

This report is public	
Local Area Development Funds – Proposal for Allocation	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	7 September 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Leader - Strategic Leadership and Regeneration, Councillor Lesley McLean
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	6 August 2026
Report of	Executive Director Place & Regeneration, Ian Boll

Purpose of report

This paper sets out the next tranche of projects – discussed and recommended by Area Oversight Groups (AOGs) – for Local Area Development Funding. This funding was agreed as part of the annual budget setting process by Council on 23 February 2026. This paper also provides an update on projects previously approved for funding by the Executive in July 2026.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To agree to allocate £524k of Local Area Development Funds to progress the following projects for the 2026/27 financial year as discussed and recommended at the respective Area Oversight Group and to agree to add the capital projects to the capital programme:

Figure 1: Project Summary

Figure 1: Project Summary

Project	Est. Cost (£)		AOG
	RDEL	CDEL	
Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look and Feel Phase 2		£100k	Banbury
Pioneer Square Conveniences (Manorsfield Road)	£26k		Bicester
Langford Village Park Improvements		£100k	
Dangerfield Nature Reserve Boardwalk		£60k	
Sports Pavilion – RIBA Stages 2-4	£33k		Kidlington
*Green Spaces Improvements – Yarnton		£110k	
Town Centre Improvements	£30k		
*Oxford-Banbury Road Corridor Options Appraisal	£45k		
Community Insight Fund	£20k		
Total Revenue / Capital Funding	£154k	£370k	
Total Funding Requested	£524,000		
<i>* The allocations for these two projects are for match funding to support delivery of a wider initiative</i>			

- 1.2 To approve the use of £47,281 of S106 funds to top up the proposed allocation for Green Spaces Improvements for Yarnton (Appendix 3) and include to create a total scheme budget of £157,281 in the capital programme.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Regeneration and the Assistant Director Finance, to agree final cost plans for the above projects subject to the maximum cost envelope outlined in Figure 1.
- 1.4 To note the progress of previously approved projects and to agree to receive further updates as project delivery progresses.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 As part of the 2026/27 Budget, a number of new funds were agreed by Council in February 2026. This included the introduction of 3 Local Development Funds for each of the district's three main urban centres and their surrounding areas, meaning that the entire district would have access to local development funding.
- 2.2 The focus of this funding is on projects that are deliverable and will have a tangible impact on our communities. The following projects have been identified for funding:

Figure 2: Project Summary

Project	Est. Cost (£)		AOG
	RDEL	CDEL	
Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look and Feel Phase 2		£100k	Banbury
Pioneer Square Conveniences (Manorsfield Road)	£26k		Bicester
Langford Village Park Improvements		£100k	
Dangerfield Nature Reserve Boardwalk		£60k	
Sports Pavilion – RIBA Stages 2-4	£33k		Kidlington
*Green Spaces Improvements – Yarnton		£110k	
Town Centre Improvements	£30k		
*Oxford-Banbury Road Corridor Options Appraisal	£45k		
Community Insight Fund	£20k		
Total Revenue / Capital Funding	£154k	£370k	
Total Funding Requested	£524,000		
<i>* The allocations for these two projects are for match funding to support delivery of a wider initiative</i>			

- 2.3 All projects proposed for funding have been discussed at the relevant AOG meeting and have been included in Area Priority Plans (APPs) with agreement from Ward Councillors in attendance at the respective AOG meetings.
- 2.4 In July 2026, the Executive agreed to fund the Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look & Feel Phase 1 project. Delivery of this project commenced on 1 September 2026 in line with the project business case. Further updates on this project will be reported to future meetings of the Executive.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	Of the £0.900m of the Local Area Development Funds that was approved at Full Council in February 2026, £0.021m has been approved for spending on agreed projects. This report is requesting further approval for £0.524m for projects mention within this report. I can confirm that these funds are available to be drawn down from the Local Area Development Funds. These projects will be closely monitored to ensure that spend remains within the current budget envelope. Kimberley Digweed, Finance Business Partner, 29 July 2026			
Legal	The proposed projects described in this report and its appendices notes funding available for all areas of the district. As noted in this report, the use of funding for any intended project will require the input of legal services to review and advise on the legal implications of the use of funding. This may include advice and support on a variety of issues including compliance with the Council's constitution, applicable legislation and other requirements. It is noted that there is a potentially wide scope of requests for use of funding. The early instruction of legal and procurement teams is recommended. Denzil-John Turbervill, Head of Legal Services, 3 August 2026			
Risk Management	These projects have been identified and agreed by Ward Councillors as local area priorities. In part this proposal aims to mitigate a risk that our urban centres are not treated equally. Where projects identified in this paper are being delivered by the council, the internal PMO governance process will be followed, including a project risk register to manage and monitor this and any further identified risks. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 23 July 2026			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		This report seeks to agree allocations of funding for specific projects. Any need for a full equality impact assessment will be subsequently undertaken as part of appropriate project governance processes, and in line with our Equalities, diversity and inclusion framework. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 23 July 2026
A Are there any aspects of the		X		

proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Climate & Environmental Impact				Not applicable
ICT & Digital Impact				Not applicable
Data Impact				Not applicable
Procurement & subsidy				Not applicable
Council Priorities	1. Economic Prosperity. The proposals within this paper are designed to help create vibrant economic centres and thriving rural villages that support local businesses, attract investment and enhance community life. 2. Community Leadership. The proposals within this paper are a direct result of working closely with stakeholders and our communities to strengthen collaboration and resilience.			
Human Resources	Not applicable			
Property	Not applicable			
Consultation & Engagement	Engagement has been undertaken with the elected members of the respective AOG for each area. For Bicester, the most recent AOG meeting was 3 August; Kidlington 30 July; and Banbury 5 August.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 During 2025 the council embedded an area-based approach to growth through the creation of Area Oversight Groups (AOGs) for Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington (Five Parishes).
- 3.2 This area-based approach strives to take a holistic view of the development and infrastructure needs in each area and seek to ensure that local representatives can understand proposed growth and assist in shaping responses. Each area has a

core AOG that meets three times per year, augmented by a further Area Priority Plan (APP) Review meeting that meets a further three times. This results in bi-monthly engagement with ward councillors.

Area Priority Plans (APPs)

- 3.3 APPs were created to facilitate consistent service provision which sets clear ambitions for each of the three areas whilst reflecting their differing needs and circumstances.
- 3.4 The purpose of an APP was to build a medium to longer-term vision for each area, the areas of planned growth, critical infrastructure to be delivered / needed, as well as to better engage with local businesses and community stakeholders. Alongside this, immediate enhancements to localities would be considered.

Local Area Development Funds

- 3.5 As part of the 2026/27 Budget, a number of new funds were agreed by Council in February 2026. This included the introduction of 3 Local Development Funds for each of the district's three main urban centres and their surrounding areas, meaning that the entire district would have access to local development funding.
- 3.6 Regeneration & Growth is seeking an allocation of £524k to support delivery of the following projects.

Figure 3: Project Summary

Project	Est. Cost (£)		AOG
	RDEL	CDEL	
Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look and Feel Phase 2		£100k	Banbury
Pioneer Square Conveniences (Manorsfield Road)	£26k		Bicester
Langford Village Park Improvements		£100k	
Dangerfield Nature Reserve Boardwalk		£60k	
Sports Pavilion – RIBA Stages 2-4	£33k		Kidlington
*Green Spaces Improvements – Yarnton		£110k	
Town Centre Improvements	£30k		
*Oxford-Banbury Road Corridor Options Appraisal	£45k		
Community Insight Fund	£20k		
Total Revenue / Capital Funding	£154k	£370k	
Total Funding Requested	£524,000		
* The allocations for these two projects are for match funding to support delivery of a wider initiative			

- 3.7 Each of these projects sits on the respective APP for the relevant area and has been discussed and recommended at AOG meetings during July and August 2026.

Update on Previously Funded Projects

- 3.8 In July 2026, Executive agreed to fund the Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look & Feel Phase 1 project. Delivery of this project commenced on 1 September 2026 in line with the project business case, with the first cleaning event taking place on 4 and 5 September. Further updates on this project will be reported to future meetings of the Executive.

4. Details

- 4.1 During 2025 the council embedded an area-based approach to growth through the creation of Area Oversight Groups (AOGs) for Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington (Five Parishes).
- 4.2 This area-based approach strives to take a holistic view of the development and infrastructure needs in each area and seek to ensure that local representatives can understand proposed growth and assist in shaping responses.
- 4.3 One of the core roles envisaged through the area-based approach was to engage with local communities and businesses through ward councillors, ensuring that community needs and aspirations are reflected in the delivery of both key infrastructure, but also in enhancements to the primary urban centres and surrounding areas.

Local Area Development Funds

- 4.4 As part of the 2026/27 Budget, a number of new funds were agreed by Council in February 2026. This included the introduction of 3 Local Development Funds for each of the district's three main urban centres and their surrounding areas, meaning that the entire district would have access to local development funding.
- 4.5 Each of the three funds has £0.300m allocated for a period of two years, with the MTFS currently assuming that there will be a third year of £0.233m funding each.
- 4.6 Local Area Development Funds were set up to enable local ward councillors to have the opportunity to be involved in an area framework that allows them to recommend proposals to the Executive to be funded to the benefit of their areas. Examples of potential schemes that may be put forward include:
 - Improving local public realm and the experience of the local area
 - Enhancing green and amenity spaces
 - Introducing growing spaces
 - Flood prevention.
- 4.7 There is no exclusive list to the possible requests for area funding, however each request will be subject to the Council's standard checks on legal and financial implications and the Council's standing orders.

Area Oversight Groups (AOGs)

- 4.8 It is envisaged that AOGs will act as informal consultative bodies to recommend priority projects from their respective Area Priority Plans (APPs). All ward members for each area are invited to the relevant AOG and are voting members of the AOG for the purpose of agreeing to the funding recommendations contained within this report to Executive.
- 4.9 AOGs meet on a bi-monthly basis (ward councillors), with wider stakeholders attending three times per year to agree area priorities. The most recent round of meetings were the AOGs (ward councillors only) in Bicester (3 August), Kidlington (30 July) and Banbury (5 August).

Funding Recommendations - Banbury

- 4.10 In accordance with the above and with the Recommendation Paper (Appendix 5), the following projects have come forward to seek funding from the Executive for Banbury:

Figure 4: Banbury Project Summary

Project	Est. Cost (£)
Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look and Feel Phase 2	£100k
Total Funding Requested - Banbury	£100,000

- 4.11 Following approval of Phase 1, this subsequent phase seeks to deliver upgraded street furniture within Banbury town centre. This focuses on enhancing the appearance functionality and accessibility of the town centre – including benches, recycling bins and other cast iron street furniture (including hanging basket columns and planters).
- 4.12 Within the project area, 73 benches and 24 bins have been identified for replacement or refurbishment, along with repainting of other cast iron street furniture. The outline business case (Appendix 6) sets out the indicative costings for this project.

Funding Recommendations - Bicester

- 4.13 In accordance with the above and with the Recommendation Paper (Appendix 1), the following projects have come forward to seek funding from the Executive for Bicester:

Figure 5: Bicester Project Summary

Project	Est. Cost (£)
Pioneer Square Conveniences (Manorsfield Road)	£26k
Langford Village Park Improvements	£100k
Dangerfield Nature Reserve Boardwalk	£60k
Total Funding Requested - Bicester	£186,000

Pioneer Square Conveniences (Manorsfield Road)

- 4.14 Public conveniences are located at Pioneer Square (Manorsfield Road), immediately adjacent to the town's main bus stops, a major point of arrival for many visitors and shoppers. The conveniences are also one minute's walk from Bicester Library, outside which is a key drop off / pick up point for library and town centre visitors. These facilities also provide an important service to passengers and drivers using the Manorsfield Road bus station.
- 4.15 Retention of current opening hours for 2026/27 will bring with it several benefits, likely to include:
- Potential increased footfall and dwell time
 - Reduced complaints on level of public facilities within the town centre
 - Increased positive perception amongst visitors and businesses.

Langford Village Park Improvements

- 4.16 Langford Village Park is an area that regularly floods, creating not only barriers to accessibility for much of the park but also damages the fabric of the park. Working with Bicester Town Council an opportunity has been identified for a new gravel path that would replace the current unpaved, grass pathway that winds through one of the main areas of the park. Quotations have been obtained.
- 4.17 To augment this proposed improvement, the Langford Village Community Association has also requested a new picnic bench and eight replacement benches for community use throughout the park.

Dangerfield Nature Reserve Boardwalk

- 4.18 The existing Boardwalk at Dangerfield Nature Reserve has deteriorated due to age and exposure to flooding. Sections of the structure are now in poor condition, reducing accessibility and creating an increasing maintenance liability. As an important access route, there is an aspiration to deliver a more durable and flood-resilient replacement structure.
- 4.19 Replacing the current Boardwalk will help to improve accessibility – including enhanced ramp access where appropriate – and help to protect an important community asset, improve the visitor experience and reduce the need for ongoing reactive maintenance. Further information is provided in Appendix 2.

Funding Recommendations - Kidlington

- 4.20 In accordance with the above and with the Recommendation Paper (Appendix 3), the following projects have come forward to seek funding from the Executive for the Kidlington area:

Figure 6: Kidlington Project Summary

Project	Est. Cost (£)
Sports Pavilion – RIBA Stages 2-4	£33k
*Green Spaces Improvements – Yarnton	£110k
Town Centre Improvements	£30k
*Oxford-Banbury Road Corridor Options Appraisal	£45k
Community Insight Fund	£20k
Total Funding Requested - Kidlington	£238,000
<i>* The allocations for these two projects are for match funding to support delivery of a wider initiative</i>	

Sports Pavilion

- 4.21 Outline planning consent has already been granted (22/00747/OUT) for 370 homes on land at Bicester Road (otherwise known as site PR7a). As part of the s106 agreement for the site, Cherwell District Council is required to secure Reserved Matters planning consent for an agreed design for new sports pitches and a community pavilion. This will then enable the land to be offered to the council (or an approved body) prior to 50% occupation of the site.
- 4.22 This funding request is to develop the outline design and secure Reserved Matters consent for the land in accordance with the s106 agreement. The transfer of the land will be accompanied by a contribution from the developer for the construction of the facility (as detailed in the outline business case), as well as contribution to ongoing maintenance of the sports pitches.

Green Spaces Improvements

- 4.23 Earlier this year, Cherwell District Council commissioned Gillespies to undertake a comprehensive review of green spaces across Kidlington and the surrounding parishes. The review assessed the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing green space provision, identified key constraints and opportunities, and made recommendations for future improvements that would, encourage physical activity, maximise access to nature and support health and wellbeing.
- 4.24 The proposed project seeks funding to progress the next stage of this work by developing and delivering priority improvements identified through the Green Space Review. There is a particular focus on Rutten Lane Park, which was identified as a key community asset requiring investment to address ageing facilities, accessibility challenges and increasing demand. This project will provide a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) facility and also utilises s106 monies secured for the provision of new recreational facilities.
- 4.25 Engagement undertaken as part of the review, including discussions with Yarnton Parish Council and local stakeholders, highlighted a desire for improved, more inclusive and welcoming spaces that encourage recreation, physical activity and community interaction. With planned housing growth expected to place additional pressure on existing provision, investment in the play areas at both sites will help address current deficiencies, improve the quality of facilities available to local families and young people and support healthier, more active communities. Further details are set out in Appendix 4.

Town Centre Improvements

- 4.26 The Kidlington Public Realm Strategy Framework (November 2024) and Stage 2 of the Kidlington Spatial Study have identified a need for improvements to Kidlington town centre. This is reinforced by discussions at the Area Oversight Group. Accordingly, this project seeks to develop a coordinated place-shaping approach to enhance the town centre. It aims to address prominent issues including street furniture, limited wayfinding, underutilised spaces and the need for a stronger town centre identity.
- 4.27 The focus for this project is on public realm improvements, meanwhile uses / vacant unit activation, as well as funding to support specific studies that will drive additional footfall into the town centre. This budget is augmented by existing officer time to develop specific initiatives that enhance the town centre.

Oxford-Banbury Road Corridor

- 4.28 Led by Oxfordshire County Council, this project is seeking funding to commission a high-level feasibility and concept study for the A4260 through Kidlington. The study will review the existing corridor in the context of planned growth, transport priorities and opportunities for placemaking, active travel and public realm improvements, with a specific focus on options around Langford Lane and the Rosie roundabout.
- 4.29 OCC has identified some funding for the study, but further funding is required to ensure a comprehensive approach that can inform subsequent investment

decisions. The proposal is for Local Area Funding to contribute match funding to OCC to enable commissioning and delivery of the study during 2026/27.

Community Insight Fund

- 4.30 Utilising CDC's successful Community Insight Model (which has been effective in Banbury and Bicester wards), this project involves the development of a Community Insight Profile for Kidlington East. This will provide an evidence base to inform targeted action aimed at reducing health inequalities and improving outcomes for local residents.
- 4.31 Whilst Kidlington performs relatively well overall, data shows that specific areas within Kidlington East are experiencing comparatively higher and worsening levels of deprivation, particularly affecting children, young people and older residents.
- 4.32 By combining Public Health Data, residents' experiences and key local stakeholder perspectives, the project will generate locally informed recommendations and identify priority actions for improving health and wellbeing. These recommendations are expected to inform a range of targeted interventions that will require investment through a dedicated grant fund. Local organisations would then be able to apply for funding to deliver initiatives that address identified needs. Cherwell District Council would facilitate and coordinate this process, building on the successful approach already adopted through the Banbury and Bicester Community Insight Profiles.

Summary of Funding Request

- 4.33 The total funding ask within this paper is to allocate £524k of Local Area Development Funds to the identified projects. These allocations will lead to the following funding profile for each area:

Figure 7: Local Area Development Funds Summary

AOG		Financial Year 26/27
Banbury	Original Allocation	£0.300m
	Previously Agreed Allocations	£0.022m
	Funding Request – This Report	£0.100m
	Total Remaining	£0.178m
Bicester	Original Allocation	£0.300m
	Previously Agreed Allocations	-
	Funding Request – This Report	£0.186m
	Total Remaining	£0.114m
Kidlington	Original Allocation	£0.300m
	Previously Agreed Allocations	-
	Funding Request – This Report	£0.238m
	Total Remaining	£0.062m

Project Updates

- 4.34 In line with the agreed process for funding, project updates will be provided to Executive on a regular basis.
- 4.35 The first project funded (July 2026) was Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation – Look & Feel Phase 1. Delivery of this project commenced on 1 September 2026 in line

with the approved project business case, with the first cleaning event taking place on 4 and 5 September. Further updates on this project will be reported to future meetings of the Executive.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Do not proceed with projects proposed - Funds have already been allocated as set out in Section 4 and priorities have been agreed by Area Oversight Groups. This report is intended to utilise some of this funding for enhancements identified by ward councillors as representatives of our communities. Doing nothing means that identified priorities will not be funded and commitments made to the district as part of the budget setting process will not be fulfilled.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 This report seeks to agree an allocation of £524k of Local Area Development Funds for delivery of specific projects in Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington.
- 6.2 The proposed projects are supported by the respective AOG and support the council's priorities around delivering economic prosperity and community leadership.

Decision Information

Key Decision	Yes. The decision will allocate funding for key projects across multiple council wards that is expected to have a significant positive impact on our communities.
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Recommendations Paper – Bicester
Appendix 2	Business Case – Bicester proposals
Appendix 3	Recommendations Paper – Kidlington
Appendix 4	Business Cases – Kidlington proposals
Appendix 5	Recommendations Paper – Banbury

Appendix 6	Business Case – Banbury Town Centre Revitalisation Phase 2
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	• Bicester AOG – Minutes of meeting held 03/08/26 • Kidlington (Five Parishes) AOG – Minutes of meeting held 30/07/26 • Banbury AOG – Minutes of meeting held 05/08/26
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Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Executive Director Place & Regeneration, 27 July 2026