



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Annual Report

Council Performance 2012/13



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1. Introduction – meeting our objectives

Welcome to Cherwell District Council's annual performance report for 2012/13. This document looks back over the year and reviews the Council's strategic objectives and performance against them. It also highlights areas of achievement in terms of the Council's key services and looks forward to the challenges we face in the future.

This report sits alongside our business plan and the detailed financial and performance reports which set out our long term priorities, medium term financial strategy and details of our achievements.

During 2012/13 the Council has focused on protecting frontline services, working in partnership to develop and deliver ambitious regeneration plans for our local towns and supporting an innovative collaborative agenda with the aim of reducing the costs of our services and increasing the Council's efficiency.

Looking forward we continue to face many opportunities and challenges. As new national policies are implemented we are working with partners to ensure we manage changes to the welfare system, that we forge partnerships with the new health bodies such as clinical commissioning groups and that we work across the region on issues around crime and community safety with the new Policing and Crime Commissioners and economic development with the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

2013/14 is the fourth year we have frozen council tax and we are continuing to explore opportunities to reduce our costs. Our business plan for 2013/14 sets out an ambitious programme of service delivery and new projects which include redevelopment in Banbury and Bicester town centres, continuing investment in affordable housing and sports provision within the district, and maintaining high performance in services such as recycling and food waste collection.

In the midst of significant change, new policy developments and unprecedented economic challenges we remain committed to working effectively with our partners to ensure high quality services are delivered in times of financial constraint.

We hope you find this annual report useful, and if you have any feedback or would like to discuss the business plan in more detail please get in touch using the contact details on page 27.

Councillor Barry Wood



Leader of Cherwell District Council

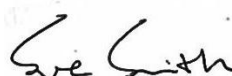
Councillor Nicholas Turner



Lead Member for Performance and Customers

Sue Smith

Chief Executive, Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils



2. Cherwell – introducing the district

Cherwell District covers an area of 590 square kilometres (228 square miles) in north Oxfordshire. Named after the River Cherwell which flows through it, the District is located between London and Birmingham, at the most northern point of the South East region, where it meets the West Midlands and East Midlands. Cherwell borders Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire, Aylesbury Vale, South Northamptonshire and Stratford on Avon Districts.

Approximately 141,868 people live in the district with over 60 per cent of the population living in the principal centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington; the remainder in more than 70 smaller settlements of between 50 and 3,500 people.

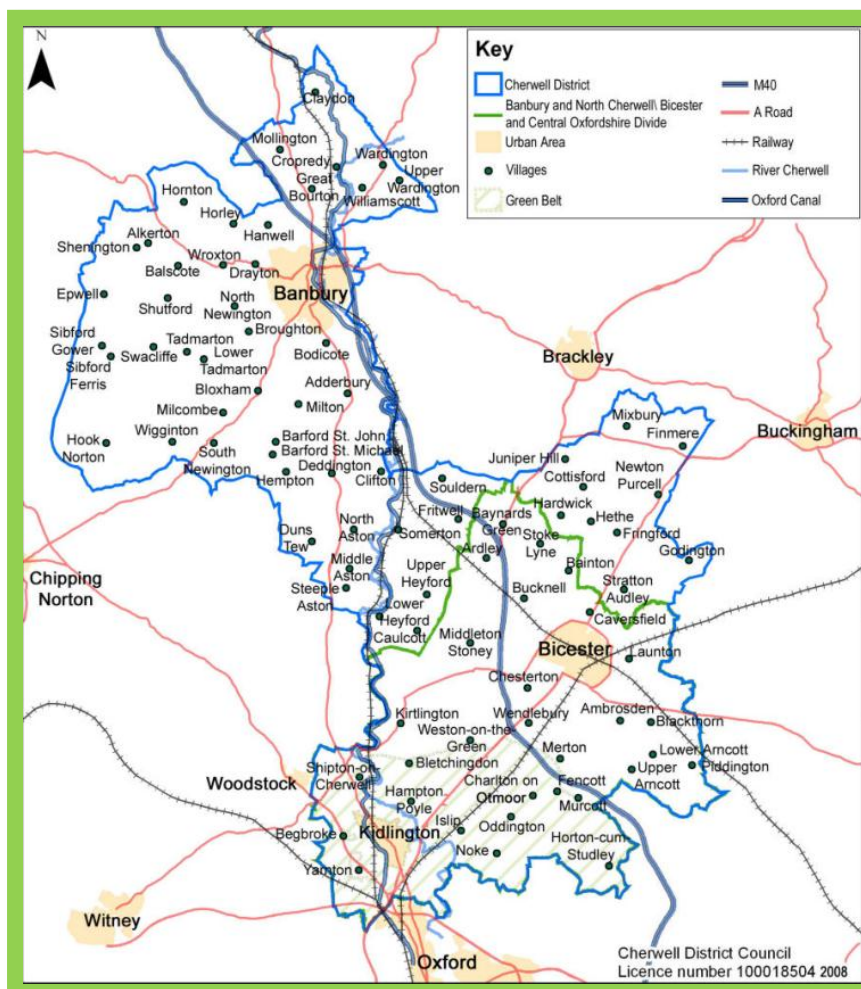
Cherwell offers a unique and successful combination of fine rural landscapes providing some of the most attractive and picturesque scenery in Oxfordshire with thriving commercial and industrial centres that bring prosperity and economic strength in a highly accessible and desirable location. The majority of the District (approx.85 per cent) is made up of attractive farmland with 14 per cent lying within the Oxford Green Belt, contributing to making Cherwell the thirteenth least densely populated district in the South East. The District also has a rich built heritage, with

around 3,000 listed buildings and more than 50 conservation areas.

Cherwell District is centrally located and accessible, the M40 passes through the district and there are excellent rail connections to both London and Birmingham.

Banbury to Birmingham is around 40 miles and less than an hour by train.

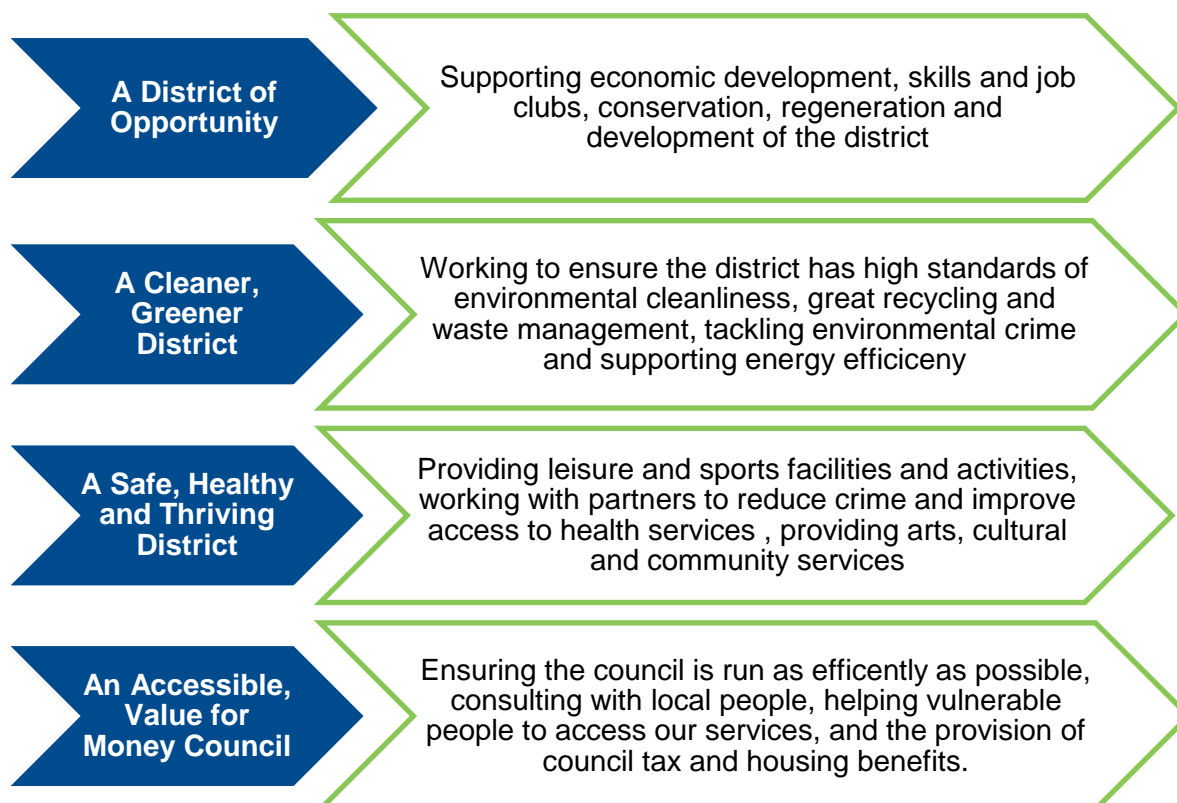
Bicester is 60 miles from London and also just less than one hour by train.



3. Our Approach to Performance

Our long term vision for the district is ambitious. Working with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors we are aiming to build a district with a diverse economy. We are working to secure opportunities for all, and to help grow vibrant, thriving communities connected by a sense of pride, place and purpose.

To help deliver this vision the Council has four strategic priorities. These priorities shape the work we do, our services, plans and major projects. They are outlined below and form the basis of our performance objectives as set out in our Business Plan:

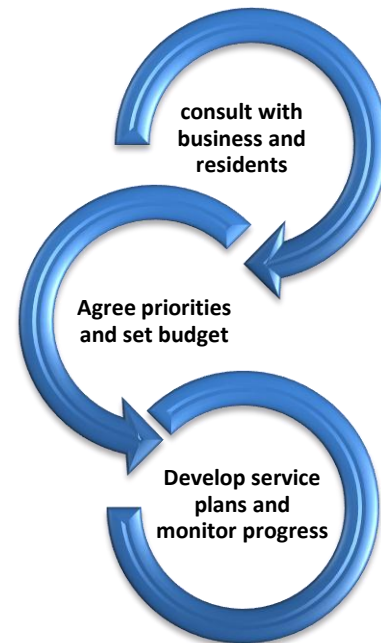


As well as our strategic priorities we set out a number of performance pledges and review our progress in terms of customer feedback, resources, delivery of services, major programmes and projects. This forms our performance scorecard which is reported quarterly.

A focus on delivery

Performance, accountability and transparency

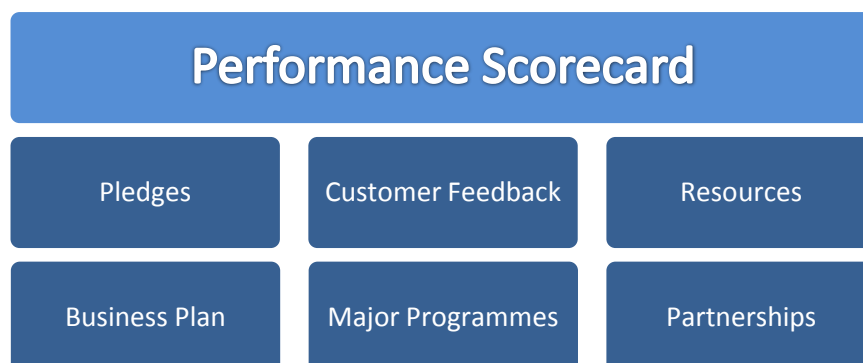
- As part of our annual business planning process we follow a clear cycle. We consult with business and residents to understand local priorities, we work with our partners to agree priorities and objectives and set a budget to deliver them, finally our services develop plans to ensure we meet our commitments and we report upon our progress.
- During operational service planning every staff member has a performance appraisal and is set targets and objectives to ensure they are working to meet the Council's priorities.



Reporting our performance

- Every quarter we review our performance. The table below outlines our performance scorecard. As with any business we report on a number of measures with reflect the council's priorities and core activities. These include the performance pledges, customer feedback and resources. We also review our business plan targets, the performance of key council services, major programmes and projects and our work with commercial and voluntary sector partners.
- This approach helps to ensure we monitor the performance of our whole organisation. Where we identify issues we report actions to be taken to the Executive.
- Details about our performance and expenditure are published on a monthly basis and can be found on the finance and performance pages of our website.

www.cherwell.gov.uk



4. Priorities and Performance 2012/13

2012/13 has seen the Council deliver against its strategic priorities whilst continuing to reduce its base budget, maintain performance in priority service areas and work towards major projects. This section of the annual reports performance in five main areas:

→ Our performance pledges

A set of 'pledges' publicly highlighted in the council tax leaflet which was sent to every household in Cherwell. These promises reflect local priorities, are grounded within our strategic objectives and reflect the results of our corporate consultation programme.

→ Delivering our business plan

The business plan highlight our key aims and objectives under our four strategic priorities, a district of opportunity, a cleaner, greener district, a safe, healthy and thriving district and an accessible, value for money council.

→ Major programmes

A suite of major programmes and projects helping to develop the economic, social and environmental sustainability for the district.

→ Customer feedback

Feedback from local residents and customers.

→ Working in partnership

Recognising that much of the work the Council undertakes is done so in partnership with the voluntary and private sector this section highlights the projects and initiatives undertaken over the course of the last year.

Our Performance Pledges for 2012/13 – a review

Of the 17 performance pledges we made at the beginning of the year 14 have been met in full and 3 partially met. The table below provides a summary of our performance:

A District of Opportunity

Continue to support skills development, apprenticeships and job clubs in order to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training

- Achieved in Full – during the year 135 jobs clubs were held with over 1200 attendees. We worked in partnership to deliver a series of events and activities aimed specifically at young people and the Council has continued its successful programme of apprenticeships.

Deliver 100 affordable homes in the District and support opportunities for self build and developing self build skills

- Achieved in Full – 113 homes were delivered during 2012/13.

Complete the local plan as the foundation for economic growth in the district

- Achieved in Part – the Local Plan is being progressed and following additional evidence some additional public consultation has been added to the programme which has resulted in some minor delays.

Continue to strengthen the leisure and retail facilities in Banbury and Bicester Town Centres

- Achieved in Full – strong progress on plans to develop Spiceball in Banbury and the Bicester Town Centre redevelopment is well underway.

A Cleaner, Greener District

Increase the household recycling rate to 60%

- Achieved in Part – this year we achieved a rate of 55%. This is due to national changes which mean that street sweepings can no longer be composted and now go into the landfill waste stream and cold weather in March reduced the amount of garden waste collected. The Council remains strongly committed to recycling and continues to work to promote recycling and waste reduction.

Improve local residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness continuing our successful programme of neighbourhood litter blitzes

- Achieved in Full – satisfaction ratings have risen from 64% to 69%.

A Cleaner, Greener District

Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by 4% by further improving the energy efficiency of our buildings and vehicles

- Achieved in Full – final figures will be collated and verified in the Summer of 2013 however we are projecting a reduction in excess of 4%.

Continue to give Cherwell residents the opportunity to take advantage of low cost discounted insulation under the new Green Deal replaces discount funding

- Achieved in Full – the Council is working with partners to establish a Green Deal provider service which will provide an opportunity for local residents to access funding. During the year we have also worked with Age UK to support older residents stay warm in their homes.

Begin construction of the Eco-Bicester houses

- Achieved in Full – progress towards this pledge has been strong throughout the year and we are on track to begin construction in Summer 2013.

A Safe, Healthy and Thriving District

Work with local police and licence holders to roll out the "best bar none" scheme which will help make our town centres safer in the evenings

- Achieved in Part – progress is being made to deliver the scheme however there have been some delays. Training is now scheduled to ensure there are scheme assessors available.

Continue working with our partners to provide support to the most vulnerable individuals and families in the District

- Achieved in Full – strong progress on the Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme has been seen this year. Of particular note is the work that has been undertaken to provide support to the most vulnerable families in the district as part of the county wised 'Thriving Families' scheme.

A Safe, Healthy and Thriving District

Complete the layout of the sports pitches at the South West Bicester Sports Village and finalise plans for the Pavilion

- Achieved in Full – whilst the weather did have some impact on drainage and landscaping the programme is due to be completed in November.

Inspire young people to take up new sporting opportunities during the Olympic Year

- Achieved in Full – the successful sports activator and ‘sportivate’ programmes have continued to link in with sports clubs to provide more opportunities for young people to access sports.

Support the local health sector in building a new community hospital in Bicester

- Achieved in Full – a new hospital has been agreed for the existing site.

An Accessible, Value for Money Council

Secure savings of at least £800,000 to help meet the medium term financial deficit

- Achieved in Full – this target has been met in full and savings built into the medium term financial strategy. A council tax freeze is in place for the coming year and this represents the fourth year of a 0% council tax increase.

Improve level of customer satisfaction with our services

- Achieved in Full – the 2012 survey showed an improvement in our overall level of satisfaction from 68% in 2011 to 75% in 2012.

Continue to improve our website, the ease of accessing our services and giving feedback online

- Achieved in Full – this year we have worked to ensure the top tasks on our webpage reflect customer requirements; we have worked to Socitm, Siteimprove and plain English Best practice.

Delivering Our Business Plan

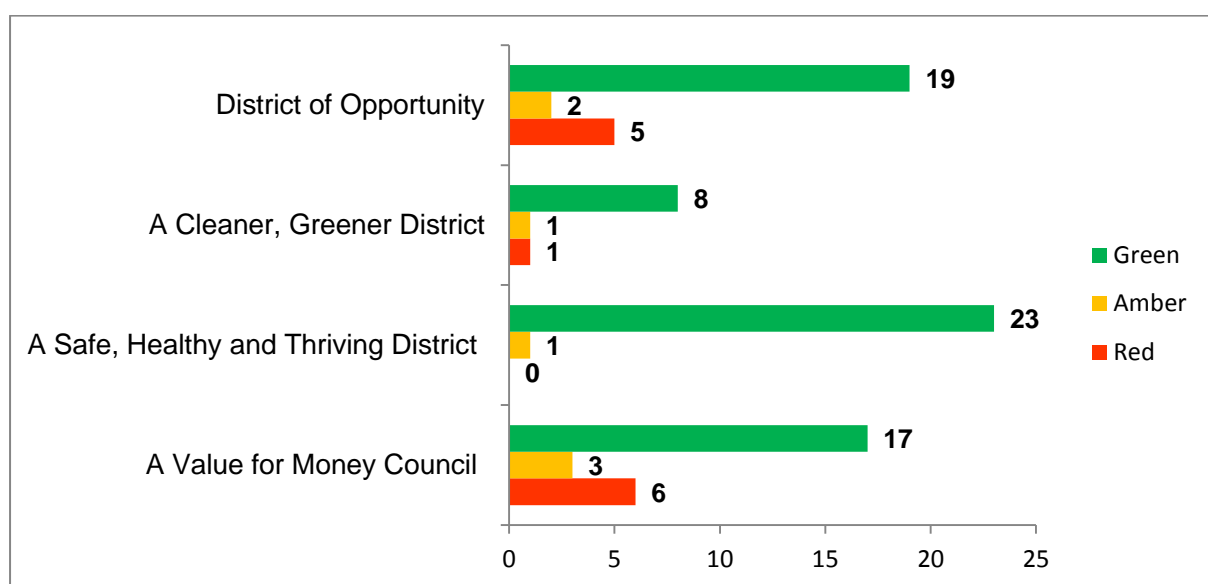
During 2012/13 we have focused on delivery of our strategic priorities, providing value for money and key projects and services that enhance the social, economic and environmental quality of the district.

A summary of our performance:

Percentage achievement across all performance themes:

| END OF YEAR 2012/13 Summary Outturn | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-----|------------------|
| | Green | Amber | Red | No Data Provided |
| Performance Pledges | 78% | 17% | 0% | 0% |
| Corporate Business Plan | 87% | 8% | 6% | 0% |
| Customer, Finance and HR Measures | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% |
| Priority Service Indicators | 55% | 8% | 23% | 0% |
| Major Programmes | 89% | 11% | 0% | 0% |
| Corporate Equalities Plan | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Significant Partnerships | 94% | 6% | 0% | 0% |
| Brighter Futures in Banbury | 72% | 28% | 0% | 0% |
| | 81% | 12% | 7% | 0% |

Achievement by business plan priority (by number of measures under each priority):



Performance Highlights include:

A District of Opportunity

Economic Development

- Our Job Clubs have continued across the district, with over 135 events including targeted and specialist clubs aimed at specific sectors and groups. This year we have also supported a self help job club for professionals and executives and worked closely with colleagues in the County Council to provide support for young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS).

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of job clubs held in 2012/13 | 135 |
| Total number of local people attending job clubs | 1225 |
| Reduction in young people NEET in Banbury April 2012 – March 2013 | - 83 (from 219 to 136) |
| Average reduction in Job Seekers allowance claimants across Cherwell | -0.2% |
| Average reduction in Job Seekers allowance claimants in Banbury Wards April 2012-March 2013 | Ruscote -0.9% Neithrop -0.5% Grimsby & Castle -0.5% |

- As part of the armed forces community covenant the Council has supported the local military by holding briefing sessions for members of the Pioneer Regiment in Bicester facing redundancy.
- Apprenticeships – the council has its own programme of apprenticeships, with six new opportunities for young unemployed local people made available this year, and has worked with local business to support the establishment of new apprenticeship opportunities.
- Supporting local businesses and entrepreneurship, we have worked to provide a comprehensive set of services to support local business including:
 - ➔ advice to local residents on setting up their own business through our Oxfordshire Business Enterprise Service, providing assistance to two local businesses to bid for regional growth funding
 - ➔ leading the Cherwell Business Awards to celebrate local business success and promote inward investment
 - ➔ providing an advice service for businesses seeking new sites and premises
 - ➔ supporting local business through networking events such as the Banbury in Business Exhibition



Planning Services

- Processing planning applications (minor and other) is on target at year end with just over 78% of minor applications processed within 8 weeks.
- A new Local Plan for the district is being developed and will complete its public consultation in 2013/14.
- A Design and Conservation Strategy has been agreed to help protect the built environment of the district and the Oxford Canal has been designated as a Conservation Area.

Regeneration and Housing

- Regeneration: the Master Plans for Banbury and Bicester have been progressed and set out the long term vision for the development for the towns.
- During 2012/13 we have supported the development of our town centres by making significant progress on the town centre redevelopment in Bicester and on the south west Bicester multi-sports village.
- We have delivered 113 new affordable homes during 2012/13, these included 18 at the former Dashwood Primary School site which deliver affordable homes in the Brighter Futures in Banbury Wards and meet the conservation needs of the local area. In addition we have delivered new standards of environmentally sustainable affordable housing at the Bryan House site in Bicester, meeting the national energy efficiency standard at levels 4 and 5.
- Temporary accommodation has risen during the year and at year end we have 43 households in temporary housing, against a projected 33. We are working to review the cases and look for solutions to address the current issue and prevent future cases. Our preventative approach to homelessness continues to be successful and throughout 2012/13 there were no cases of repeat homelessness.
- Our work to support the development of affordable housing and the skills of unemployed young people through our innovative 'Build!' programme continues with new sites being identified to provide self build affordable housing options for local people. In Banbury sites are identified at Fairway Methodist Church, West Street and Broughton Road and in Bicester there are sites at London and Middleton Roads.



A Cleaner, Greener District

Protecting the environmental quality of the district



- We now recycle around 55% of our waste. As government rules have changed this year we haven't been able to compost street sweepings.
- However, we are committed to improving recycling and have excellent customer satisfaction ratings for our service: (data taken from our annual satisfaction survey 2012)

| | |
|--|-----|
| % satisfied with waste collection services | 80% |
| % satisfied with recycling collections | 79% |
| % satisfied with recycling centres | 86% |

- As a large local employer we seek to demonstrate our environmental responsibilities, in 2012/13 we are projecting a reduction in our CO2 emissions of 4% and we are installing solar panels to further reduce our energy costs and impacts.
- As well as our routine street cleansing, work to reduce fly tipping and our zero tolerance approach to environmental crime such as littering we also work to improve things at a neighbourhood level. Fly tipping this year has fallen with 420 recorded incidents against a projected rate of 467.
- This year we have continued our programme of targeted neighbourhood litter blitzes across the district to ensure our streets and neighbourhoods are clean and will continue this programme next year.



A Safe, Healthy and Thriving District

Supporting local communities

- Activities for older people – we have a service level agreement with Age UK that has provided 40 active lifestyle sessions for older people per month throughout 2012/13.

- Activities for younger people – over the last year a number of new initiatives have been launched to help improve the participation of young people in activities and sports. These have focused on building links between sports clubs and young people via the ‘Activator’ and ‘Sportivate’ programmes.
- Advisory services – our partnership with the Citizen’s Advice Bureaux continues to offer advisory services for vulnerable people, focusing on financial advice. The partnership also offers support to volunteering. An area for development will be ensuring that volunteering is geographically spread across the district.

Community Safety

- Our already low crime figures continue to show improvement and our work with local communities helps to ensure that people feel safe in their homes and communities:

| Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour | 2012/13 | 2011/12 | |
|--|---------|---------|--|
| Anti-Social Behaviour (total recorded) | 2352 | 3200 | |
| Criminal Damage | 1081 | 1261 | |
| Burglary(Dwelling) | 178 | 210 | |
| All Crime | 6743 | 7348 | |

| Community Safety | 2012 | 2011 | |
|--|------|------|--|
| % of residents who feel safe at home after dark | 95% | 90% | |
| % of residents who feel safe in town centres after dark | 59% | 46% | |
| % of residents who feel safe in their local communities after dark | 77% | 62% | |

Leisure, Community and Health Services

- Leisure centres visits stand at over 1.2 million for the year, around 40,000 more than last year.
- Significant progress has been made towards securing Trust status for the Banbury Museum; this will help to ensure a long term and financially sustainable future for the museum.
- The council has worked with local partners to support and encourage the development of new and improved health services in Bicester and retention of services at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury. A new hospital has been agreed for the community site in Bicester.

An Accessible, Value for Money Council

Benefits

- During 2012/13 our time to process new housing and council tax benefits was 17.19 days with our average time to process the previous year at 17.22 days. The average time to process changes in benefits claims is 4.58 days against a target of 9 days.
- During 2012/13 we have worked with local partners to ensure changes to the welfare system have been well communicated and potential impacts on vulnerable people have been identified. The Council has acted as a community leader holding a series of very well attended information and training sessions for any interested community group or local agency to attend.

Improvement and Efficiency

- During 2012/13 we have secured savings of £800,000 through an innovative value for money programme and joint working with our neighbouring council of South Northamptonshire by sharing senior management, ICT services and back office services. We have also worked to improve efficiencies through procurement and providing better access to our services through online forms and an improved website.
- Our focus on saving costs through efficiencies, procurement and partnership working has enabled us to focus on protecting frontline services and ensuring we have been able to freeze council tax for the four year period 2010/11- 2013/14.
- During 2012/13 we were shortlisted by the Municipal Journal and the Local Government Chronicle in several awards categories including: Democratic Services Team of the Year, Shared Services Initiative of the Year and Central Services Team of the Year.

Community Engagement

- Our Connecting Communities programme provides community information and access to local public services in accessible locations. We combine these with fun activities for families, young people and older people to encourage strong community relations and easy access to services. This year four events were held in Banbury and Bicester themed around health and wellbeing, young people and intergenerational issues.



- The Council has continued to hold Faith and Disability Forums to ensure that a wide variety of community groups are able to help contribute to the development and improvement of local services.

Major Programmes

The Council has a programme of major projects which support two key themes 'place' and 'organisational transformation'.

The Place programme includes the on-going work to regenerate Bicester Town Centre and the long term development plans that underpin the Eco-Bicester Project. Brighter Futures in Banbury is a partnership programme that aims to tackle long term disadvantage in key wards within the town. It is an innovative programme that brings together public, private and voluntary sector agencies to help address a wide variety of issues including educational attainment, worklessness, activities and support for young people.

| Place | Year end summary |
|--------------------------|--|
| Eco Town Bicester | The 'exemplar planning permission' has been granted and is the first eco-town planning permission to have been granted nationally. |
| Bicester Town Centre | The programme is well on track with final fit out works underway and the first phase on schedule for opening. |
| Banbury Brighter Futures | The programme has been subject to significant change this year as each of the key partners have been subject to significant organisational change. Strong progress has been made working to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training, the Thriving Families programme (targeted family support) has been established and crime figures across the wards have improved. |
| Banbury Developments | This new programme has been established during 12/13 with the aim of strengthening Banbury town Centre. |

The Transformation Programme aims to ensure that the Council establishes services that are lean, cost effective and fit for purpose as nationally budgets reduce. The projects seek to explore opportunities for collaborative working, streamlining back office processes and protecting frontline services.

| Transformation | Year end summary |
|------------------------|--|
| ICT Shared Services | This project aims to harmonise ICT services across two Councils (Cherwell and South Northamptonshire) and deliver significant efficiencies and performance improvements as a result. Projected savings are on track and of the 11 workstreams to deliver the project 8 are on track, one is complete and one has been delayed. |
| Service Transformation | Good progress has been made: Finance and Procurement, Performance and Democratic Services have all completed the implementation phase of their joint working business case and savings have been realised. Human Resources have begun consultation on their business case. |

Customer Feedback

Customer feedback is an important part of our performance management framework and we collect information in a number of ways including asking service users what they think of us, conducting satisfaction survey via our Citizen's Panel and learning from comments and complaints.

The Satisfaction Survey conducted in June 2012 shows that more residents than ever are satisfied with Cherwell's performance. The overall message from this year's survey is very positive; we have improved satisfaction levels in the majority of areas. We are continuing to deliver services along with improving satisfaction levels despite the current economic climate. However we are not complacent and strive to address areas where satisfaction scores are not as high.

The overall percentage of people satisfied with the services' provided by Cherwell District Council has risen significantly this year to 75%, from 68% in 2011. This is the highest rating of satisfaction recorded since the survey began.

Summary of customer satisfaction rates by service

| Service | % very/fairly satisfied | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| | 2012 | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 |
| Overall satisfaction | 75 | 68 | 73 | 67 | 67 | 60 |
| Recycling centres | 87 | 88 | 87 | 86 | 83 | 77 |
| Local area as a place to live | 86 | 78 | Not collected in previous years | | | |
| Food and garden waste collection | 80 | 80 | 76 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Household recycling service | 80 | 82 | 83 | 78 | 75 | 76 |
| Waste collection | 80 | 76 | 78 | 70 | 68 | 67 |
| Leisure facilities | 76 | 74 | 71 | 68 | 63 | 58 |
| The way parks and open spaces are looked after | 77 | 72 | 74 | 73 | 70 | 71 |
| Street cleaning | 69 | 64 | 72 | 67 | 66 | 63 |
| Local car parking facilities | 63 | 49 | 63 | 64 | 63 | 58 |
| Leisure activities | 61 | 56 | Not collected in previous years | | | |
| Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour & nuisance | 49 | 43 | 44 | 36 | 36 | 30 |
| Council's approach to dealing with environmental crime | 47 | 42 | Not collected in previous years | | | |

Complaints Management

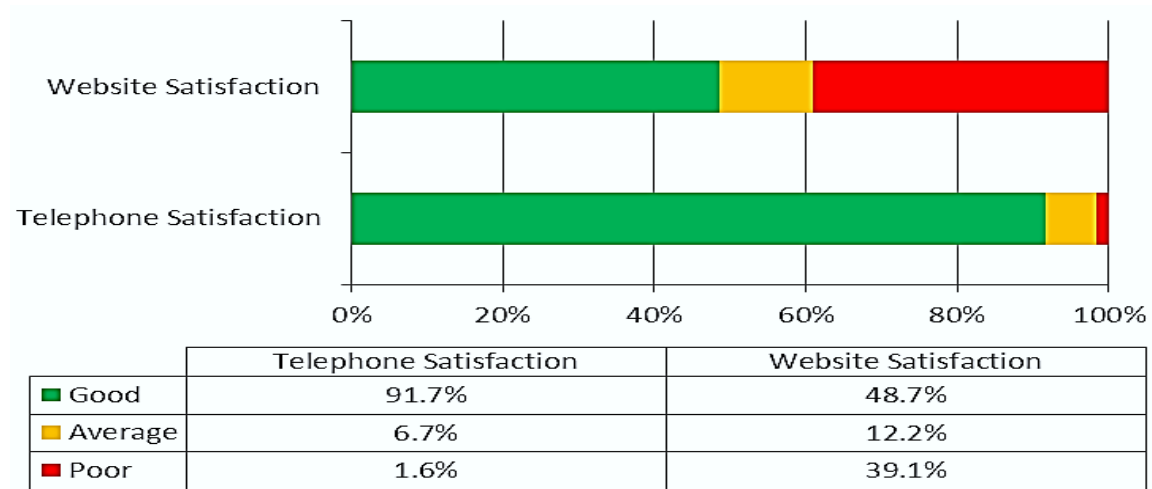
Cherwell District Council currently has a three stage complaints management system (initial investigation and judgement, head of service review, and a further senior manager review if required). The process is robust and allows the Council to learn lessons and implement improvements. Figures for 2012/13 are:

| Service | 2012/13 | 2011/12 | +/- |
|---|---------|---------|-----|
| Total complaints received | 191 | 256 | -65 |
| Amenity Services | 36 | 39 | -3 |
| Benefits | 20 | 24 | -4 |
| Building Control and Engineering Services | 1 | 1 | - |
| Business Rates | 1 | 2 | -1 |
| Chief Executive's and Communications | 1 | 2 | -1 |
| Council Tax | 17 | 17 | - |
| Customer Service | 14 | 23 | -9 |
| Development Control and Major Developments | 6 | 5 | +1 |
| Elections | 0 | 6 | -6 |
| Environmental Services | 15 | 12 | +3 |
| Finance | 1 | 3 | -2 |
| Housing Services | 10 | 10 | - |
| Legal and Democratic Services | 3 | 2 | +1 |
| Multiple service areas | 6 | 7 | -1 |
| Planning | 25 | 24 | +1 |
| Recreation and Health | 6 | 3 | +3 |
| Safer Communities and Community Development | 4 | 3 | +1 |
| Urban and Rural Services | 25 | 71 | -46 |
| Misc | 0 | 2 | -2 |

Gov Metric

As well as learning from complaints and reviewing satisfaction ratings we also use the Gov Metric system to help improve our performance in terms of telephone and web based transactions.

For 2012/13 Telephone satisfaction levels remain high but overall website satisfaction levels are significantly lower. Whilst they have improved from 2011/12 improving the accessibility and range of service available on our website remains a priority.



Working in Partnership

The Council is committed to working with partners from across the public, private and voluntary sectors to meet its objectives. During 2012/13 this commitment has been demonstrated in a number of areas including economic development, breaking the cycle of deprivation, housing and homelessness, tackling crime and supporting community safety and town centre regeneration.

A summary of all of our key partnerships is included in the appendix to this report, highlights include:

The Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership

Over the past twelve months the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership has streamlined its functioning and revised its Terms of Reference. The Board and Management Group have merged into one Partnership Board, which enables representation from all sectors of Cherwell to continue to build strong relationships and work cooperatively together to ensure the aspirations of the Sustainable Community Strategy come into fruition.



The Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership held its Annual Reference Group. This conference focused on 'Building New Communities' and attendees received a presentation from the Director of Local Projects of the Young Foundation. The presentation focused on the development of new communities and highlighted the importance of community engagement to ensure effective integrated communities. The event was a great success with representation from all different communities living and working within Cherwell.

The LSP have continued its programme of community engagement events, such as Connecting Our Communities and the Disability and Faith Forums and work to encourage high levels of participation through better communication of all of its consultative forums.

The Local Strategic Partnership has also supported local partners by providing Welfare Reform training sessions for organisations who support, work and are affected by these changes.

The Local Strategic Partnership has also been looking at current education attainment levels for both Primary and Secondary Schools within the Cherwell area and will be working closely with Local Head Teachers and Oxfordshire County Council to ensure improvement in these figures continue.

Brighter Futures in Banbury (BFIB)

The BFIB programme aims to tackle disadvantage and deprivation in Banbury through multi-agency working; during 2012/13 the following achievements have been made:

- A full programme of activities to support young people into education, employment or training including specialist support, drop-ins and an apprenticeships scheme, resulting in the reduction of the numbers of NEETS from 219 (April 2012) to 136 (March 2013)
- The successful delivery of job clubs and targeted work to help people return to work
- An exciting programme of activities for children, young people and their families to provide support to access opportunities and more targeted support for the most vulnerable families
- Work to increase the number of people accessing health services including screening, smoking cessation and alcohol services

A full annual review of the programme is available on our website

www.cherwell.gov.uk

Economic Development

The Council supports a variety of economic development partnerships including work across the region with the Oxfordshire and South Midlands Local Enterprise partnerships. More locally work continues in Bicester with the North West Bicester Strategic Delivery Board and Bicester Vision to make significant progress with regards to the development of the town centre. During 2012/13 significant progress was made with a new Master Plan setting out the long term future of the town developed.

The Cherwell M40 Investment Partnership continues and provides an opportunity for relationship to be developed between the public and private sectors, supporting investment and economic development. During 2012/13 improvement works to the Murdock Industrial Estate were facilitated by this group.

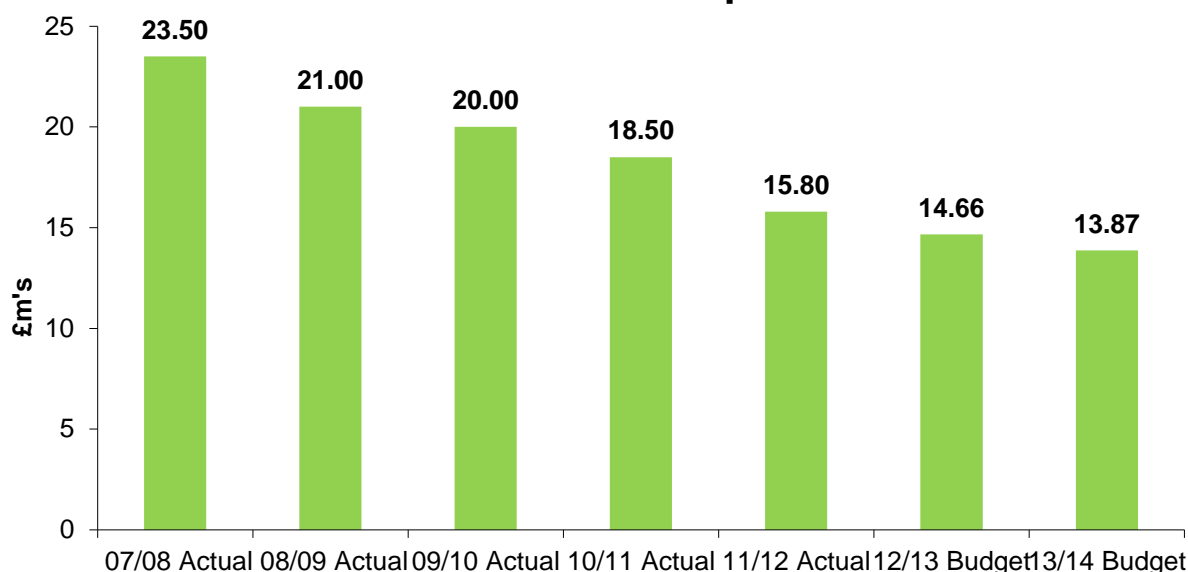


During 2013 the Council was delighted to hear that Mr John Vernon has received a Queens Award for Enterprise in his role as an advisor for the Oxfordshire Business Enterprises Service an advisory partnership led by Cherwell District Council which provides free business advice for local residents.

Managing our Resources

As a result of the comprehensive spending review in 2010 it was announced that the Council would receive a 26% reduction in formula grant for the period 2011/12-2014/15. Cherwell District Council has a strong track record of delivering significant efficiency savings and over the last seven years we have reduced our revenue budget by 41%.

Net Service Expenditure



For 2012/13 our financial performance has been maintained in terms of both capital and revenue, provisional outturns are within set tolerance targets. Our performance demonstrates our ability to respond positively and actively to changing economic circumstances and deliver sizeable capital programmes and effective financial management. Our provisional financial outturns for 2012/13 show that variances within the revenue budget are within the Council's stated tolerances of 2%. For capital our provisional outturn is also with stated tolerances of +2% / -5%.

Our strong financial position is underpinned by effective stewardship of our resources, including:

- Meeting our sickness absence targets with a low annual average sickness absence rate of 6.16 days per full time employee in 2012/13.
- Continuing to develop our website and increasing the number of our services that can be booked, paid for or ordered online, helping to improve our back office efficiency.
- Collecting over 98% of council tax and business rates and improving our performance in comparison with last year.
- Over 98% of our invoices are paid within 30 days.

Our effective financial management has ensured we have balanced our budget and delivered a council tax freeze for the 2013/14 year.

Procurement

The Joint Procurement Team has been in place since July 2012 and has built on the excellent year on year cashable savings previously achieved, which have outweighed their costs and provided added value across the entire expenditure programme.

Total cumulative cashable savings since 2008 have exceeded £2.75m and the department has played a key role in helping the Council reduce its service budgets in line with funding reductions and in embracing the Localism agenda.

The success of the team in engaging with the local economy was recently recognised at the Government Opportunities (GO) Excellence in Public Procurement Awards 2013/14, with the team beating off national contenders for a Highly Commended award for the Best Supplier Engagement Initiative of the Year category.

Joint Working with South Northamptonshire Council



Our partnership with South Northamptonshire Council has resulted in significant savings since its inception in 2011. The Councils work together to identify opportunities for joint working and shared services and to date Cherwell has made savings of £1.2m through a number of initiatives:

- a series of joint back office services including: Finance and Procurement, Performance and Insight, Democratic Services, a Joint Information Technology Service
- a shared building control service
- advanced plans for a joint Human Resources Team

In addition to our strategic partnership with South Northamptonshire Council we also seek to develop further opportunities for collaborative working with other partners. Examples of savings generated through collaboration include the provision of interim human resources and legal support to Stratford upon Avon Council during 2012/13.

More details about our budget can be found in the Council's budget book which accompanies this document and is available on the finance pages of our website.

www.cherwell.gov.uk

Looking forward

Our focus on service delivery, innovation and performance in 2013/14 remains strong.

Our Business Plan 2013/14 sets out a detailed overview of our priorities and we will report progress on a quarterly basis. For the coming year we have also made a series of performance pledges. We believe these are some of the key services and projects that local people care about and our aim is to put these right at the heart of what we do. For the coming year our performance pledges are:

A district of opportunity

- ➔ Continue to support skills development, apprenticeships and job clubs in order to help support local employment and reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.
- ➔ Deliver 150 affordable homes in the district and support opportunities for self build and developing self build skills.
- ➔ Continue to strengthen leisure and retail facilities in Banbury and Bicester town centres.
- ➔ Complete the Local Plan as the foundation for economic growth in the district.

A cleaner, greener district

- ➔ Maintain a household recycling rate of above 57%
- ➔ Improve local residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness continuing our successful programme of neighbourhood litter blitzes.
- ➔ Continue to reduce the Council's carbon footprint by further improving the energy efficiency of our buildings and vehicles.
- ➔ Continue to give Cherwell residents the opportunity to reduce their energy costs by working with partners to set up a 'green deal provider' service for low cost insulation and exploring opportunities to develop bulk buying and 'collective energy switching' schemes.
- ➔ Start work onsite for the initial housing development at Northwest Bicester.

A safe, healthy and thriving district

- ➔ Continue working with our partners to provide support to the most vulnerable individuals and families in the district, building on the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme.
- ➔ Support the local health sector in building a new community hospital in Bicester and work to support the on-going delivery of services at the Horton General hospital in Banbury.
- ➔ Complete the lay out of the sports pitches at the South West Bicester sports village and finalise plans for the pavilion.
- ➔ Support the upgrade of sports facilities across the district using the Olympic legacy fund.
- ➔ Work with the local police and licence holders to ensure our town centres remain safe and vibrant in the evenings.

An accessible, value for money council




- ➔ Secure cashable savings of at least £500,000 to help meet the medium term financial deficit and continue to identify non cashable savings in procurement.
- ➔ Improve levels of customer satisfaction focusing on our anti-social behaviour, environmental crime and car parking services.
- ➔ Continue to improve our website, the ease of accessing our services and paying for services online.

Getting in touch

Throughout the year the Council provides opportunities for local people to have their say. Whether this be through customer satisfaction surveys, budget consultation, consultation on new projects and services, talking to local business organisations or feedback via our link-points or web site we are keen to listen to what people like and what needs to be improved. Our consultations are published on our one-stop consultation portal which can be found at:

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

However, if you would like to feedback back about any other matter you can do so using the contact details below.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Click</p>  | <p>Consultation inbox: consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</p> |
| <p>Call</p>  | <p>To find and email your ward councillor: http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/mgFindCouncillor.aspx</p> <p>The Performance and Insight team: 01295 221575 Customer Services: 01295 227001</p> |
| <p>Write</p>  | <p>The Performance and Insight Team Bodicote House Bodicote Banbury Oxfordshire, OX15 4AA</p> |

For general enquiries our contact details are via the web site www.cherwell.gov.uk or the customer service team 01295 227001.

Alternative formats

This document is available in alternative formats and languages, please contact 01295 227001:

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać. 01295 227001

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੇਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ। 01295 227001

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。01295 227001

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔
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