

# Council

## A new Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell

19 October 2009

### Report of Chief Executive

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell to Council for consideration and endorsement.

This report is public

#### Recommendations

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The meeting is recommended:

- (1) To note the consultation and development work that has been undertaken to develop the draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell.
- (2) To endorse the strategy and ask the Leader of the Council to ensure any amendments made as a result of consultation feedback reflect the policy and strategy of the District Council.

#### Executive Summary

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##### Introduction

- 1.1 The draft Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the long term strategic direction for sustainable communities in Cherwell. The strategy must link into the Local Development Framework and cover the elements that make up a sustainable community (economic, social, environmental and infrastructure).
- 1.2 The development of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy has been facilitated by Cherwell District Council over the last nine months.
- 1.3 The Chief Executive of Cherwell District Council District Council is the Chairman of the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership (the Local

Strategic Partnership for Cherwell). The Leader of the Council is also a member of the partnership.

- 1.4 All Members of Cherwell District Council were invited to take part in workshops to shape the content of the strategy in February and April this year. All Elected Members and Parish Councils have been invited to comment on the draft strategy as part of the formal consultation process.
- 1.5 The content of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy is based on extensive consultation and research.

### **Proposals**

- 1.6 That Cherwell District Council endorses the draft Sustainable Community Strategy and participates in the development of a delivery plan to ensure the objectives and actions with the draft strategy are actioned.
- 1.7 That in his capacity as a member of the Local Strategic Partnership for Cherwell the Leader of the Council is asked to ensure that any amendments made to the draft strategy resulting from the formal consultation are in keeping with Cherwell District Council policy and strategy.

### **Conclusion**

- 1.8 The draft Sustainable Community Strategy is based on extensive research and reflects the key opportunities and challenges facing the district. It will be implemented through a delivery plan and this work will be coordinated by the Local Strategic Partnership for Cherwell. Cherwell District Council will be a member of the Local Strategic Partnership and will help shape the delivery of the strategy. Cherwell District Council also has a role to play in terms of scrutinising the work of the partnership.

### **Background Information**

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- 2.1 Cherwell District Council has a track record of effective partnership working with regards to the existing Community Plan (recognised as part of our CPA inspection).
- 2.2 The existing Community Plan has a vision that runs until 2016 and a current action plan that completes in the 2010/11 year.
- 2.3 The new draft Sustainable Community Strategy (attached as Appendix 1) builds on the strengths of our existing work.

- 2.4 A number of factors led to the decision to develop a new draft Sustainable Community Strategy: the short time frame left to run on the current Community Plan; changes in the economic climate that are affecting the local community; our aspirations for the district; as well as changes in government policy requiring Community Plans to be longer term, more strategic and closely linked to Local Development Frameworks.
- 2.5 Cherwell District Council has been instrumental in working with the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership to fundamentally review the existing plan and develop a new strategy. This work has been based on extensive consultation, a review policy and an understanding of social and economic trends impacting upon the district.
- 2.6 The draft strategy has been out for twelve weeks of formal consultation the results of which are currently being collated. Initial analysis suggests that most of the consultation feedback is positive with no significant changes suggested by respondents. A number of minor issues have been identified which will be addressed by the Local Strategic Partnership.
- 2.7 Members of Cherwell District Council have participated in the development of the draft strategy. Two Members workshops were held at the outset of the project to develop content. Parish Councils have been involved through the Parish Liaison meeting, through the countryside forum and through specific interviews and presentations. All Members and Parish Councils were invited to take part in the formal consultation.

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

- 3.1 The draft Sustainable Community Strategy is broken down into four themes or pledges. 'A diverse economy, the economic pledge', 'Opportunities for all, the community pledge', 'Connected and protected, the infrastructure and environment pledge' and 'How will we do it, the leadership pledge'. These four pledges have a number of objectives that underpin them and are based on the developmental consultation and analysis that has been undertaken.
- 3.2 Taken together these four pledges reflect the bigger picture for Cherwell, reflecting all of the services the council and our partners deliver. Within the strategy specific issues relating to the urban areas (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) are identified as well as issues specifically relating to rural communities.
- 3.3 In addition to these four pledges a number of long term strategic challenges are identified in the strategy. These are: 'Managing Growth', 'Tight Resources and Creating Prosperity', 'Adapting to an Aging Population', 'Empowering the Next Generation', 'Building Communities

and Reducing Inequality', 'Diverse Communities', 'Reducing Climate Change' and Strengthening Local Participation'. These issues have also been identified by the Council as important within the District.

- 3.4 The draft sustainable community strategy outlines the key strategic priorities, opportunities and challenges for the district. The strategy will be reviewed on a periodic basis and it will be actioned through a five year delivery plan which all local partners will be asked to contribute to.

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

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| <b>Option One</b>   | Endorse the draft strategy and ask the Leader of the Council to ensure any amendments made as a result of the consultation feedback are in keeping with District Council policy and strategy. |
| <b>Option Two</b>   | Endorse the draft strategy with any additional suggestions or recommendations to be taken on board.   |
| <b>Option Three</b> | To ask the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership to review the draft strategy.  |

## **Consultations**

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| <b>Developmental Consultation</b> | The draft was developed through extensive consultation with stakeholder groups from across the district and also informed by the place survey (a survey of local residents).  |
| <b>Formal Consultation</b>        | The draft has been out for formal consultation for 12 weeks. Stakeholders have been invited to comment and the draft is publicly available on the Cherwell District Council Consultation Portal.  |
| <b>Formal Consultation Events</b> | During the formal consultation period special consultation events have included: meetings with the town councils, a countryside forum, a voluntary sector forum, an event with college students, discussions with local stakeholders and an event with colleagues from across our county borders. |

## **Implications**

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| <b>Financial:</b> | No direct financial implication, but the strategy will influence the future priorities of the Council. |
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Comments checked by [Insert name], [Insert job title]  
01295 22[Insert extension number]

**Legal:** No legal implications.

Comments checked by [Insert name], [Insert job title]  
01295 22[Insert extension number]

**Risk Management:** The most significant risk with regards to the Sustainable Community Strategy is the failure to deliver. This will be mitigated by the development of a delivery plan

Comments checked by [Insert name], [Insert job title]  
01295 22[Insert extension number]

**Equalities:** The SCS will require an equalities impact assessment. The developmental consultation has included hard to reach groups and the draft identifies specific equalities issues.

Comments checked by Caroline French, Equalities and Diversity Officer 01295 227928

### **Wards Affected**

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All

### **Document Information**

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<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Draft Sustainable Community Strategy
<b>Background Papers</b>	
Draft Sustainable Community Strategy Consultation Review Digging a Bit Deeper	
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