

# Executive

## Oxfordshire 2030 and the Local Area Agreement

Executive 6 April 2009

### Report of the Chief Executive and Community and Corporate Planning Manager

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To adopt Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy and note progress on the development of its delivery plans, in particular, the renegotiated targets for the Local Area Agreement.

This report is public
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#### Recommendations

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The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Invite Council to adopt Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, as a key strategic document for Cherwell District Council.
- (2) Invite Council to agree the renegotiated targets for the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement.
- (3) Request that a detailed report outlining the implications of the Place Survey is brought to Executive when national comparison data is available.

#### Executive Summary

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##### Introduction

- 1.1 Oxfordshire 2030, the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy, sets out a strategic vision for Oxfordshire. The themes, priorities, pledges and actions that it contains should be acceptable to Cherwell District Council as it will be responsible for contributing to their delivery.
- 1.2 The priorities in Oxfordshire 2030 are reflected in the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement. Oxfordshire 2030 is attached as Appendix 1, the Delivery Plan as Appendix 2, and the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement as Appendix 4.

- 1.3 Oxfordshire 2030 provides a vision for the future of Oxfordshire and consequently has been critical to determining the current Local Area Agreement. It will also determine future Local Area Agreements. It has, therefore, potentially significant financial implications.
- 1.4 The Executive considered a draft of Oxfordshire 2030 at its meeting on 1 September 2008. The majority of the comments made then have been incorporated into this final version.
- 1.5 The responses to all of Cherwell's comments are set out in Appendix 3. In summary, amendments incorporated include;
- making the whole document less Oxford centric
  - indicating the importance of Banbury as a sub regional hub
  - promoting the partnership nature of the document by having all Local Strategic Partnership Chairmen in Oxfordshire signing it off
  - better reflecting the important role of Town and Parish Councils.
- 1.6 Comments not fully incorporated include;
- Incorporating more Cherwell-related issues
  - clearly indicating the links between District Local Strategic Partnerships, thematic partnerships and Oxfordshire 2030
  - clear signposting to where detailed action plans can be found

This was primarily because it is a county-wide document and can't incorporate all of Cherwell's issues and also because the county-wide review of partnerships is still to be finalised.

- 1.7 The renegotiated targets for the Local Area Agreement are considered to be generally acceptable. However, there are several risks around a number of indicators where there are currently no established delivery groups, where no district level targets have been set, only county average targets, and where no national comparator data is available (as is the case for the Place Survey indicators). These risks are due to be addressed through the county-wide review of partnerships governance and improved performance management arrangements.

### **Proposals**

- 1.8 Executive Members are asked invite Council to adopt Oxfordshire 2030 as one of the key strategic documents for Cherwell District Council. They are also asked to invite Council to agree the renegotiated targets for the Local Area Agreement.
- 1.9 Executive Members are also recommended to request an additional report with a detailed review of the results of the Place Survey and any performance issues for Cherwell when the national comparative data becomes available.

### **Conclusion**

- 1.10 Oxfordshire 2030 is a key strategic document for the District. The Local Area Agreement delivers many of the priorities within Oxfordshire 2030.

## **Background Information**

### **Oxfordshire 2030**

- 2.1 Local authorities have a duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy. The role of the Sustainable Community Strategy is to set out the strategic vision for a place. It provides a vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult cross-cutting issues such as the economic future of an area, social exclusion and climate change. Oxfordshire Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership for Oxfordshire, has developed Oxfordshire 2030. Within Cherwell we currently also have the Cherwell Community Plan, although this is being revised and a new Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy will be published in the autumn.
- 2.2 Oxfordshire 2030 is a key strategic document for the whole of Oxfordshire. The new Local Area Agreement is based on it, as will future agreements. Local Area Agreements potentially have significant amounts of funding associated with them, and the Comprehensive Area Assessment will consider the delivery of the Local Area Agreement targets.
- 2.3 All key documents created by public sector agencies in Oxfordshire will need to take account of Oxfordshire 2030, including our new Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy. There is an expectation (and a duty to co-operate for public agencies) on all of the key partners within Oxfordshire (the County Council, District Council, Police, Primary Care Trust, Health Authorities, voluntary and community sector, colleges and businesses) to embrace the messages within the Strategy and align themselves to help deliver it.

Oxfordshire 2030 is important to Cherwell because:

- It should reflect the priorities identified in the emerging Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy, and visa versa
- Evidence for the current and future Local Area Agreements will be based on it
- Our Local Development Framework will need to demonstrate strong links to it
- Cherwell District Council has to 'have regard' to the Oxfordshire 2030
- Cherwell District Council will be one of the partners who will contribute to delivering it

### **Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement**

- 2.4 The Local Area Agreement is a three year agreement, based on the priorities in Oxfordshire 2030. It can be viewed as one of the key delivery mechanisms for Oxfordshire 2030. It is of importance because of the potential funding associated with it. It is an agreement between central government, Government Office for the South East, Oxfordshire County Council (as the accountable body for the LAA) and Oxfordshire Partnership. Cherwell District Council is among other statutory agencies represented on the Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 2.5 The agreement is based upon the National Indicators (NIs). It includes 35 NIs that Oxfordshire decided upon, and 16 statutory National Indicators related to

Children and Young People (total 51 NIs). Four of these National Indicators are measured through the Place Survey.

2.6 Renegotiation of targets has been undertaken for several of the targets. These targets are changing for a number of reasons;

- GOSE giving some new targets.
- Place Survey indicators were collected for the first time this year, so a baseline has only just been established (see appendix 5).
- Economically affected indicators, the current economic climate means that not all indicators can now be met, based on evidence some targets have been renegotiated. Flexibility in the reward grant arrangements means that we have the option to negotiate final targets for these indicators at the end of 2009/10.
- Indicators where it has become clear that targets are not achievable or there is a problem with the baseline data.

2.6.1 Revised targets for the indicators that have been renegotiated are set out in Appendix 4. Reward money to Oxfordshire will be based upon average performance across the 35 designated LAA improvement targets. (Reward funding is not affected by delivery of the 16 statutory indicators). No reward will be payable if an area's average performance is below a minimum level (60%). All of the reward on offer will be payable if all targets are achieved.

### **The Place Survey**

2.8 The Place Survey is a government requirement. It is a postal questionnaire distributed at district level every two years. The Place Survey collects data that underpins 18 national indicators; four of these are included within the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement.

2.9 Currently we have the headline results of the Place Survey for Cherwell. However, the Audit Commission is yet to release national comparative data so it is not possible to make effective comparisons about our performance. The 18 national indicator scores are included at Appendix 5A. These form a significant element of our performance picture and will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

2.10 With more detail the topline Place Survey results for Cherwell are included at Appendix 5B. These results will require comparative analysis when national data becomes available. As the fieldwork was conducted between September and December 2008 the results provide the first useful overview of public perception since the recession began and can be used to inform the development of our new Sustainable Community Strategy and other strategic documents, for example the Corporate Plan.

2.11 Of interest are results that suggest activities for teenagers, traffic congestion and road repair are issues that most need improving in the local area.

### **Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options**

3.1 Acknowledging that Oxfordshire 2030 is a county-wide document and as such can't reflect all of Cherwell's issues, does Oxfordshire 2030 reflect the priorities for the District?

- 3.2 Are the renegotiated targets in the Local Area Agreement realistic and achievable?
- 3.3 Without national comparative data we cannot reliably use the Place Survey results to understand our performance and any specific issues for Cherwell.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

**Option One** To adopt Oxfordshire 2030, Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, agree the renegotiated Local Area Agreement targets and request a comparative analysis of the Place Survey when national data becomes available

### **Consultations**

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**Cherwell Community Planning Partnership** Considered the Oxfordshire 2030 consultation document at its meetings on 17 July and 18 September. The views of Executive were reported to the 18 September meeting and agreed.

**Executive** Considered the Oxfordshire 2030 consultation document at its meeting on 1 September. The responses to comments made are included in Appendix 3.

### **Implications**

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(Financial, Legal and Risk and other implications e.g. Equalities, Human Resources, Data Quality and Environmental where relevant)

**Financial:** **Oxfordshire 2030 and Local Area Agreement**  
 Oxfordshire 2030 itself has no financial effects. However, it should be noted that it will be used as the evidence base and set priorities for the current and future Local Area Agreements. If Oxfordshire 2030 does not reflect Cherwell's priorities there is a real danger that they will not be included in future Local Area Agreements and consequently might not get funding.

Significant funding is associated with the Local Area Agreement. This is dependent upon the area's average performance. In Oxfordshire the expected total amount of reward budget available is estimated at £3.734m. Target setting for the Local Area Agreement is critical as unmet targets will reduce the reward funding available. No reward funding will be payable if Oxfordshire's average performance is below 60%. Reward funding will be payable from an average performance of 60%, when 40% of the funding will be payable, on a sliding scale to 100%.

Comments checked by Sarah Best, Senior Accountancy Assistant 01295 221736

**Legal:** **Oxfordshire 2030 and Local Area Agreement**  
 Cherwell District Council is required by law to "have

regard" to Oxfordshire 2030. This means that our policies should not be in conflict with it or inconsistent with it. If they were this could be grounds for a successful challenge.

Cherwell District Council has a "duty to co-operate" to agree relevant targets in the Local Area Agreement. This means that we need to commit to deliver to these targets.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer 01295 221686

**Risk Management:**

**Oxfordshire 2030 and Local Area Agreement**

By not contributing to Oxfordshire 2030 there is a possibility that priorities are set for Oxfordshire that don't reflect priorities in Cherwell. The Strategy could commit the Council to delivering actions that either it may not agree to or it does not consider a priority.

Unrealistic targets in the Local Area Agreement could either result in GOSE not agreeing to them or targets not being met and funding not being optimised.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566

**CAA Implications**

**Oxfordshire 2030 and Local Area Agreement**

Under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (which replaces Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)), it is expected that Cherwell's contribution to priorities set within Oxfordshire 2030 and also the Local Area Agreement will be formally assessed.

Comments checked by Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement 01295 227959

**Wards Affected**

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All

**Corporate Plan Themes**

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All

**Executive Portfolio**

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**Councillor Wood**  
**Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community**

**Document Information**

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<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	<i>Oxfordshire 2030</i>
Appendix 2	<i>Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan</i>
Appendix 3	<i>Oxfordshire 2030 – Responses to Executive Comments</i>
Appendix 4	<i>Local Area Agreement – Renegotiated Targets</i>
Appendix 5A	<i>Place Survey NI scores for Cherwell</i>
Appendix 5B	<i>Place Survey headline results for Cherwell</i>

**Background Papers**

None

**Report Author**

Claire Taylor and Helen Couperthwaite, Community and Corporate Planning.

**Contact Information**

01295 221751

Helen.couperthwaite@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk