meeting of the committee.

Report Requests

- 9.4. There is a general expectation that officers will provide a written report for items on a scrutiny committee agenda. There is a standard format for this, which should provide the main information pertinent to the matter under consideration. Scrutiny members should expect this standard report be made available to the committee and not simply a PowerPoint presentation slides.
- 9.5. The general expectation is that reports will be made available to a committee upon request with a reasonable notice period, sometimes at relatively short notice. However, scrutiny members should also be aware of the time it can take to prepare a formal report and also the Council's operational report clearance processes and make report request in good time to allow for this.
- 9.6. The report also needs to be available at least five "clear days" ahead of the meeting as a minimum to meet the statutory publication deadlines. Deadlines for reports should normal b provided with the report requests. The deadline for final reports will usually be at least ten days ahead of a meeting to allow time for compilation and publication within the statutory deadlines.

¹ Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10 Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10 Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.
↪ [The Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

- 9.7. As far as practicable, five to six weeks before a meeting of the committee, a report request is submitted by the scrutiny officer to the relevant department, which provides a still brief but more detailed scope of the topic and the key information to be addressed in the report. This is normally drawn up by the scrutiny officer in consultation with the Chairman of the committee.
- 9.8. This should be used by the department to guide the preparation of any requested reports to the committee.
- 9.9. The report requests should include the subject for consideration, the purpose of the inquiry, the key lines of enquiry being addressed, the relevant Executive Member and directorate, any external witnesses anticipated and the deadline date for submission of any papers for publication with the agenda, (which must be at least 5 “clear days” before the meeting). Normally, a draft copy of the report will be requested for at a week before the final report deadline to allow the Chairperson of the scrutiny committee to review the draft report.

Scrutiny Agenda Publication

- 9.10. Scrutiny agendas and papers must be published five clear days in advance of the meeting and are published on the Council website.

10. Questions in Committee

- 10.1. Members of scrutiny committees will put questions to witnesses in committee, including to Executive Members, council officers and external witnesses. Putting the right questions in a scrutiny committee can be key to ensuring that the scrutiny process is effective in obtaining evidence in support of scrutiny recommendations and in providing focused accountability. Scrutiny Members need to be careful however that questions are focused and strategic towards the objectives of the scrutiny inquiry being undertaken.
- 10.2. Broadly, the purpose of questions in committee is either:
- To hold the executive to account,
 - To better understand the area under consideration,
 - To seek information to inform the development of any proposals (scrutiny recommendations) or conclusions drawn from the matter under consideration.
- 10.3. Questions from the committee may be put in committee without any advance notice and answered in committee.
- 10.4. Questions from members of the committee may be sent to the scrutiny officer or collated ahead of the meeting, and with the permission of the members of the committee, submitted to the department, may provide for a more considered or extensive answers in committee, but such questions are still to be put and answered at the meeting, along with any supplementary information made available in response.

11. Scrutiny Reports and Recommendations

- 11.1. The main statutory role of scrutiny committees is the power to make reports and recommendations to the Executive. Scrutiny recommendations may be made in committee to the Executive or other local decision makers. The Executive has a statutory duty to respond to scrutiny reports and recommendations made.
- 11.2. Scrutiny reports and recommendations may be drawn up in advance, with the advice and support of a scrutiny officer, sometimes through a Scrutiny Working Group. Scrutiny reports and recommendations are agreed by resolution of the committee in committee.
- 11.3. The resolutions of the committee should be put to the committee verbatim by the Chair (or through the clerk or scrutiny officer in assisting the Chair), or tabled in written form (such as on an officer report with officer recommendations). Such proposed resolutions may then be debated and amended before being resolved upon. Scrutiny recommendations may also include those made in scrutiny reports agreed in committee (e.g. through Scrutiny Working Groups).
- 11.4. Consideration should be given before and during the meeting as to how scrutiny recommendations should be worded so that they are worded in the most meaningful and effective way. The wording of scrutiny recommendations should be framed in such a way as to provide possible executive decisions if agreed by the Cabinet (or other decision maker).
- 11.5. As far as possible, scrutiny recommendations should be SSMART – Strategic, Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Time-based.
- 11.6. What is the best way to make sure our recommendations are implemented?
- 11.7. A scrutiny inquiry will conclude by making recommendations to decision-making bodies, such as the Council's Executive.
- 11.8. The following tips can help ensure that scrutiny recommendations are implemented:
 - Recommendations that are specific, strategic, substantive, achievable and few in number:
 - Recommendations based on logical argument drawing on evidence.
 - Ensure those responsible for implementing recommendations are asked about what the feasibility of proposed recommendations and can suggest modifications in evidence if that is going to make it more likely that the recommendation will be implemented.
 - Recommendations will be drawn up and presented clearly by the working group as part of its final report. Executive, via the appropriate Executive member, will provide a response to all recommendations explaining the reasons for accepting or not accepting any of the recommendations.
 - Implementation of recommendations should then be monitored.

12. The Executive Response

- 12.1. Once a scrutiny committee has resolved to make a report and/or recommendations to the Executive, the scrutiny report and/or recommendations are referred to the Executive (or other decision maker) for an Executive Response.
- 12.2. The Scrutiny Officer will prepare an officer cover report to the Executive or Executive Member (as appropriate) to present the scrutiny report or recommendations and once this is authorised for publication by the Monitoring Officer, will be placed upon the agenda of the Executive. This serves as the formal notice to the Executive of a scrutiny report or recommendations . This notice must require the Executive to respond within two months of receiving the report notice.
- 12.3. Where a scrutiny report or recommendations are referred to the Executive, at the relevant meeting of the Executive, the Chairman of the OSC relevant Scrutiny Working Group will be permitted, at the discretion of the Chairman of Executive (the Leader), to briefly address Executive to provide a brief oral summary report on the key findings and scrutiny reports and recommendations being made, requesting an Executive Response to any reports and recommendations made.
- 12.4. It is a statutory duty of the Executive to respond a scrutiny committee:
 - (a) to consider the report or recommendations,
 - (b) to respond to the scrutiny committee indicating what (if any) action the authority, or the executive, proposes to take,
 - (c) if the overview and scrutiny committee has published the report or recommendations, to publish the response.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/22/section/9FE>

- 12.5. The Executive Response is made at a formal meeting of Executive (or other decision making body), by formal resolution.
- 12.6. The draft Executive Response should be drawn up in advance by the relevant department, in consultation with the relevant decision maker. The Executive Response should provide clear executive decisions for each scrutiny recommendation.
- 12.7. The Executive Response should be drafted in such a way as to provide clarity on whether the scrutiny recommendation is agreed or rejected, or if an alternative course will be agreed, the relevant portfolio holder (Executive member), the implementing department and when the agreed actions and decisions will be implemented.
- 12.8. The Executive must respond **within two months** beginning with the date on which it received the notice of the scrutiny report or recommendations.

13. Scrutiny Review of Implementation

13.1. *How are recommendations monitored?*

- 13.2. Six months after the OSC has made recommendations to the Executive, progress on the implementation of those recommendations should be reported to OSC. The format of the monitoring may differ from subject to subject, but may include:
- A table listing each recommendation with a 'progress' column
 - A written report from relevant Executive member/officer
 - A presentation
- 13.3. OSC should evaluate and assess the impact of their previous recommendations, referring back to the initial scoping document and compiling a brief evaluation summary for publication.

14. Scrutiny Co-optees

- 14.1. The constitution allows co-option of external people to assist with specific scrutiny reviews (section 4a, paragraph 6.9). Such co-options can be made to the formal OSC, however it is more likely that committee will want to appoint co-optees to task and finish scrutiny working groups that are established for specific reviews.
- 14.2. Once a scrutiny working group has decided to co-opt members, Expressions of Interest to join the working group may be sought from the desired background, included other non-executive Members of the Council, external organisations, experts in the field, service users.
- 14.3. In considering co-option of people outside of the Council and external organisations particular care should be given to consider appropriate persons, mindful of the fact that people and organisations may have particular political and personal interests in an issue. Elected Members and external cooptees need to bring an objective and independent mindset to the scrutiny process, along with their knowledge and expertise.
- 14.4. In seeking Expressions of Interest the following details need to be defined and communicated to people who may be interested, the following steps may be followed:
- the subject under review
 - an indicative timeframe for the whole review
 - an estimate as to the number of meetings that the co-optees will be expected to attend
 - the format and anticipated location of the meetings, i.e. online via MS Teams, in person at Council offices, or a hybrid approach
 - how interested parties should make their application, eg. via a CV and covering letter, email or application form
 - the deadline for applications/expressions of interest.

- 14.5. In identifying Expressions of Interest from external people and organisations, an advertisement of the co-option opportunity may be sent out to relevant agencies and advertised through Council media and other available media, providing the details of the role and scrutiny inquiry.
- 14.6. Members of the scrutiny working group may consider expressions of interest received, creating a short list for interview. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a meeting, and the task and finish group will decide who to appoint.
- 14.7. The Scrutiny Working Group will reserve the right to not appoint any co-optees following interview.
- 14.8. Any appointments made will be for a specified time period, likely to coincide with the estimated timeframe for the scrutiny inquiry.
- 14.9. Once the recruitment process has completed, meetings of the scrutiny working group will take place in line with the process detailed at paragraph 6.6 of the Constitution.

15. Scrutiny Training and Development

- 15.1. The Statutory Scrutiny Guidance 2024 says that Local Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively and that authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions.
- 15.2. Cherwell District Council draws up an annual programme of scrutiny training and development for members and officers, including training and development for new members of the a scrutiny committee, training and development for all members of the OSC and scrutiny working groups, scrutiny training for all members of the Council, including Members of the Executive, training for council officers involved with Overview and Scrutiny.

16. Further resources and reviewing and updating of this guide

- 16.1. The Monitoring Officer and Democratic and Elections Team will periodically review this guide with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, gathering feedback from OSC as required, to ensure it remains up-to-date and appropriate.
- 16.2. In addition to this guide and the formal CDC Constitution, OSC members may wish to consult further resources, such as the LGA's Councillor Workbook on Scrutiny - <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/councillors-workbook-scrutiny> (updated September 2023) which gives more detailed information about possible approaches to Scrutiny.

- 16.3. *This guidance should be read in conjunction with the [Cherwell District Council Constitution](#)² and the [Statutory Scrutiny Guidance](#)³ issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.*

² The Cherwell District Council Constitution

<https://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=531&MId=3982&Ver=4&Info=1>

(Accessed 11 February 2025).

³ Statutory guidance - Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils, combined authorities and combined county authorities, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
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