

Business Plan 2017-18



Cherwell:
a district of
opportunity

Cherwell:
safe, green,
clean

Cherwell:
a thriving
community

Cherwell:
sound budgets
and customer
focused council

Cherwell: a great place to live

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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Foreword

Welcome to Cherwell District Council’s business plan for 2017–18. This plan is about our priorities for the district in the coming year. The council is here to serve the people of the district and therefore our plan aims to support those who live, work and visit this district which has a lot to offer. Our plan is based on an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our district and consultation with local businesses and residents to determine local requirements.

We will make sure the council operates efficiently, and work towards long term solutions to deal with the cuts we face. We have already been proactive working with our partner South Northamptonshire Council developing shared working and looking at new ways of delivering services for our communities. Financial savings have been made over the past years and we will continue to be as innovative as possible to ensure the council manages its day to day business even more effectively and transparently.

We recognise that a strong local economy is essential for a strong local community. We will continue to promote economic growth; helping local companies to expand, securing high quality and high value jobs, with increased opportunities for all, and supporting more affordable homes for local people. The above is supported by the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 which ensures that growth is targeted and investment made whilst still respecting the character and beauty of our rural areas.

This business plan, based around four key themes, also outlines our performance pledges for the year and we remain committed to working effectively with our partners to ensure high quality services are delivered in times of financial constraint.

We want Cherwell to be a district where people want to live and work and we think we are moving in the right direction.

If you would like any more information about the priorities of this council please get in touch using the details on the back of this document.



Councillor Barry Wood



Leader of Cherwell District Council



Sue Smith



Joint Chief Executive, Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils



Cherwell: a great place to live

An overview of Cherwell

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. The M40 passes through Cherwell and there are good rail connections to both London and Birmingham.

The district is growing with over half of the population living in the principal centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington; the remainder in more than 70 smaller settlements. Cherwell's population has increased significantly over the past 20 years and this trend is set to continue with the population predicted to reach 155,650 by 2021.

One of the council's main strategic challenges is to ensure that the district grows in a sustainable way; one that delivers a prosperous economy and thriving communities. The Eco Bicester development will see approximately 5,000 houses built over the next 20 years. Delivering the local plan will play a key role in this, as will implementing the Masterplans for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington to secure new housing, retail, development and leisure opportunities. The council is working with its partners to ensure that this growth is delivered while protecting and enhancing the character of our urban centres, villages and landscapes.

Another key challenge for the district will be responding to population changes. The population of Cherwell is continuing to age, with the number of residents aged 60 and above predicted to increase by over 7,000 between 2011 and 2021. By 2021, nearly a quarter of Cherwell's population will be aged 60 or over. This rate of increase will provide challenges and the council will have to continue to anticipate the future services required by our older population, building on

our strong track record of ensuring the needs of older residents are met. The council is focused on ensuring that our services are accessible to all people living in the district.

Another of the council's key challenges will be to ensure that communities across the district continue to thrive. As part of this commitment, the council will be working with partners to increase the affordable housing options across the district, whilst continuing to work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into employment.



Our strategic approach to business planning: Performance, accountability and transparency

Five Year Business Strategy - Priorities for the five year strategy

The table below presents the council’s strategic priorities for its five year business strategy. This strategy sits alongside the council’s Medium-term Financial Strategy and is underpinned by an annual

business plan, budget and performance management framework that sets out the milestones, performance measures and budget that will drive the council’s delivery of services and major projects.

Cherwell: a district of opportunity	Cherwell: safe, green, clean	Cherwell: a thriving community	Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council
Managing growth of the district.	Provide high quality recycling and waste services, helping residents recycle.	Deliver affordable housing and work with private sector landlords to help improve affordable housing options.	Reduce the cost of our services through efficiencies.
Deliver the growth plans for Bicester.	Provide high quality street cleansing services, and tackle environmental crime (littering, fly tipping, graffiti) where it arises.	Work with partners to support financial inclusion.	Communicate effectively with local residents and businesses and increase access to services on line.
Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury.	Work with partners to help ensure the district remains a low crime area.	Provide high quality housing options advice and support to prevent homelessness.	Deliver the five year financial strategy.
		Work to promote and support health and wellbeing across the district.	
Promote inward investment and support business growth within the district.	Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment.	Provide high quality and accessible leisure opportunities.	Deliver the key outcomes of the Commercial Strategy to reduce the funding gap in the Medium Term Revenue Plan.
		Provide support to the voluntary and community sector.	
Develop and implement a “One Council” offer of support to local businesses including regulatory services.		Protect our built heritage.	Ensure effective governance and performance management arrangements are in place.
Consider steps to support the visitor economy and the well-being of town centres as part of our approach to economic growth in the district.		Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services.	

How we will manage the performance of our plan

Implementing our Strategy

Our annual business plan outlines the key actions for the coming year, along with the associated performance measures/outcomes. This enables us to demonstrate that we align our resources to the delivery of the business plan in the most effective way possible, whilst also providing a clear direction of travel for the council, its employees and for everyone in our district and those who read this document.

Our business planning cycle is underpinned by budget reviews aimed at identifying opportunities for increased efficiency and performance. This process is led by locally elected members. Consultation with residents and businesses also contribute to the development of the plan including our annual customer satisfaction survey.



Improvement and Innovation

The council has robust plans to deliver improvement and increased efficiency given the challenging national economic circumstances currently being faced.

We have progressed a transformation programme that delivers both financial savings and prepares us to be a leading and thriving council. We continue to work with our suppliers to identify procurement savings, reduce our energy costs, increase the amount of services that can be accessed online and generally improve our business processes.

Managing our Performance

The overarching five year Business Strategy, Medium-term Financial Plan, annual business plan, service plans and the appraisal targets of individual employees all demonstrate that the council has a

clear and robust “golden thread” between resource availability and delivery of the council’s agreed priorities. This approach helps us to provide effective community leadership, and will demonstrate that we are adopting a more mature and commercially aware approach to running our council.

Performance management represents an essential part of our assurance and accountability process. It ensures that we are focused on the delivery of our strategic and operational objectives and provides an effective way of demonstrating our achievements to local residents whilst also being transparent about the issues or challenges that we are facing.

Reporting our Performance

We report our performance on a quarterly basis and it is reviewed by the Executive. Where performance issues and challenges are identified the Joint Management Team and lead elected members work together to deliver improvement.

Details about our performance and expenditure are available at www.cherwell.gov.uk

Managing our Resources

The council continues to face challenging financial times, and we are not alone. We can and must learn from the experience of others. We are actively exploring all opportunities to not only ensure our survival, but ultimately also manage our growth. It is an ambitious aspiration, but it is one that we have to face head on. And it is our commitment to you. We must ensure that as taxpayers, your money is spent wisely and that we deliver services that provide you with what you need, when you need it.

The revenue budget for 2017–18 can be found on our website www.cherwell.gov.uk. The council also has an ambitious Capital Programme and an aspiration to regenerate the two market towns of Banbury and Bicester whilst not forgetting to invest adequate financial capital resources across the rest of the district for the people who live and work here. We aim to do this by delivering high quality programmes which will significantly boost the economic prosperity of the area and create much needed jobs and investment.

Cherwell: a district of opportunity

Supporting economic development, employment, conservation, regeneration and development of the district

Managing growth of the district

- Consult on the Proposed Submission Local Plan Part 2 and partial review of Local Plan Part 1 and submit to the Secretary of State
- Monitor the delivery of the five year land supply and work with Development Management on appropriate responses as this supply changes
- Engage with all neighbouring councils and other public bodies on planning matters affecting Cherwell from other Districts and public bodies under the duty to co-operate
- Support parish teams preparing neighbourhood plans for their community

Deliver the growth plans for Bicester

- Northwest Bicester: continue to facilitate the planning applications for the site
- Northwest Bicester: Delivery of the Eco - Bicester business centre
- Adoption of the Masterplan document to assist revitalisation of town centre
- Market Bicester's employment and investment opportunities
- Deliver, in partnership, the Healthy New Town programme for Bicester

Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury

- Review strategic development plan for Bolton Road site. Consult with local businesses and develop preferred option for redevelopment.
- Take steps to develop a Masterplan of Canalside in Banbury Town Centre for redevelopment
- Secure start on Castle Quay 2
- Maximise the council's income from Castle Quay
- Support The Mill & Museum Trust as the primary town centre arts and cultural provision in their development activity
- Proceed with the preparation of a Business Improvement District (BID) for Banbury

Promote inward investment and support business growth within the district

- Support business growth, skills & employment in local companies and the visitor economy
- Continue to use the Cherwell Investment Partnership (CHIP) as a hub for inward investment
- Ensure that available land and premises for business are promoted locally and nationally
- Work with OXLEP and SEMLEP to ensure the work of each Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) supports the development of the economy of Cherwell district
- Support skills development to keep unemployment at a low level

Develop and implement a 'One Council' offer of support to local businesses including regulatory services.

- Review and simplify the planning pre-application process
- Improve customer satisfaction with regulatory services
- Continue working with agents / developers to ensure excellent working relationships

Consider steps to support the visitor economy and the well-being of town centres as part of our approach to economic growth in the district.

- Implement an Action Plan with key attractions and town centres to promote the district to visitors

**Cherwell: safe, green,
clean**

Working to ensure the district has high standards of environmental cleanliness, great recycling and waste management, tackling crime and supporting energy efficiency

Provide high quality recycling & waste services, helping residents recycle

- Increase recycling and reduce residual waste per household
- Maintain high customer satisfaction with recycling and waste service

Provide high quality street cleansing services, and tackle environmental crime

- Maintain high customer satisfaction with street cleansing
- Maintain a programme of high profile neighbourhood blitzes and pursue a hard enforcement and conviction line to environmental crime
- Provide a fast response time in dealing with fly tip incidents

Work with partners to help ensure the district remains a low crime area

- Continue to work with Thames Valley Police to maintain an effective CCTV operational system for our urban areas
- Continue working with local police & licence holders to ensure town centres remain safe

Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment

- Deliver the council's Biodiversity Action Plan
- Reduction of two per cent in council's carbon emissions
- Establish multi-agency Air Quality Management Action Plans as required

Cherwell: a thriving community

Providing affordable housing, leisure and sports facilities and activities, working with partners to improve access to health services, providing arts, cultural and community services

Deliver affordable housing & work with private sector landlords

- The council to deliver at least 190 units of affordable housing
- Monitor the number of affordable housing units in the district that are delivered via negotiations on new development proposals
- Promote an off-site construction factory in Bicester
- Secure additional nomination rights into the private sector through landlords home improvement grants

Work with partners to support financial inclusion

- Conclude negotiation for a new debt, money and housing advice service through a third party contract
- Maintain performance on payment of Housing Benefit

Provide high quality housing options advice & support to prevent homelessness

- Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation
- Through Housing Advice team reduce the number of repeat homelessness cases presented to the council
- Prevent people from becoming homeless through use of Housing Advice Service
- Improve energy efficiency through CHEEP grants (The CHEEP grant is an energy efficiency grant available to private sector landlords)

Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the district

- Support the Community Partnership Network with financial, clinical & technological changes in the health and social care sector
- With partners help improve lives of most vulnerable from Brighter Futures initiative
- Work with partners to maintain the widest level of health care provision at the Horton General Hospital
- To promote good health and wellbeing to residents and workers through the provision of active lifestyle opportunities plus advice on community engagement and healthy eating

Provide high quality & accessible leisure opportunities

- Undertake feasibility studies of extended and new indoor leisure facilities in Banbury and Bicester to meet additional demand from local growth
- Complete works for Whitelands Farm Sports Ground, SW Bicester to enable the outdoor sports pitches to operate from September 2017
- Commence, with the aid of external funding, the redevelopment of The Hill in Banbury
- Establish sports pitch and facilities strategies for the district

Provide support to the voluntary & community sector

- Support the development of neighbourhood community associations in areas of new large scale housing development
- Undertake new commissioning arrangements for promoting volunteering and the placement of volunteers.
- Support the Local Strategic Partnership in addressing the key issues in the district

Protect our built heritage

- Continue the programme of Conservation Area Reviews
- Provide design guidance on major developments
- Process planning applications and defend the council's position at appeals, in accordance with planning policies and guidance

Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services

- Work with BT/BDUK & Oxfordshire County Council to extend Superfast Broadband district-wide

Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

Ensuring the council is run as efficiently as possible, consulting with local people, helping vulnerable people to access our services, and the provision of council tax and housing benefits.

Reduce the cost of our services through efficiencies

- Identify and deliver on-going efficiencies and savings to reduce the cost of running our services
- Implement the shared corporate IT strategy including a new council website
- Increase in Council Tax Base
- Increase in NNDR Base

Communicate effectively with local residents & businesses and increase access to services online

- Continue to increase use of social media to communicate with residents & local businesses
- Continue to develop our business focused communications
- Increase the number of services that can be accessed and paid for on line

Deliver the five year financial strategy

- Deliver annual balanced budget setting out five year financial plan (Medium-term Revenue Plan)

Deliver the key outcomes of the commercial strategy to reduce the funding gap in the MTRP

- Grow existing income for services we currently trade
- Deliver a jointly owned company (with SNC) for Revenues and Benefits services
- Undertake feasibility studies for the delivery of new commercial services and projects
- Implement the actions set out in the new Asset Management Strategy

Ensure there are effective governance and performance management arrangements in place for all council owned companies and/or alternative service delivery vehicles

- Formation of sound business and financial plans
- Delivery of specific key performance indicators (KPI) from agreed service level agreements (SLA)
- Compliance with company law and relevant legislation
- Introduce quality management models in all services

Performance Pledges 2017–18

Every year from the key objectives and actions detailed across our strategic priorities several are highlighted as performance pledges. They are key activities that reflect local priorities and these pledges demonstrate our commitment to the delivery of important local services and new projects to help make Cherwell a great place to live.

For 2017–18 our pledges are:

Cherwell: a district of opportunity



- Deliver, in partnership, the **Healthy New Town** programme for Bicester.
- Deliver the Banbury Business Improvement District to **support local businesses**.
- Develop and implement a **'One Council' offer** to support local businesses including regulatory services.





Cherwell: safe, green, clean

- Undertake **neighbourhood blitzes** with community involvement and pursue a hard enforcement line on environmental crime.
- Work with the local police and licence holders to ensure our town centres remain **clean, safe and vibrant** at all times.
- Provide a **fast response time** in dealing with fly tip incidents.






Cherwell: a thriving community

- With our partners help to **improve the lives** of the most vulnerable from the Brighter Futures initiative.
- Deliver at least 190 units of **affordable housing**.
- **Complete the phase 2 pavilion** and car park works for Whitelands Farm Sports Ground.






Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

- **Reduce the cost** of providing our services through partnerships, joint working and other service delivery models.
- Ease of communication – with **more services available online**.
- Continue to increase use of social media to **communicate with residents and local businesses**. Continue to develop our business focused communications.






Appendix – How we will show our performance

The following tables show the measures and actions we will use to report and manage the performance of the business plan. Progress is monitored on a regular basis by both Members and Officers with any issues being highlighted and acted upon.

Cherwell: a district of opportunity	
Our objective is:	We will show our performance through:
Managing growth of the district	Meeting key dates for the proposed submission of Local Plan Part 2
	Delivery against five year land supply targets
	Engaging with all neighbouring councils under the duty to co-operate
	Preparation of neighbourhood plans to timetables set in regulations
Deliver the growth plans for Bicester	Continuing to facilitate the planning applications for Northwest Bicester
	Delivery of the Eco-Bicester business centre
	Adoption of the Masterplan document to assist revitalisation of Bicester town centre
	Marketing Bicester's employment and investment opportunities
	Delivering, in partnership, the Healthy New Town programme for Bicester
Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	Reviewing the strategic development plan for the Bolton Road site
	Adopting Masterplan for Canalside in 2017-18
	Securing start on Castle Quay 2
	Attending FM meeting, improving financial reporting and reviewing investment with Aberdeen Investment Properties
	Supporting The Mill & Museum Trust as the primary town centre arts and cultural provision in their development activity
	Completing 2nd stage assessment of the Business Improvement District (BID) for Banbury by October 2017
Promote inward investment and support business growth within the district.	Number of businesses who have received advice
	An increase in NNDR base
	Increased take up of LEP services - reported in Annual Business Survey
	Unemployment rate and take up of Job Clubs/Job Fairs by companies
Develop and implement a 'One Council' offer of support to local businesses including regulatory services.	A review of the planning pre-application process by June 2017
	Carrying out a survey and establish baseline satisfaction with services
	Developing an action plan for improvement
	Attendance numbers and feedback /satisfaction from Agents' forums
Consider steps to support the visitor economy and the well-being of town centres as part of our approach to economic growth in the district.	Updates on the Action Plan to Executive in 2016/17 and report on implementation

Cherwell: safe, green, clean

Our objective is:	We will show our performance through:
Provide high quality recycling & waste services, helping residents recycle	Achieving a 56% recycling rate
	Residual household waste per household
	Amount of waste sent to energy recovery
	Maintaining high customer satisfaction with recycling and waste service (80%)
Provide high quality street cleansing services, and tackle environmental crime	Maintaining high customer satisfaction with street cleansing (80%)
	Number of neighbourhood blitzes
	Number of enforcement actions
	Success of fly-tip enforcement
	Investigating incidents within 24 hrs from report
	Cleaning up within 48 hrs from investigation
Work with partners to help ensure the district remains a low crime area	Maintaining CCTV in all urban areas
	Reducing the number of anti-social behaviour incidents
	Carrying out operations and initiatives in accordance with the joint CDC /TVP night-safe plan
	Reducing incidents of drunkenness, begging and rough sleeping by carrying out proportionate interventions in the Banbury Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) area
	Embedding the new CDC Taxi Policy including implementing safeguarding awareness training for licensed taxi drivers
	Responding to incidents / complaints regarding licensed premises
	Undertaking routine food/health and safety inspections as per programme.
	To investigate and respond to complaints/accidents as required
Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment	Implementing agreed action plans including the promotion of cycling and walking
	Reviewing progress of the actions in the Air Quality Action Plans with partner agencies responsible for their implementation

Cherwell: a thriving community

Our objective is:	We will show our performance through:
Deliver affordable housing & work with private sector landlords	Delivering homes throughout the year that are designated for affordable housing
	Number of other affordable housing units
	Creating at least an additional 10 units of accommodation for nomination by the council
Work with partners to support financial inclusion	Average time taken to process new Housing Benefit claims
	Average time taken to process change in circumstances
	Average time taken to process new claims and changes for Housing Benefit
	Customer satisfaction with benefits process
Provide high quality housing options advice & support to prevent homelessness	Maintaining a target of no more than 41 properties allocated for temporary accommodation
	Tracking repeat homeless presentations and developing an action plan and initiatives following the new Homelessness Prevention Act coming into law.
	10 CHEEP Energy Efficiency Grants allocated in 2017–18
Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the district.	Promoting the Workplace Wellbeing Charter to obtain commitment from five local businesses to work towards accreditation.
	Undertaking a feasibility study for introducing the Eat Out Eat Well Award for food businesses in Cherwell

Cherwell: a thriving community

Our objective is:	We will show our performance through:
Provide high quality & accessible leisure opportunities	New facility models in Banbury and Bicester (to be considered in Summer 2017)
	Whitelands Farm Sports Ground outdoor sports pitches being operational from September 2017
	Commencing construction on the redevelopment of The Hill in Banbury during the second half of 2017–18
	Agreeing Sports pitch and facilities strategies for the district in the first half of 2017–18
Provide support to the voluntary & community sector	Providing support for two new neighbourhood community associations
	Putting in place a partner organisation with new commissioning arrangements for promoting volunteering and the placement of volunteers in first half of 2017–18
Protect our built heritage	Completing five Conservation Area Reviews
	Responding to consultations from Development Management with design guidance on major developments within the prescribed timescale
	Processing major planning applications within 13 weeks
	Processing minor planning applications within eight weeks
	Processing other planning applications within eight weeks
The percentage of planning appeals allowed	
Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services	Reporting every six months on progress of extending Superfast Broadband district-wide to show where has been connected and the forward programme

Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

Our objective is:	We will show our performance through:
Reduce the cost of our services through efficiencies	Completion of efficiency reviews and £ savings delivered
	Implementing the shared Corporate IT Strategy including a new council website
	Percentage of Council Tax collected
	Percentage of Business Rates collected
Communicate effectively with local residents & businesses and increase access to services online	Social media ratings: Number of Facebook likes
	Social media ratings: Number of Twitter followers
	Making five more services available online
	Reducing face to face contact time
Deliver the five year financial strategy	Budget variance on capital within 2 per cent (Annually reported)
	Budget variance on revenue within 2 per cent (Annually reported)
Deliver the key outcomes of the commercial strategy to reduce the funding gap in the MTRP	Growing existing income for services we currently trade
	Delivering a jointly owned company (with SNC) for Revenues and Benefits services
	Undertaking feasibility studies for the delivery of new commercial services and projects
	Implementing the actions set out in the new Asset Management Strategy

Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

Our objective is:	We will show our performance through:
Ensure there are effective governance and performance management arrangements in place for all council owned companies and/or alternative service delivery vehicles	Delivering specific KPIS from agreed Service Level Agreements with council owned companies
	All reports to members on establishment of companies/entities will include full legal implications confirming relevant statutory powers and compliance with legal requirements
	Each approved company entity incorporated in accordance with project plan timescale
	Introducing quality management models in all services

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 you like and what needs to be improved.

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

Email: consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

To find and email your ward councillor:
<http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/mgFindCouncillor.aspx>

Call the Performance and Insight Team:
01295 221605

Customer Services: 01295 227001

Write:

The Performance and Insight Team
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For general enquiries visit www.cherwell.gov.uk
or contact the customer service team
01295 227001.

Cherwell: a great place to live

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