

Committee: Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board
Date: Tuesday 22 September 2009
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

**Councillor Colin Clarke
(Chairman)**

**Councillor Alyas Ahmed
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Margaret Cullip
Councillor Victoria Irvine**

Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillor Devena Rae
Councillor Carol Steward
Councillor Keith Strangwood
Councillor Patricia Tompson**

**Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Martin Weir**

Substitutes

**Councillor Nick Cotter, Councillor Mrs Diana Edwards,
Councillor Lawrie Stratford and Councillor John Wyse**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. Urgent Business

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 14)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 July 2009.

5. Budget 2010/11

The Head of Finance will brief the Board on the options for the scrutiny of the 2010/11 budget.

6. Improving Partnership Working - Progress Report (Pages 15 - 33)

Report of the Head of Improvement

Summary

To provide the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board with an update on the progress of the Improving Partnership Working project.

Recommendations

The Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to comment on the attached report on the progress of the Improving Partnership Working Project (Appendix 1).

7. Partnership Scrutiny - Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (Pages 34 - 50)

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

To update Members on the progress to date of the scrutiny review of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the contents of the report and that the review is ongoing.
- 2) Identify further actions to progress the review.
- 3) Consider the issues arising from the Sustainable Community Strategy that impact on the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.
- 4) To consider the issues Members wish to raise at the question and answer session with the Portfolio Holder Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural, the Strategic Director Environment and Community and the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council Chief Executive at the Board's October meeting.

8. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/09 (Pages 51 - 68)

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

The Chairman will present the Overview and Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09.

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09.

9. The Councillor Call for Action (Pages 69 - 76)

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

This report advises Members of the introduction of a Councillor Call for Action as determined by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007.

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the contents of this report and to consider the implications for this Council of the Councillor Call for Action
- 2) Note the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Councillor Call for Action Guidance (Appendix 1)

10. Work Programme (Pages 77 - 87)

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

To provide the Board with an update on the overview and scrutiny work programme for 2009/10.

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- 3) Note the current Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board element of the work programme for 2009/10 as set out at Appendix 1.
- 4) Note the update on elements of the 2009/10 budget scrutiny (fees and charges).
- 5) Note the update from the Finance Scrutiny and Performance Scrutiny Working Groups.
- 6) Note the update on the food waste processing initiative.

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221589 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item. The definition of personal and prejudicial interests is set out in the constitution. The Democratic Support Officer will have a copy available for inspection at all meetings.

Personal Interest: Members must declare the interest but may stay in the room, debate and vote on the issue.

Prejudicial Interest: Member must withdraw from the meeting room and should inform the Chairman accordingly.

With the exception of the some very specific circumstances, a Member with a personal interest also has a prejudicial interest if it is one which a Member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Legal and Democratic Services natasha.clark@cherwell-dc.gov.uk (01295) 221589

Mary Harpley
Chief Executive

Published on Monday 14 September 2009

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

Cherwell District Council

Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board

Minutes of a meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 21 July 2009 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Colin Clarke (Chairman)

Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Alyas Ahmed
Councillor Devena Rae
Councillor Carol Steward
Councillor Patricia Tompson
Councillor Martin Weir

Substitute Members: Councillor Lawrie Stratford (In place of Councillor Douglas Webb)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Margaret Cullip
Councillor Victoria Irvine
Councillor Keith Strangwood
Councillor Douglas Webb

Officers: Julie Evans, Strategic Director - Customer Service & Resources
Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance
Grahame Helm, Head of Safer Communities & Community Development
Chris Rothwell, Head of Urban & Rural Services
Craig Forsyth, Communications Officer
Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Natasha Clark, Trainee Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

8 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

9 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

10 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 Fees and Charges Update Report

The Board considered a report which detailed the progress on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Fees and Charges scrutiny review in December 2008. The Head of Finance confirmed that the majority of recommendations relating to the increase of fees had been implemented by 1 April 2009 in order to support the 2009/10 budget.

The Board noted that there were some exceptions, for example fees relating to taxi licences and in Legal and Democratic Services, which were currently the subject of value for money reviews. The original scrutiny recommendations would be reviewed, and where appropriate implemented, once the outcomes of the value for money reviews were available.

The Head of Finance explained that it was still too early in the year to identify any clear patterns from the activity and income profiles. In some areas, such as Excess Parking Charge Notices, income had increased but in others, for example season tickets there had been a decrease. It was not possible to determine if this was the impact of the recession or merely a seasonal variation.

The Head of Finance agreed to bring a further report to the Board which would contain details of the financial position at Quarter 3 in January 2010. The Board asked that details of the activity cost and transaction volumes for these fees and charges should be included in the report.

In advance of that update report the Board asked officers to provide supplementary information on the following:

- A breakdown of Excess Charge Notice income to show the proportion paid in the initial discount period.
- The take up of the Ring Go service
- Incident rates for abandoned vehicles
- Details on the experience of neighbouring authorities regarding activity levels in pay and display car parks

The Head of Finance explained that officers had carried out research into the charging, discount and concession policies of other local authorities and that they were now ready to work with members of the Board to formulate similar policies for Cherwell District Council ahead of the 2011/12 budget process. A report setting out the draft policies would be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

Resolved

- 1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- 2) That the Head of Finance be invited to bring a further progress report on the Quarter 3 position relating to fees and charges to a future meeting.
- 3) That Councillors Rae, Steward and Weir be nominated to work with officers on the formulation of charging, discount and concession

policies for Cherwell District Council ahead of the 2011/12 budget process.

- 4) That the Head of Finance be invited to bring a report setting out the proposed charging, discount and concession policies to a future meeting of the Board.

12 **Budget Scrutiny 2010/2011**

The Strategic Director Customer Service and Resources and the Head of Finance were present to brief Members on the current status of the 2010/2011 budget process.

The Head of Finance informed the Board that in view of the current economic climate the 2010/2011 budget would focus on savings and efficiencies and that there would obviously be no real scope to look at capital projects or growth items. The Strategic Director Customer Service reminded the Board that the Council had made a public promise to residents to save £1million in 2010/2011.

The Head of Finance advised the Board that as part of the 2010/11 budget exercise the Portfolio Holder Resources and Organisational Development would be undertaking a root and branch review of the Council's income and expenditure, including a detailed analysis of what the statutory and discretionary services of a Local Authority were. She suggested that this might be an area where the Board could scrutinise aspects of the budget in much the same way as they had looked at fees and charges the previous year.

Members of the Board agreed with this proposal. They also indicated that they wanted to look at the scope to offer savings and efficiencies from the "Member Services" budget.

It was agreed that the Head of Finance would bring more detailed proposals for the Board's scrutiny of the 2010/11 budget to the September meeting.

Resolved

That the Head of Finance be invited to bring more detailed proposals for the Board's scrutiny of the 2010/11 budget to the September meeting.

13 **Monitoring the Performance of Cherwell District Council Key Contracts**

The Head of Improvement joined the Committee for a discussion on the role the Board could play in monitoring the performance of the Council's key contracts.

The Chairman said that he believed that scrutiny should concentrate on post project evaluation of large capital contracts as this was where they could make the most effective contribution. The Board also felt that they had a role to play in reviewing large value service contracts, such as the contract for the

provision of agency staff, prior to re-tendering. Members of the Board commented on the difficulty in drawing firm conclusions from the information presented and asked for additional detail on a number of the specific contracts listed and more generally on the Council's policies for contract negotiation, management and review.

The Board accepted the Head of Improvement's offer to bring additional information on the Council's contract policy and procedures and a revised contract register to the September meeting. The Board requested that the Strategic Procurement Manager also be invited to the September meeting for this discussion.

Resolved

That the Head of Improvement and the Strategic Procurement Manager be invited to bring a report on the Council's contract policies and procedures and a more detailed version of the contract register to the September meeting.

14

Improving Partnership Working

The Head of Improvement presented the brief for the 'Improving Partnership Working' project he was leading. The project had emerged following consideration of the Working in Partnership Annual Report by the Executive in March 2009.

The Board noted that the outcomes of the project would be very important, particularly in light of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment which would judge the performance of both the Council and its partners.

The Board commented on the inadequacy of the information and apparent false entries in the Partnership Register which they had considered at their March meeting and suggested that this should also be updated and improved as part of the Improving Partnership Working project brief. Members of the Board commented that it would be useful to understand what a partnership is, why and how the Council becomes involved in a partnership, the benefits and outcomes for Cherwell and how the Council ensures that the partnership is delivering. Members also commented that many partnerships did not have elected member representation.

The Board agreed that in view of their constitutional responsibility to scrutinise the Council's partnership arrangements they should maintain an active interest and involvement in this improvement project. They accepted the Head of Improvement's offer to attend the meeting in September to provide additional information on the Council's partnership arrangements and the initial findings of the Improving Partnership Working project.

Resolved

That the Head of Improvement be invited to submit a report to the September meeting of the Board to provide additional information on the Council's partnership arrangements and the initial findings of the Improving Partnership Working project.

15 **Partnership Scrutiny - Oxfordshire Rural Community Council Briefing**

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the proposed scope and project plan for the scrutiny of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.

The Head of Urban and Rural Services and the Head of Safer Communities and Community Development were present and briefed Members on the work of Rural Community Councils and the structure and organisation of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.

The Head of Urban and Rural Services presented the rural and countryside perspective. He advised the Board that Oxfordshire Rural Community Council was one of 38 Rural Community Councils in England. It had been founded in 1920 and is a registered charity that works to improve the quality of life for those who live or work in rural Oxfordshire.

The Head of Urban and Rural Services commented that the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council offered a good resource for the Council and brought a wider skill and experience base to help the Council deliver services to rural communities, in particular with regard to village halls, village shops and parish planning. The Head of Urban and Rural Services advised the Board that some recent achievements would not have been possible without the expertise of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council staff and a similar service could not be provided in-house for the same funding.

The Head of Urban and Rural Services advised the Board that Cherwell District Council did not have a formal agreement with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council for funding and service delivery. At present only Oxfordshire County Council had a contractual arrangement with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. The Head of Urban and Rural Services noted the need for Cherwell to develop a more focused and structured arrangement with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, for example, through a service level agreement which would incorporate clear aims and targets and maintain greater flexibility to adapt to service requirements than a formal contract.

The Head of Safer Communities and Community Development briefed the Board on the Council's involvement with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council from a community transport perspective. The Oxfordshire Community Transport and Accessibility Partnership (formerly Oxfordshire Rural Transport Partnership) aimed to promote and support improved transport and other means of accessing services for people in rural and other marginalised/isolated communities.

The Head of Safer Communities and Community Development commented that historically funding for Oxfordshire Rural Community Partnership had been built into the service budget and remained at the same level. It was felt that the grant had represented low value for money for the Council in the past in contrast to what the Partnership delivers to other districts.

The Head of Safer Communities and Community Development informed the Committee that in light of recent national developments, the service had now identified a real need for some research and advice (e.g. concessionary travel and volunteer car schemes) from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. He also suggested the need to set clear targets and outcomes expected from the partnership in the future through a formal funding agreement. In this respect, he recommended that the Council make a single payment to ORCC and negotiate a single agreement to cover all the services provided.

Members of the Board commented that the funding arrangements seemed to be determined by other organisations (particularly Oxfordshire County Council in the case of community transport) and were not subject to a full review by the Council. Members noted that the role of elected Members with the Partnership was not clear and should be explored further.

Members discussed how public satisfaction with the services delivered by the Partnership could be measured and agreed that it was important to visit villages across the district to see for themselves the work that had been achieved with the support of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and speak with residents. The Board agreed that the Scrutiny Officer and Rural Development and Countryside Manager would arrange dates and locations for visits during August.

Following the Officers' presentation and discussion, the Board agreed the scoping document and project review for the partnership scrutiny review of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council with the amendment that Cherwell District Council's Member Representative be added to the witness list.

Resolved

- 1) That the scoping document for the partnership scrutiny review of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes be agreed.
- 2) That the project grid for the partnership scrutiny review of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council as set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes be agreed.
- 3) That the Scrutiny Officer and Rural Development and Countryside Manager should arrange visits during August to villages in the district for Members to see the work undertaken with the support of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and speak with residents.

16

Work Programme 2009/2010 Update

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the overview and scrutiny work programme 2009/2010.

Bicester Vision Partnership

The Vice-Chairman, who had been a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when it had carried out a review of the Bicester Vision Partnership

gave the Board an overview of the review and explained the thinking behind the recommendations. He said that the Bicester Vision had accepted the recommendations regarding communications and that as a result there had been an improvement in the dissemination of information about the work of Bicester Vision.

The Board agreed that they should review the Council's involvement in the Bicester Vision Partnership in the spring of 2010 and asked the Vice-Chairman and Scrutiny Officer to bring proposals for the conduct of that review to the November meeting.

Performance Scrutiny Working Group

The Board noted that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group had reviewed the year end performance data and would be monitoring trends in a number of areas, including processing planning applications which was still rated red. At the next meeting they had asked to speak to officers about the Council's failure to meet its CO₂ emission reduction targets and to a representative from the Mobile Camera Unit regarding fly-tipping.

Resolved

- 1) That the Vice-Chairman and Scrutiny Officer be invited to bring proposals for the review of the Bicester Vision Partnership to the November meeting.
- 2) That the work of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group be noted.
- 3) That the Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board element of the work programme for 2009/10 as set out in Appendix 3 to these minutes be agreed.

The meeting ended at 9.50 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC)

<p>Purpose of Review Specify exactly what the Scrutiny Review should achieve and refer where possible to VFM issues of service cost, service performance and/or customer satisfaction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish an understanding of the work of Rural Community Councils • To receive information on the structure and organisation of ORCC • To establish a better understanding of the relationship between CDC and ORCC • To review and understand the funding arrangements • To determine whether the partnership provides value for money for Cherwell and meets the goals of both partners • To determine the extent to which the partnership meets the needs of the residents, businesses and parish councils in the rural areas
<p>Indicators of Success What factors/outcomes will demonstrate that this Scrutiny Review has been a success.</p>	<p>Improved service delivery from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on the roles/relationships within the partnership • a clear statement of objectives and goals for delivery in 2010 (and beyond) • Clarity on the funding arrangements • Understand any contra indicators for partnership working and resolve a way forward • Produce a final report and agreed actions.
<p>Methodology/ Approach What types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee based Q&A sessions to interview CDC officers and ORCC staff • Site visits/public meetings to villages to seek views of rural communities • Briefing sessions on specific topics (e.g. funding) • Desk top review and interviews to identify alternative approaches and possible best practice
<p>Target body for Recommendations Executive, Council, Other/Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive/Council • ORCC
<p>Key dates Identify key meeting dates and any deadlines for reports or decisions</p>	<p>21 July ~ initial briefing from CDC (Grahame Helm re transport) and Chris Rothwell (re villages) Aug/Sept ~ visits to villages with Kevin Lerner & ORCC staff ~ topic based briefing sessions ~ interviews/meetings with other councils / groups using</p>

DRAFT

	<p>ORCC services 22 Sept ~ follow up briefing to review findings, financial data 20 October ~ witness Q&A session with ORCC Chief Executive and CDC PfH and Strategic Director. November ~ report & recommendations to Executive/ORCC</p>
<p>Risks Identify any weaknesses and barriers to success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource constraints in CDC • Resource constraints within ORCC • Manage expectations and concerns of ORCC and public
<p>Witnesses/ Experts/ Site Visits Who, why and when</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC: PfH, Member Representative on ORCC, Strategic Director, Service Heads & Team Leaders, Finance • ORCC: Chief Executive and operational staff • Cherwell village representatives &/or public • Other councils / users of ORCC services • Other local authorities
<p>Publicity & Media Do we need to publicise the review to encourage community involvement? what sort of media coverage do we want? Fliers, leaflets, radio broadcast, press-release, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will this review be subject to a press embargo? No • CDC press contact: Craig Forsyth • Spokesperson for Scrutiny Review: Cllr Clarke
<p>Resources & Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist staff • external support • consultation • research 	<p>Expect to manage within existing CDC resources.</p>

<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>Approved by Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board:</p>	<p>Date:</p>

ORCC Partnership Scrutiny – DRAFT PROJECT GRID

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board: Cllrs Clarke, Ahmed, Billington, Cullip, Irvine, Mawer, Rae, Stratford, Strangwood, Tompson, Webb, Weir.

Timescale: July – October 2009

Scrutiny support: Catherine Phythian & Natasha Clark

Service area support: Chris Rothwell, Grahame Helm, Kevin Larner

No.	Key Task	Outcome	Milestones	Resources
To establish an understanding of the work of the ORCC				
To gain a better understanding of the relationship between CDC and ORCC				
To receive information on the structure and organisation of ORCC				
1.1	Initial briefing from CDC Officers	Good understanding of the work of ORCC and what it delivers for CDC	21 July	All members
1.2	Visit to ORCC offices & staff		August	Members Scrutiny Officer Kevin Larner ORCC staff
To review and understand the funding arrangements				
1.3	Detailed consideration of CDC funding support to ORCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of CDC funding to ORCC for last 5 years Details of comparative funding from OCC and other Councils 	Briefing meeting in Aug/Sept	Members Scrutiny Officer Finance Officer Rothwell/Helm/Larner
To determine the extent to which the partnership meets the needs of the residents, businesses and parish councils in the rural areas				
1.4	Detailed consideration of CDC rural issues as identified in Rural Strategy and Sustainable Communities Strategy	Identify key issues and concerns and the extent to which they are matched by the work of ORCC	Briefing meeting in August	Members Scrutiny Officer Community Planning Officer Rothwell/Helm/Larner



ORCC Partnership Scrutiny – DRAFT PROJECT GRID

1.5	Informal site visits to villages (3 or 4) from across the district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve ward councillor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct evidence from members of public and rural residents regarding needs and experience of ORCC / CDC services 	17 August – 4 Sept	Members Scrutiny Officer Kevin Larner ORCC staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve Parish Council reps Speak to ordinary residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the issues of concern to the user groups in the district. 		
To determine whether the partnership provides value for money for Cherwell and meets the goals of both partners				
1.6	Review best practice, successful schemes in other areas.	Identify potential for replication of best practice at Cherwell.	Desk top survey July/August Briefing meeting in Aug/Sept	Scrutiny Officer Members Rothwell/Helm/Larner
1.7	Review the experience of other Oxfordshire Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison of CDC arrangements Identify areas for improvement / change 	Meetings in Aug/Sept	Members Scrutiny Officer Rothwell/Helm/Larner
1.8	Q&A session with ORCC Chief Executive, Pfh and Strategic Director	To discuss initial conclusions and draft report/recommendations	20 October	All Members

Meeting date	21 July	Aug	Aug	Aug/Sept	Sept	22 Sept	Early Oct	20 Oct
Topic	1.1 and 1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.7	All		1.8
Witnesses	Helm & Rothwell	Finance staff	Community Planning Manager	Public	Other Councils	N/A		ORCC Ch Exec Pfh Strategic Director
Present/ Expected	R&PSB					R&PSB		R&PSB

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/10 ~ as @ 22/07/09

Title	Committee/T&FG	Comments	Meeting				
			Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Later
Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny							
Preparations for an ageing population	OSC	Cllr R Stratford to monitor developments Invite representatives of Oxfordshire Health & Well-Being Board to attend future meeting		?	?		
Youth Facility Provision	OSC	Work programme item for 15 September Possible joint scrutiny with other Oxfordshire authorities; to note developments.	✓				
Engaging with young people	OSC	Agenda item for 15 September Consider draft scoping document for possible review	✓				
Young People's VFM review	OSC	To consider the outcomes and conclusions of the VFM review into young people's services				✓	
Registered Social Landlords' Management Partnership and related standards	R&PSB	Work programme item for 20 October To consider as possible topic for partnership scrutiny		✓			
Scrutiny – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings							
Sustainable Communities Strategy	OSC	Agenda item for 10 November Claire Taylor to present consultation outcomes, draft service delivery plan and leadership plans			✓		
Preparation for the 2012 Olympics tourism potential in the district	OSC	Agenda item for 13 October Invite PfH (Customer Service & ICT) to attend Head of Service has confirmed this as preferred date		✓			

Title	Committee/T&FG	Comments	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Later
2010/2011 Budget	R&PSB	Agenda item for 22 September To agree approach/topic for budget scrutiny.	✓				
Partnerships: ORCC	R&PSB	Agenda item for Sept/Oct To review effectiveness of partnership with ORCC.	✓	✓			
Partnerships: Cherwell Safer Communities	R&PSB	Work programme item for 20 October To agree scoping document and project plan.		✓			
Improving Partnership Working	R&PSB	Agenda item for 22 September To consider the improvements proposals identified by the Improving Partnership Working project team.	✓				
Contracts review	R&PSB	Agenda item for 22 September To consider and agree an approach for contract scrutiny	✓				
Task & Finish Groups – agreed topics for review outside committee meetings							
Private Sector Housing Strategy	Cllr Rose Stratford (Ch) Cllr Stevens (VC) Cllr Smithson Cllr Tompson	Cllr Rae Cllr Sibley	Policy development work on the private sector housing strategy.				✓
Crime & Anti-social behaviour	Cllr Irvine Cllr Billington Cllr Tompson Cllr Smithson Cllr Sibley	Cllr Ahmed Cllr Cullip	Active – final report scheduled for Executive in autumn 2009 Chairman of T&FG to attend OSC meeting in Sept to brief on progress	✓			
Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations							
Concessionary Fares	OSC	Work programme item for 5 January meeting PfH to attend and brief on progress on recommendations and developments on government consultation				✓	

Title	Committee/T&FG	Comments	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Later
Affordable Housing & Rural Exception Sites	OSC	Agenda item for 10 November meeting PfH to attend and brief on progress on recommendations			✓		
Markets in Cherwell	OSC	Agenda item for 13 October meeting PfH to attend and brief on progress		✓			
Partnerships: Bicester Vision	R&PSB	Work programme item for 24 November To agree scope and project plan for review in early 2010.			✓		✓
Fees and Charges	R&PSB	Agenda item for 12 January meeting Review of progress against recommendations and in advance of next budget round				✓	
Food Waste Processing	R&PSB/PSWG	Review autumn 2010 6 months after final stage of roll-out programme.					✓
Sports Centre Modernisation	FSWG	Refurbished centres due to open summer 2009; new Spiceball due to open winter 2009. FSWG to review at July 2009 meeting.	✓				
Residents' Parking Schemes	OSC	Work programme item for 15 September To note current position	✓				
RAF Bicester	OSC	Work programme item for 15 September Chairman to brief on current position	✓				

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board

Improving Partnership Working – Progress Report

22 September 2009

Report of Head of Improvement

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board with an update on the progress of the Improving Partnership Working project.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to comment on the attached report on the progress of the Improving Partnership Working Project (Appendix 1).

Details

1 Background

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board 21 July 2009 considered the project brief of the Improving Partnership Working project and requested that a progress report be brought to their meeting on 22 September 2009. The report is attached (Appendix 1).

2 Improving Partnership Working

The report sets out the findings of the project to date. Democratic Services and Corporate and Community Planning have been closely involved in developing these findings. The lead officers for the partnerships rated as fair in the 2008/09 Partnerships Annual Report have been interviewed to identify ways in which the performance of these individual partnerships, and partnership working more widely, could be improved.

3 Next Steps

The changes proposed in the report are intended to be in place in their entirety for 2010/11. In advance of that the Council is monitoring the performance of the seventeen significant partnerships through the corporate

Performance Management Framework and will be planning for the future through the 2010/11 Service and Financial Planning process which is currently underway.

Many of the issues covered in the project were raised in the 2008/09 Annual Partnership Report to the Executive. Given the need to report back to the Executive, and given the recommendation that we discontinue the Partnership Annual Report in its current format, I propose that the final recommendations of the project are included in the report to the Executive on the Performance Management Framework for 2010/11. This will reinforce a key recommendation of the project that we integrate the management of partnerships (and our involvement in other outside bodies) into the existing performance management processes of the Council. Any constitutional matters concerning partnership working will be dealt with under the current review of the Council's constitution.

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Improving Partnership Working: Progress Report for Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board
Appendix 1 - Attachment A	Assessment of significant partnerships rated as delivering fair value for money.
Appendix 1 - Attachment B	Statement of roles and responsibilities of councillors involved in outside bodies.
Appendix 1 - Attachment C	Internal Audit report on partnership working in 2008/09 – Action Plan.
Background Papers	
Improving Partnership Working – Project Brief. Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board 21 July 2009.	
Report Author	Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement
Contact Information	01295 227959 mike.carroll@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Progress Report for Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board 22 September 2009

1.0 Introduction

The catalyst for this project was the 2008/09 Annual Partnership Report considered by the Executive on 16 March 2009. The Executive agreed a number of recommendations to improve partnership working. Since then a number of issues about what we can expect from partnerships and the level of resources we should commit, how we can best monitor the performance of partnerships, and how we determine what are significant partnerships have been added to these concerns. The outcomes of the project are below. These are set out under the recommendations of the Executive report.

The Executive 3 March 2008 agreed a protocol for partnership working. The recommendations in this report do not supplant the protocol but rather add detail to areas of practice in the light of experience of involvement in partnerships and wider performance management.

An Internal Audit Report on partnership working in 2008/09 was published in August 2009 and made a number of recommendations to improve partnership working. Many of the recommendations have already been addressed, some will be considered through this project and the rest completed this year. The action plan is shown in Attachment C.

This project is particularly timely as partnership working is growing and likely to continue to grow as many difficult social issues require cross-organisation working and we have to find more efficient and cost effective ways of working. With this growth has also come awareness that there are a number of significant management issues we have to address if we are to achieve the same standards of performance from partnerships as we expect from the delivery of our own services.

The current phase of the review of the Council's constitution is updating the position regarding representation on outside bodies. An outcome of this will be a detailed advice note for councillors serving on outside bodies. This is the context for the statement of roles and responsibilities proposed in 6. below.

2.0 Outcomes

Executive Recommendation 4a. Improve the service delivery and value for money from Cherwell's significant partnerships.

The Executive asked officers to bring forward proposals to improve the performance of the 10 significant partnerships whose delivery of value for

money was only rated as fair. To complete this exercise all lead officers were interviewed about the performance of their partnership, how it could deliver better value for money, and any wider observations about improving the performance of the partnership. The responses are in Attachment A. A number of wider issues were raised about improving the performance of partnerships. These are:

For all outside bodies, and in particular the significant partnerships because of the commitment of resources involved, the Council needs to be clear about the reason for its involvement and the level of commitment this involves. A simple example of this is the number of meetings involved which can tend to proliferate as the partnership is established.

To achieve the best value for money the management of partnerships should be integrated fully into the service planning and performance management processes. In this way the same rigour will be applied to partnerships as to other areas of service delivery. This is particularly important given the increased use of partnerships (and indeed contractors) as the means of delivering our objectives. As with all service areas there is a judgement to be made about the level of monitoring and reporting required. Underlying this are the following principles:

- The same standards of performance are to be expected of partnerships as of our own services. The management of partnerships should be fully integrated into the Council's service planning and performance management processes. It is acknowledged there are particular issues relating to managing partnerships and these should be addressed corporately through the lead officer for partnership working.
- The role of partnerships and the resources involved in delivering our objectives will be clarified through the Service and Financial Planning process. At this stage any risks associated with delivering these objectives will be identified as part of the work plan of the partnership and included on the council's risk register.
- The actual performance on delivering objectives will be monitored and reviewed through the Council's Performance Management Framework. The significant partnerships will be monitored at the highest level and performance reported to the Executive every quarter. Below that partnerships will be monitored at Directorate and service level, and dealt with at that level unless serious issues emerge (as is the case with most of the detailed actions and targets contained in the individual service plans) or there are successes or emerging issues to report.
- From 2010/11 all partnerships will have an internal regime of performance management that includes having agreed objectives, a process for monitoring and reviewing performance, and produce an annual statement of performance. The extent of this regime will have to be proportionate to the size of the organisation and in most cases a light touch approach will suffice.

- In the Council's annual performance report there will be a report on the performance of the significant partnerships. It is proposed that this is supplemented with an overall value for money assessment of each of the significant partnerships and a wider commentary on the overall management of partnerships. This will replace the current partnerships annual report.
- Scrutiny will have the option to review the performance of individual partnerships or wider management issues. The Performance Scrutiny Working Group will continue to consider the quarterly performance reports and any issue with the significant partnerships may be recommended for more detailed consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.
- The internal audit process should be used to assess the performance of individual partnerships (using the Use of Resources KLOES will link this into the wider inspection and audit regime).
- The performance of individual partnerships can be included in the Value for Money review programme when an in depth review of performance is required.
- We need to be clearer about the purpose of the partnership and the reason for our involvement. From the commentary in Attachment A it can be seen that a main benefit of many partnerships is the opportunity for liaison, communication and consultation. This has not been fully reflected in our judgement of value for money. It also poses questions of how to measure the effectiveness of a partnership when it does not have clearly defined objectives around service delivery. This is considered further in section 3.

Executive Recommendation 4b. Seek out opportunities for new partnership arrangements to improve service delivery and value for money.

This is being developed through the Service and Financial Planning process for 2010/11, the 2009/10 Value for Money review programme, and consideration of developing wider strategic partnerships for the Council into the future. The development of Sustainable Community Strategy, and the new terms of reference of the Local Strategic Partnership, provides an opportunity to review the existing partnerships and identify new opportunities for joint working and collaboration.

Executive Recommendation 4c. Continue to strengthen governance and accountability arrangements, especially around information and data sharing arrangements.

The Council's partnership protocol includes arrangements for information and data sharing.

Executive Recommendation 4d. With West Oxfordshire District Council, continue to jointly lead the countywide review of the structure and governance arrangements of countywide partnerships.

The county wide review of partnerships governance and structure, led by Cherwell and West Oxfordshire District Councils, has now been completed. There are new arrangements for countywide thematic partnerships in place to deliver the Local Area agreement and the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy. The over arching structure, role and membership of these partnerships has been agreed by the Oxfordshire Partnership Board and the detailed working arrangements for each partnership are being developed.

Executive Recommendation 4e. As part of this countywide review, achieve agreement on the significant partnerships common to all the local authorities across Oxfordshire and focus resources accordingly.

County wide significant partnerships are those that include the Local Strategic Partnership and the supporting thematic partnerships as identified in the county wide governance review. These are:

1. The Oxfordshire Partnership
2. The Public Service Board
3. Children's Trust
4. Environment and Waste Partnership
5. Health and Well Being Partnership
6. Oxfordshire Economic Partnership
7. Safer Communities Partnership
8. Spatial Planning and Infrastructure
9. Stronger Communities Partnership.

Local Authorities (i.e. the county or other Oxfordshire districts) may also consider other local partnerships in their areas to be significant (an example of this may include a partnership like Bicester Vision). These are unlikely to be county wide and are likely to be locally specific (reflecting local priorities). For this reason it is unlikely that any additional county wide significant partnerships will be identified.

Executive Recommendation 4f. Strengthen the support for elected Members involved in partnerships on the Council's behalf through the Member Training and Development Programme.

See 6 below.

Executive Recommendation 4g. Strengthen the links between the Council's partnerships and Executive Members, to be considered as part of the Council's current review of its Constitution.

The Local Strategic Partnership for Cherwell has already reviewed its terms of reference and strengthened Member representation. This work will be

developed further over the next year as the new Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership develops and improves its governance arrangements.

The role of member representatives on outside bodies and the wider role of Executive Portfolio Holders in these bodies will be set out in part 111 of the review of the constitution.

As part of the county wide review there are now clear roles for elected members on the Oxfordshire Partnership, The Public Service Board and all thematic partnerships.

Executive Recommendation 4h. Consider hosting a Cherwell Partnerships Conference to celebrate achievements, consider future partnership opportunities, share knowledge and best practice.

The revised terms of reference for the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership includes a reference group that brings together a wide range of local stakeholders and partners. This group will act as a forum to share best practice, celebrate and challenge achievement. Along with the Local Strategic Partnership Board the reference group may also initiate new partnership activities, projects or initiatives where existing partnerships or delivery arrangements are not already in place.

In early 2010 the first meeting of the reference group will be held. This will be for Council members, officers, stakeholders and representatives from partner organisations who wish to attend. The overall aim of the conference will be to share information on the framework for managing partnerships and how to achieve the best outcomes from the partnerships we are involved in. We will also share examples of good practice and success that have made a difference in Cherwell.

Executive Recommendation 4i. Include significant partnerships in the Council's performance management framework and include in the quarterly performance report to the Executive.

For 2009/10 the performance of the seventeen significant partnerships is being monitored through the performance management framework. The performance of the partnerships is included in the quarterly performance report to the Executive. In 2009/10 the report is in the form of a commentary by the lead officer for the partnership on the performance achieved and any issues arising. The reason this approach was adopted is because of the work still required in a number of these partnerships to agree objectives through which performance can be judged. In 2010/11 this issue will have been resolved and performance monitored against the agreed objectives of the partnership.

Executive Recommendation 5. That the Annual Partnerships Report be referred to Overview and Scrutiny as part of their future programme of work on the evaluation of partnerships.

The report was considered by the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board and they agreed to include scrutiny reviews of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and Cherwell Safer Community Partnership in the work programme for 2009/10. The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board commented on the terms of reference of this project and the draft recommendations arising. Also the Performance Scrutiny Working Group reviews the Council's quarterly performance report and through that the performance of the significant partnerships.

Executive Recommendation 6. That the Executive receive a report setting out how the Council will effectively support member representatives on partnerships and all outside bodies, including providing appropriate training, strengthening staff support for members, advice on council policy with regard to issues within the remit of partnerships and outside bodies and providing feedback mechanisms from issues raised on partnerships on outside bodies.

Councillors have queried if there is a difference between an outside body and a partnership. In simple terms an outside body is any organisation which is constitutionally separate from the Council (but which is of interest to us because we have a relationship or active involvement with that body). Within that a partnership is where there is an agreement to work together to achieve shared objectives, often supported by some pooling of resources. The Executive 16 March 2009 agreed a definition of partnerships which is consistent with the Audit Commission's advice on best practice in managing partnerships. This is:

'Partnerships are arrangements with one or more organisations, from any sector, who share the responsibility for agreeing and/or then delivering a set of planned actions or outcomes.

Most such partnerships will share risks and resources to some extent, and their work will have an identifiable impact on the Council's services and corporate priorities.

Purely contractual arrangements with another party to provide goods and/or services will not be a partnership for the purposes of this review, even when that party is a public or voluntary sector body.'

In response to the specific issues raised by the Executive the following is proposed:

- Democratic Services will produce a 'statement of roles and responsibilities' for Councillors representing the Council on partnerships or other outside bodies, see Attachment B.
- All Councillor representatives will have a named support officer.

- Democratic Services will maintain a register of all the outside bodies on which the Council is represented. For each body there will be summary information on: the lead member, the portfolio holder, the lead officer, the purpose of the body, what it expects to achieve in the year ahead, and what has been achieved in the past year. More detailed information on the performance of individual partnerships will be maintained through the corporate Performance Management Framework. Democratic Service and Corporate and Community Planning will work together to ensure there is consistency and compatibility between the two sets of information.
- There will be a single process for deciding Councillor representation on partnerships and outside bodies. This to be made by the Leader of the Council as a portfolio holder decision (which may be subject to call in under the Council's constitution). The information provided on the outside bodies register (and the Performance Management Framework if required) will help inform this decision.
- The support required by the Councillor, background information, briefings on current issues, substitute attendance for example, will be agreed between the Councillor and lead officer. The support required will range from the negligible where the Council's commitment is not significant to substantial where major resources and service delivery is involved.
- Training for Councillors involved in partnerships and representing the Council on other bodies will be available through the Member Development Programme which is co-ordinated by Democratic services. In advance of 2010/11 briefing on partnership working and the representational role will be available to Councillors. The Partnership Conference, see previous, will cover wider issues on the effective management of partnerships.
- Members will agree the significant partnerships whose performance will be monitored through the Performance Management Framework and reported to the Executive quarterly. This will be done through the end of year performance report for the previous year. Other partnerships and outside bodies will be monitored at directorate or service level as appropriate.
- In advance of 2010/11 the Deputy Leader of the Council will conduct a review of the current councillor representation on outside bodies to establish if this is an appropriate level of commitment and a good use of resources.

3.0 Other Issues

How do we define a significant partnership and what are the significant partnerships for 2010/11?

For 2009/10 the Council identified seventeen significant partnerships. As a result their performance was highlighted in the 2008/09 Annual Partnership

Report and their performance monitored and reported through the corporate Performance Management Framework in 2009/10. The decision was made using criteria recommended by the Audit Commission and CIPFA. These criteria are helpful but the final decision has to also involve an understanding of local circumstances and priorities. For 2010/11 the following is proposed:

- The Sustainable Community Strategy and the corporate priorities that come from this will provide the context for agreeing the significant partnerships.
- For performance management to be manageable there should be no more than twenty significant partnerships. As nine cross-county significant partnerships have been identified (see 4e) this leave a maximum of eleven Cherwell specific partnerships to be agreed.
- The criteria for judging if a partnership is significant are:
 - The contribution to delivering corporate priorities.
 - The costs and financial benefits.
 - The consequences of failure.
 - Does the partnership take significant decisions?
 - Is it a statutory body or responsible for regulatory functions?
 - The scale of the benefits delivered.
 - The level of risk involved.
- The benefits realised can be both tangible and intangible. To manage performance effectively we do need hard performance targets. However the benefits of many current partnerships are seen as softer in terms of maintaining good communication and liaison and hence relations with key local organisations. A lesson from 2009/10 is the Council needs to be clearer about why we are involved in partnerships, what we expect them to deliver, and how we will measure their success. This will need to be addressed as part of the above process.
- The significant partnerships proposed for 2010/11 will be included in the report to the Executive on the content of the corporate Performance Management Framework for 2010/11.

SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIPS - VALUE FOR MONEY

Introduction

The Executive asked officers to bring forward proposals to improve the performance of the 10 significant partnerships whose delivery of value for money was only rated as fair. To complete this exercise all lead officers were interviewed about the performance of their partnership, how it could deliver better value for money, and any wider observations about improving the performance of the partnerships. A summary of the responses is below.

<p>OXFORDSHIRE-WIDE</p>
<p>Supporting People</p>
<p>The County Council is the lead agency for Supporting People and receives the grant from Central Government to disburse for housing related support for vulnerable people. Within this framework District Councils will seek to influence overall policy and bid for resources for local projects. The clear benefit is that we secure cash from the County Council to provide services in Cherwell. All the Cherwell projects are based on a needs analysis and all contracts are subject to strict monitoring. Reflecting changes in local circumstances the priority in Cherwell is shifting towards supporting people with mental health problems.</p> <p>The fair rating was given because of a perceived lack of information on the outcomes delivered. Lead officers dispute this on the basis that there is considerable evidence of improved outcomes, particularly facilities for young people and the significant reduction in the numbers in temporary accommodation. Currently the Council commits the equivalent of one full time equivalent member of staff to this partnership and in 2008/09 received back £2.5m in funding.</p> <p>Value for Money. In advance of the credit crunch there was already a 15% reduction in the overall budget planned and within that a 20% reduction in the budget for young people. In the light of this CDC is already working on ways it can work smarter and more efficiently with the resources available. A major initiative is underway to re-commission services in order to achieve savings and respond to changing local needs and priorities. New governance arrangements will also be put in place to strengthen performance. There are concerns about the pooling of funding streams under the overall auspices of the Public Service Board and the possible impact this may have on Cherwell accessing funds for our local priorities.</p>
<p>Children and Young People's Partnership</p>
<p>This is a statutory body. Under the Childrens Act the County Council has to engage with District Councils and other partners to deliver a joined up approach to working with children and young people. Because the primary</p>

purpose of the act is to safeguard children the County Council, and Social Services in particular, is the lead agency. Given this the Districts' are inevitably minor partners but play a crucial role in providing positive activities for children and young people. The only direct demand on CDC resources is the officer time to attend about eight meetings a year (the county-wide board and the area board). There is no pooling of budgets. The partnership has established three area boards to make it more responsive to local conditions and issues. The Partnership has recently agreed a new Childrens' Plan to cover the next three years.

Value for Money. The view of the lead officer is that our involvement in this partnership actually delivers good value for money. The relatively small commitment of officer time is easily outweighed by the resources received from the Partnership. This is in the order of £50/60k a year (the Council's Street Rangers are funded from this source). The Partnership facilitates a good flow of information between agencies, the coordination of activities, and allows us to influence wider policy issues. Areas for future improvement include developing the local agenda through the Area Boards and using the new Childrens Plan to develop more robust local performance targets.

Oxfordshire Economic Partnership

This is seen as an important strategic partnership particularly as it channels money from SEEDA and the county. CDC contributes £5k and has a councillor representative on the board. There are issues around its role and functions that need to be clarified if it is to operate most effectively. Also needs to be better understanding between the membership about what are the key issues to address. Current structure seen as unwieldy so to be restructured with a smaller board concentrating on strategic issues and a development group dealing with practical issues. Internal communication could be improved. CDC wants OEP to be clear about its role in: managing Oxon Business Enterprise; supporting the Jobs Clubs; and in encouraging inward investment (which may duplicate what CDC already does in this area).

Value for Money. Changes have to be delivered if vfm is to improve. Need to assess impact of structural changes at the year end and if there is a clear and shared agenda amongst the participating organisations. If Oxon Economic Partnership take on Oxon Business Enterprise then this may improve vfm for CDC, even though we will continue to host the service.

Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership

This is an important organisation in so far as it decides the allocation of funds allocated by the Home Office. Meets quarterly with chief executives representing the local authorities (though there is frequent use of substitutes). There are issues about its purpose beyond that, particularly as it may duplicate the statutory functions at the District level. Is most effective as a co-ordinating group and sharing information on best practice (the presentation of the use of public TV screens in Hastings for example). Problem if number of meetings involved expands to include Tactical Business Groups.

Value for Money. An important body as it provides access to funds and information on best practice. Most effective when focussed this limited agenda. Concerns about expansion beyond this, the additional meetings and other commitments and the return on the resources this involves. Need to review remit and functioning of this group. Review performance at the end of the year.

CHERWELL SPECIFIC

Cherwell Community Planning Partnership

This partnership is responsible for delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy (previously the Local Strategic Plan). Although it is not a statutory body it does have a central role coordinating the activities of the major public sector organisations. It is an important forum for deciding joint approaches to issues, initiating joint working and sharing information. Besides tangible service delivery the Partnership also offers intangible benefits around building cross organisation communication and cooperation and external reputation. There is no pooling of budgets but there is considerable joint working on individual projects. There have been issues raised about how to improve the operation of the Partnership to make it a more effective delivery body. This is reflected in the changes referred to below.

Value for Money. A number of improvements are planned to improve the performance of the Partnership. From November 2009 there will be a smaller board with increased member involvement. This will provide a clearer focus on delivering outcomes for the community. This will support the delivery of the new Sustainable Community Strategy and the 3 year delivery plan that will be launched in February 2010. There will also be more practical support available to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy as the Police and the Primary Care Trust match the resources provided by the Council. There is performance management of the partnership through the Council's PMF which is limited to a basket of National Indicators. This will be reviewed in advance of 2010/11. A review of the impact of these changes will be made at year end and that will inform whether the Partnership has improved its performance delivered better value for money. An issue for further consideration is the relationship between this partnership and other partnerships in the district and if the latter in some way should be accountable to the former.

Cherwell Safer Community Partnership

Primary purpose is to allocate funding from Home Office (£130k) and the Police (£60k) for local projects and has been effective in doing that. Clear evidence that many initiatives successfully launched, more difficult to establish links between patterns of crime and the work of CSCP. Requires staff time to support and attend meetings. A post at CDC funded through the CSCP budget.

Value for Money. Lead officer believes this organisation provides good and not fair value for money. This is based on the number of projects delivered through the partnership and the relative low costs of our involvement. Review again at end of year.

Cherwell M40 Investment Partnership

This is a partnership between the Council and the private sector (particularly property owners). Set up 18 years ago to take advantage of the then newly constructed M40. Most valuable as a brand to attract companies to Cherwell. Cherwell contributes staff time to attend 4 meetings a year, £20/30k in funding for marketing, and supports the property search web site. Doubtful if any savings if partnership did not exist. Provides useful forum for meeting the private sector and via the web site a single point of contact for companies. Question if this is a 'significant' partnership.

Value for Money. The lead officer believes relative to the resources involved this partnership delivers good value for money. The communication between the Council and the private sector also delivers more intangible benefits through building and maintaining good relations and understanding between the parties involved.

Kidlington Village Management Board

This is primarily a liaison group between CDC, the Village Council, the County Council, the Police and local businesses and should be judged on that basis. Meets every 2/3 months and the only cost is staff time to support the meeting. The Board has no resources. It is a forum primarily to discuss CDC spending plans and priorities on the Village Centre and give feedback on work in progress. Some issues about sporadic attendance and ability to act on the issues raised (need to manage expectations).

Value for Money. As its primary purpose is liaison performance cannot be judged on what is physically delivered, as that is CDC expenditure but rather on local involvement in the decision making process about that expenditure and satisfaction with the process. Need to consider how best to measure the performance of the board as most of the deliverables are included in CDC service plans. Occasional issues about number of officers attending the meetings and possible duplication of meetings with the Chamber of Commerce.

Banbury Town Centre Partnership

This is primarily a liaison group between CDC, the Town Council the County Council, the Police and local businesses and should be judged on that basis. Meets every 2/3 months and the only cost is staff time to support the meeting. The Partnership has no resources. It is a forum primarily to discuss CDC spending plans and priorities in the Town Centre and give feedback on work in progress. Some issues about sporadic attendance and ability to act on the

issues raised (need to manage expectations).

Value for Money. As its primary purpose is liaison performance cannot be judged on what is physically delivered, as that is CDC expenditure but rather on local involvement in the decision making process about that expenditure and satisfaction with the process. Need to consider how best to measure the performance of the Partnership as most of the deliverables are included in CDC service plans. Occasional issues about number of officers attending the meetings and possible duplication of meetings with the Chamber of Commerce.

Central Oxfordshire Steering Group.

This body has been disbanded and replaced, from 2009/10, by the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership. This is a cross-Oxfordshire body and because it will act as the single point of contact with the Housing and Communities Agency it will have powers, influence and be an important means of accessing resources. It will also allocate LAA reward funds if they are available. Leadership of the partnership will rotate annually amongst the Oxon local authorities with Cherwell taking the lead in the first year. There is a proposal to employ a full time co-ordinator. Work is underway to agree the terms of reference for the partnership.

Value for Money. The new arrangement will provide a clear focus and remit to the partnership. Judgment about performance can only be made at year end.

STATEMENT OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCILLORS INVOLVED IN OUTSIDE BODIES

Partnerships are arrangements with one or more organisations, from any sector, who share the responsibility for agreeing and/or then delivering a set of planned actions or outcomes.

Most such partnerships will share risks and resources to some extent, and their work will have an identifiable impact on the Council's services and corporate priorities.

Purely contractual arrangements with another party to provide goods and/or services will not be a partnership for the purposes of this review, even when that party is a public or voluntary sector body.

Outside Bodies are bodies or organisations (other than partnerships) which the Council has agreed to appoint representatives to.

Role of Representatives

- The role and responsibilities of representatives on partnerships and outside bodies will be set out in the governance document of that body which you will be provided with when you are appointed.
- Representatives on partnerships and outside bodies shall at all times act in the best interests of the district and residents of the district.
- Representatives on partnerships and outside bodies shall act as a conduit in keeping the Council informed of the work of the body to which they are appointed and the outside body informed of the work of the council.
- Each body to which an appointment is made by the Council will have a designated Council contact officer.
- Councillor representatives on outside bodies and partnerships shall act in accordance with the advice note for elected members on bodies external to the Council as set out in the constitution.
- Unless expressly given the power in accordance with the constitution, representatives on partnerships and outside bodies may not commit the Council to any course of action or indicate the support of the authority for any policy or decision.

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN 2008/09 – ACTION PLAN

ISSUE	RISK RATING	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p>1. Members are not aware of partnership activity. The Council has an Overview & Scrutiny Committee which is charged with overseeing partnership activities at a Council level. At present there are no periodic reports on partnerships submitted to The Committee, with the exception of the Annual Partnership Review. A reporting timetable should be produced to ensure that members receive regular information on the Council's partnerships and their performance.</p>	Medium	<p>A selection of high risk partnerships was selected by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their last meeting for review. All partnerships will be reviewed on a rolling basis.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>2. Those charged with governance may not be fully aware of partnership arrangements. Members involved in partnerships do not receive any training on the partnership protocol. Training needs for those members involved in partnerships should be addressed and training programmes implemented.</p>	Low	<p>A generic briefing on the partnership protocol will be produced for all members. Individual members will be briefed by relevant Heads of Service on specific arrangements. Claire Taylor and Heads of Service 1st October 2009</p>
<p>3. Board members may not be independent. Whilst all members involved in partnerships are covered by the Council's Code of Conduct, these are not tailored to the specifics of individual partnerships. In addition those not employed by Cherwell are not covered by these guidelines. Checks should be carried out to ensure the independence of all Board members. Each individual partnership should maintain a register of interests in respect of their Board members.</p>	Medium	<p>As part of the reorganisation of the Local Strategic Partnership, a large number of partnerships will require individual register of interests. Claire Taylor Ongoing from November 2009</p>

<p>4. Risks may not be addressed and rectified on a timely basis. Risk registers are not maintained for individual partnerships. Risk registers should be drawn up to address risks specific to individual partnerships. This should be in addition to inclusion of partnerships on the Councils risk register.</p>	Medium	All partnerships should have individual risk registers. Heads of Service 31 st October 2009.
<p>5. Performance may not be monitored. As a consequence, Adverse performance may not be rectified and best practice identified. There are no performance indicators in place for Bicester vision. In addition, the partnership does not benchmark itself against similar schemes. Performance indicators for Bicester Vision should be designed and monitored on a periodic basis. Efforts should be made to identify similar schemes to allow benchmarking of performance.</p>	Medium	The reorganised Local Strategic Partnership will sign off a delivery plan for Bicester Vision. This will require the inclusion of performance indicators. Claire Taylor 31 st March 2010.
<p>6. Insufficient governance arrangements. It was noted when reviewing the Councils partnership register that of the Councils 17 significant partnerships 8 have no member involvement. Efforts should be made to ensure that, where possible, Cherwell members are involved in all significant partnerships.</p>	Medium	The LSP Governance Improvement Program will ensure that all partnerships have member involvement from lead partners. Claire Taylor & Heads of Service 31 st October 2009.
<p>7. Increased risk of fraud and corruption. The Council's anti-fraud and corruption policy makes no reference to partnerships. Amendments should be made to the Councils antifraud and corruption policy to ensure it addresses the roles and responsibilities of partnerships. All individual partnerships protocols should make reference to this document.</p>	Medium	The Partnership protocol will be reviewed to ensure inclusion of fraud and corruption protocols. Legal Services 31 st March 2010.
<p>8. Inappropriate and unauthorised expenditure may be incurred. The Councils Standing Orders make no reference to the procedures for partnerships. The Council Standing Orders should be amended to make reference to expenditure incurred by partnerships. Standing orders should be communicated to all partners and expenditure should only be processed after sufficient authorisation.</p>	Medium	Review of the Councils Standing orders will be performed as part of the annual review. Karen Curtin 31 st March 2010.

<p>9. Partnership risks may be not be identified and rectified on a timely basis. In accordance with the Councils partnership protocol, all partnerships should have an entry on the Councils risk register. All partnerships should have an entry on the Councils risk register. In each case compensating controls should be documented to outline how risks will be mitigated.</p>	Medium	All responsible officers will be reminded of the need to update Magique with relevant risks. Rosemary Watts, with Immediate Effect.
<p>10. All the Value for Money ratings are not accurate. Each partnership is assessed on an annual basis for the level of Value for Money it secures.</p>	Low	Value for Money will be reassessed as part of the Councils Improvement Project. Mike Carroll 31 st March 2010.
<p>11. The Councils views may not be adequately represented. In accordance with the partnership protocol, each partnership should have a named lead officer from the Council. It was noted that this is not the case for the Councils Homelessness Partnership. Consideration should be given to appointing a lead officer on the Homelessness Partnership.</p>	Medium	A lead officer should be appointed and referenced in all partnership communication. Gillian Greaves 31 st August 2009.
<p>12. The Council may not receive adequate and fair media coverage. A media strategy was requested for those partnerships where a full audit was required (Bicester Vision and Homelessness). It was noted that neither had such a document in place as stipulated by the protocol. A media strategy should be developed for all Council partnerships and included within individual constitutions.</p>	Low	The partnership protocol will be amended to reflect that all significant partnerships should consider external communication as part of their constitutions. Claire Taylor 31 st March 2010.
<p>13. Members may not be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. No evidence could be provided to confirm that the constitution for Bicester Vision has been approved. Evidence should be retained to validate the approval of all key documents.</p>	Low	The reorganised Local Strategic Partnership will sign off a delivery plan for Bicester Vision. This will require the approval of their constitution. Clare Taylor 31 st March 2010.

Agenda Item 7

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board

Partnership Scrutiny – Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

22 September 2009

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the progress to date of the scrutiny review of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

This report is public

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the contents of the report and that the review is ongoing.
- (2) Identify further actions to progress the review.
- (3) Consider the issues arising from the Sustainable Community Strategy that impact on the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.
- (4) To consider the issues Members wish to raise at the question and answer session with the Portfolio Holder Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural, the Strategic Director Environment and Community and the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council Chief Executive at the Board's October meeting.

Details

1 Partnership Scrutiny

- 1.1 The Local Government and Public Health Involvement Act 2007 sets out the requirements for Local Authorities to assess the effectiveness of partnerships of which the Council is a member and to carry out the scrutiny of partnerships.
- 1.2 In March 2008, the Council adopted a Partnership Protocol and

comprehensive Partnership Working Framework. The Framework and the Council's Constitution describe partnership reviews as being part of the remit of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board.

- 1.3 At the Board's meeting on 23 June 2009, Members resolved to undertake a scrutiny review of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council in summer 2009.
- 1.4 At the Board's meeting on 21 July 2009, Members agreed a scoping document and project plan for the scrutiny review of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (attached as Appendix 1 and 2 respectively).

2 Partnership Scrutiny Review Progress

Background Briefing

- 2.1 Appendix 3 contains detailed background information on rural community councils and Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.
- 2.2 The Head of Urban and Rural Services and the Head of Safer Communities and Community Development attended the Board's July meeting to brief members on the work of Rural Community Councils and the structure and organisation of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. They briefed the Board on the Council's involvement with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council from a rural and countryside and transport perspective.

Site Visits

- 2.3 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman visited Cropredy Parish Council on 24 August 2009 to meet with Parish Councillors from Cropredy and the neighbouring village of Claydon to discuss their involvement with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. Notes of the meeting are attached at Appendix 4.
- 2.4 Further visits to villages and Parish Councils are currently being arranged. Members are asked to bring details of their availability to the meeting.

Rural Issues Arising from the Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.5 Appendix 5 contains information about rural communities in Cherwell.
- 2.6 The Community and Corporate Planning Manager and the Rural Development and Countryside Manager will be present at the meeting to brief members on the rural issues identified through the consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 2.7 Members will wish to reflect on what bearing these issues might have on the Council's partnership with ORCC.

Cherwell District Council Funding to Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

- 2.8 Details of the Council's funding to Oxfordshire Rural Community Council for the last five years are attached at Appendix 6. Further work is required to establish the exact expenditure on urban and rural services prior to 2008/2009. This information will be distributed to Members before the next meeting.

Question and Answer Session

- 2.9 Members will wish to note that the Chief Executive of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural and the Strategic Director Environment and Community will be present at the October meeting for a question and answer session. Members will wish to consider what issues and questions they would like to raise at this meeting.

Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Legal:	There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
Risk Management:	There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

A district of opportunity
A safe and healthy Cherwell

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Nigel Morris
Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Scrutiny Review Scoping Document
Appendix 2	Scrutiny Review Project Grid
Appendix 3	Background Briefing – Rural Community Councils and Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
Appendix 4	Notes from Cropredy Parish Council Visit, 25.08.09
Appendix 5	Cherwell District – Rural Communities
Appendix 6	CDC Expenditure with ORCC
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Natasha Clark, Trainee Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Contact Information	01295 221589 natasha.clark@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Planning the scrutiny review

(Use this form to plan the work of a Task & Finish Group)

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC)

<p>Purpose of Review Specify exactly what the Scrutiny Review should achieve and refer where possible to VFM issues of service cost, service performance and/or customer satisfaction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish an understanding of the work of Rural Community Councils • To receive information on the structure and organisation of ORCC • To establish a better understanding of the relationship between CDC and ORCC • To review and understand the funding arrangements • To determine whether the partnership provides value for money for Cherwell and meets the goals of both partners • To determine the extent to which the partnership meets the needs of the residents, businesses and parish councils in the rural areas
<p>Indicators of Success What factors/outcomes will demonstrate that this Scrutiny Review has been a success.</p>	<p>Improved service delivery from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on the roles/relationships within the partnership • a clear statement of objectives and goals for delivery in 2010 (and beyond) • Clarity on the funding arrangements • Understand any contra indicators for partnership working and resolve a way forward • Produce a final report and agreed actions.
<p>Methodology/ Approach What types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee based Q&A sessions to interview CDC officers and ORCC staff • Site visits/public meetings to villages to seek views of rural communities • Briefing sessions on specific topics (e.g. funding) • Desk top review and interviews to identify alternative approaches and possible best practice
<p>Target body for Recommendations Executive, Council, Other/Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive/Council • ORCC
<p>Key dates Identify key meeting dates and any deadlines for reports or decisions</p>	<p>21 July ~ initial briefing from CDC (Grahame Helm re transport) and Chris Rothwell (re villages) Aug/Sept ~ visits to villages with Kevin Lerner & ORCC staff ~ topic based briefing sessions ~ interviews/meetings with other councils / groups using</p>

	<p>ORCC services</p> <p>22 Sept ~ follow up briefing to review findings, financial data</p> <p>20 October ~ witness Q&A session with ORCC Chief Executive and CDC PfH and Strategic Director.</p> <p>November ~ report & recommendations to Executive/ORCC</p>
<p>Risks Identify any weaknesses and barriers to success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource constraints in CDC • Resource constraints within ORCC • Manage expectations and concerns of ORCC and public
<p>Witnesses/ Experts/ Site Visits Who, why and when</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC: PfH, Strategic Director, Service Heads & Team Leaders, Finance, Member representative serving on ORCC (outside body) • ORCC: Chief Executive and operational staff • Cherwell village representatives &/or public • Other councils / users of ORCC services • Other local authorities
<p>Publicity & Media Do we need to publicise the review to encourage community involvement? what sort of media coverage do we want? Fliers, leaflets, radio broadcast, press-release, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will this review be subject to a press embargo? No • CDC press contact: Craig Forsyth • Spokesperson for Scrutiny Review: Cllr Clarke
<p>Resources & Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist staff • external support • consultation • research 	<p>Expect to manage within existing CDC resources.</p>

<p>Completed by: Catherine Phythian / Natasha Clark</p>	<p>Date: July 2009</p>
<p>Approved by Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board: R&PSB</p>	<p>Date: 21 July 2009</p>

ORCC Partnership Scrutiny (September 2009)

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board: Cllrs Clarke, Ahmed, Billington, Cullip, Irvine, Mawer, Rae, Stratford, Strangwood, Tompson, Webb, Weir.

Timescale: July – October 2009

Scrutiny support: Catherine Phythian & Natasha Clark

Service area support: Chris Rothwell, Grahame Helm, Kevin Larner

No.	Key Task	Outcome	Milestones	Resources
To establish an understanding of the work of the ORCC				
To gain a better understanding of the relationship between CDC and ORCC				
To receive information on the structure and organisation of ORCC				
1.1	Initial briefing from CDC Officers	Good understanding of the work of ORCC and what it delivers for CDC	21 July	All members
1.2	Visit to ORCC offices & staff		August	Members Scrutiny Officer Kevin Larner ORCC staff
To review and understand the funding arrangements				
1.3	Detailed consideration of CDC funding support to ORCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of CDC funding to ORCC for last 5 years Details of comparative funding from OCC and other Councils 	Briefing meeting in Aug/Sept	Members Scrutiny Officer Finance Officer Rothwell/Helm/Larner
To determine the extent to which the partnership meets the needs of the residents, businesses and parish councils in the rural areas				
1.4	Detailed consideration of CDC rural issues as identified in Rural Strategy and Sustainable Communities Strategy	Identify key issues and concerns and the extent to which they are matched by the work of ORCC	Briefing meeting in August	Members Scrutiny Officer Community Planning Officer Rothwell/Helm/Larner

ORCC Partnership Scrutiny (September 2009)

1.5	Informal site visits to villages (3 or 4) from across the district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve ward councillor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct evidence from members of public and rural residents regarding needs and experience of ORCC / CDC services 	17 August – 4 Sept	Members Scrutiny Officer Kevin Larner ORCC staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve Parish Council reps Speak to ordinary residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the issues of concern to the user groups in the district. 		
To determine whether the partnership provides value for money for Cherwell and meets the goals of both partners				
1.6	Review best practice, successful schemes in other areas.	Identify potential for replication of best practice at Cherwell.	Desk top survey July/August Briefing meeting in Aug/Sept	Scrutiny Officer Members Rothwell/Helm/Larner
1.7	Review the experience of other Oxfordshire Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison of CDC arrangements Identify areas for improvement / change 	Meetings in Aug/Sept	Members Scrutiny Officer Rothwell/Helm/Larner
1.8	Q&A session with ORCC Chief Executive, PfH and Strategic Director	To discuss initial conclusions and draft report/recommendations	20 October	All Members

Meeting date	21 July	Aug	Aug	Aug/Sept	Sept	22 Sept	Early Oct	20 Oct
Topic	1.1 and 1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.7	All		1.8
Witnesses	Helm & Rothwell	Finance staff	Community Planning Manager	Public	Other Councils	N/A		ORCC Ch Exec PfH Strategic Director
Present/ Expected	R&PSB					R&PSB		R&PSB

Rural Community Councils – Background Information

Action with Communities in Rural England¹

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) is the national umbrella body of the Rural Community Action Network (RCAN), which operates at national, regional and local level in support of rural communities across the country. ACRE aims to promote a healthy, vibrant and sustainable rural community sector that is well connected to policy and decision-makers who play a part in delivering this aim.

The Rural Community Action Network and Rural Community Councils²

The Rural Community Action Network (RCAN) is the collective name for the 38 Rural Community Councils (RCC) throughout England, their eight regional bodies and their national umbrella, ACRE (see Annex 1).

The aims of the Rural Community Action Network are to:

- Support community led action and strong local governance
- Increase the long-term sustainability of local community life
- Influence policies and services, particularly to achieve equity for rural communities.

RCCs are charitable local development agencies, which support and enable initiatives in rural communities. They act as a strategic voice for rural communities, allowing grassroots issues to be championed and solutions worked out in partnership between statutory, voluntary and private sector providers. RCCs provide a local support network for rural community groups, including dedicated expertise in arenas such as transport, housing, the management of community-owned facilities, social enterprise and rural services.

RCAN members collectively employ around 1,000 staff throughout England and have a turnover that varies by county between £250,000 and £2.6 million per annum. The total national network annual turnover is more than £40 million.

The eight regional networks of RCCs play an increasingly strategic role in linking grassroots experience with the work of regional development agencies, government offices and third sector regional bodies. ACRE's role at national level mirrors the role of the regional groupings of RCCs in acting as a key advocate and strategic partner in national government policy development and third sector activities. ACRE also provides the focus for work that is either common or aims to be consistent across regions, ensuring that RCCs and

¹ www.acre.org.uk

² www.acre.org.uk/aboutthenetwork_index.html

rural community sector interests are appropriately supported throughout the country³.

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC)⁴

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council was founded in 1920, the first Rural Community Council in England. It is a company limited by guarantee and registered as a charity. The Board of Trustees administers the charity and appoints a Chief Executive to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. The Chief Executive has delegated authority, within terms of delegation approved by the Trustees, for operational matters, including finance and human resources⁵. All employed and voluntary staff are based at ORCC's Jericho Farm offices in Witney.

The ORCC works to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in rural Oxfordshire. It currently has just over 500 members, which includes both individuals and organisations. The aims of the ORCC are attached at Annex 2.

ORCC works in partnership with the District Councils, the County Council and a wide range of voluntary organisations and community groups. These include the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association, the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (who share the premises at Jericho Farm) and the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils.

In 2008 the ORCC was awarded ACRE Level 2 Quality Standards accreditation following an external review of all its activities. The accreditation means that funders and service users can be confident that ORCC are a high-quality organisation delivering a well planned and well managed service that meets the needs of communities in rural Oxfordshire. The review identified three areas of excellence:-

- The interface with communities through the Village Shops Development Worker and the direct support given to communities, social enterprise and independent shops was excellent.
- The Village of the Year competition had analysed results from the entries received for the competition to provide in depth information of those villages, which has potential to enrich the data held about rural communities in Oxfordshire.
- The Rural Housing Enablers had good and direct links with local authorities, named housing associations and also spoke about an active interface with parish plans.

³ Action with Communities in Rural England Corporate Plan, 2008 - 2011

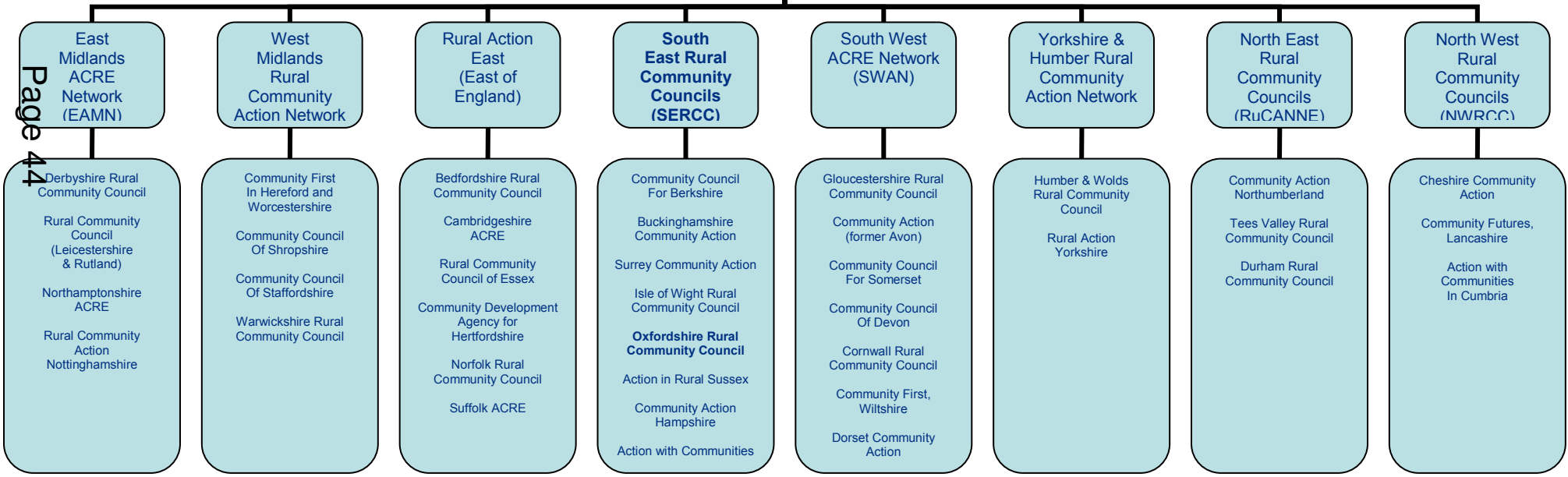
⁴ www.oxonrcc.org.uk/

⁵ Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, Financial Statements For the year ended 31 March 2008, <http://www.oxonrcc.org.uk//media/Annual%20report%202008.pdf>

Rural Community Councils: National, Regional and Local Levels

Action with Communities in Rural England

Rural Community Action Network



Page 44

AIMS OF THE OXFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ORCC)

Overall aim:

To improve the quality of life for those who live or work in a sustainable rural Oxfordshire

Specific aims

- a) Empower communities and the people within them to identify the issues that affect their lives and to find their own solutions to them.
- b) Facilitate effective rural community action initiated and led by people themselves
- c) Increase empowerment, equality and inclusion for everyone in rural communities
- d) Facilitate opportunities for people to participate in community activities and local democratic processes
- e) Increase opportunities for people to live in their home community
- f) Enable improved provision of local services and facilities, such as retail and post office services, community halls, community news and information media
- g) Promote improved means of accessing services which cannot be provided locally including promotion of transport provision and viable local service centres such as market towns
- h) Raise local awareness of opportunities to promote sustainable living
- i) Influence policies and programmes at national, regional and local level to take more account of the needs and views of people living or working in rural communities

Outcomes

- Stronger and more sustainable, vibrant and active rural communities across Oxfordshire through:

More community needs assessments and community action

- Local needs, including minority needs, are identified in more rural communities
- There are more community projects achieved to address identified local needs and improve community life and facilities and sustainability
- There are more community initiatives to draw local needs to the attention of the responsible outside agencies
- Rural community groups find it easier to achieve these outcomes successfully
- More people are involved in decision making, both within and outside their communities, about the issues which affect their and their neighbours' lives

Increased social inclusion

- Community leaders and organisers of community activities are more aware of and engage in good inclusive and sustainable practice
- There are more inclusive events and activities available in communities
- There are more community projects to improve services and care for disadvantaged individuals/groups
- External service providers are more aware of good inclusive practice in delivering services in rural areas
- Service providers are more creative and collaborative in delivering services in order to reach socially excluded groups

Increased social capital and cohesion

- Increased social capital and cohesion within rural communities through opportunities to participate in community activities

More mixed and balanced communities

- More lower income households are able to live in their home community

Improved access to services

- Services and facilities are retained in communities currently served and are provided in a way that meets local needs and addresses sustainability
- The services available are extended and improved
- More rural communities have local access to a service or facility
- More volunteers are willing and have confidence to get involved in running local activities, services and facilities
- There is more accessible, affordable and sustainable public or community transport provision for members of rural communities who need it to access services that cannot be provided locally
- Local service centres, such as market towns, offer an improved range of services
- The quality of life and the ability of vulnerable members of rural communities to live independently and manage their affairs is improved

Improved strategic awareness of rural community needs

- National, regional and local policies, programmes and services reflect the needs of people in rural communities and produce improvements to their quality of life

Activities

1. Promote local involvement in community action planning and community project development and facilitate the engagement of outside agencies in local community action planning projects
2. Provide awareness raising information and examples of good practice on how to promote social inclusion in rural communities
3. Provide awareness raising information and examples of good practice on how to promote sustainable living in rural communities
4. Promote awareness among members of rural communities of opportunities for providing and improving local services and facilities (including community halls, retail and post office services, affordable housing, community transport)
5. Provide a support service for key local action groups, service and facility providers such as:
 - Parish Plan groups
 - Community hall committees
 - Village shopkeepers and community shop committees
 - Parish councils interested in promoting affordable housing
 - Community newsletter editors
 - Community transport schemes
6. Facilitate opportunities for networking and information-sharing among and between these groups and other members of rural communities interested in promoting community activities and projects
7. Contribute to the achievement of more units of affordable housing in villages by facilitating project development by partners such as the members of the Rural Housing Partnership
8. Listen to and respond to requests by rural communities

Notes of a meeting at Cropredy

Meeting: 25 August 2009

Present: Cllrs Colin Clarke & Nicholas Mawer, Kevin Larner (Rural Development & Countryside Manager, Catherine Phythian (Scrutiny Officer)
Jane Barker (Village Shops Worker, ORCC)
Cllr Ken Atack, District Council Ward Member
Chairman and 5 Members of Cropredy Parish Council
Chairman and Member of Claydon Parish Council
2 members of the Village Hall Committee

1. Introduction

Cllr Clarke introduced the Cherwell District Council representatives and explained that the Council was involved in roughly some 60+ partnerships; the Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board had decided to review the work of ORCC and the effectiveness of the partnership in supporting the needs of the District's rural communities.

Jane Barker introduced herself and her role and responsibilities as the Village Shops Worker at ORCC. She explained that she supported established shops and post offices and helped to set up new outlets in villages across the whole of Oxfordshire.

2. Discussion

Village Plan

- Cropredy had started work on the Village Plan in 2007 and has published the first edition.
- A separate project team had been set up to produce the plan ~ rather than the PC.
- The project team had received very valuable support and advice from the officers at ORCC, especially in developing the consultation material and questionnaire for residents.
- They regarded the Village Plan as a forward looking and evolving document which had helped to raise a number of issues about the village's future in the minds of the residents.
- **Question:** how much use does CDC make of the Village Plans as a potential information source on service needs and delivery?

Village Hall:

- Representatives from the Village Hall Committee stated that they had always received helpful, prompt responses from officers at ORCC and CDC.
- They were very satisfied with the level of support provided from the partnership.

Claydon PC:

- As a smaller parish they had not used ORCC for support on recent projects.
- However, they were confident that they knew who to contact at OCC/CDC or ORCC when necessary.
- The District Council Ward Member provided a lot of advice on specific issues.

Other issues:

- Cropredy PC commented on the difficulties and problems they had experienced when they were exploring options to safeguard the village post office from closure. They felt that they had received inflexible and conflicting advice from CDC and the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils.
- They felt that similar situations were likely to arise in the future, particularly following publication of the LDF, and that there needed to be a more “joined up” response to parish councils’ requests for guidance and advice on legal and democratic matters.
- They also asked for more information about the benefits of the Quality Parish Council scheme and the methods to obtain the accreditation.

Action: Kevin Lerner offered to include these issues on the agenda of the next Parish Liaison meeting in November 2009.

Conclusion:

- That CDC and ORCC provided excellent support to Parish Councils and community groups on specific projects or in response to particular queries.
- That Parish Councils knew who to contact in external organisations in order to follow up on specific issues (e.g. County or District Council, Highways or Environment agency etc).
- That the Parish Councils should be the third member of the partnership and involved in a true dialogue with CDC and ORCC; they sometimes felt that things were “being done to them”.

Scrutiny Officer
9 September 2009

CHERWELL DISTRICT - RURAL COMMUNITIES

- There are 73 rural parishes in the district
- One third (about 44,000 people) of the population live in rural parishes
- Rural settlements range in size from the six smallest, totalling under 500 residents between them, to the six largest, with over 2,000 each.
- Two thirds of Cherwell's villages have populations of less than 500
- Unlike other Oxfordshire districts, there are no rural market towns to act as hubs for local rural economies.
- Rural Cherwell has 28% home-based workers (above county and regional averages)
- Cherwell has around 700 farms (85% of the district is farmland)
- Farming employment in Oxfordshire has declined by almost 20% since 1990
- Most of rural Cherwell's economically active residents commute to their workplaces. Less than a quarter of them work within 5km of home. Car ownership overall is high, but the people most likely to be without a car are pensioners.
- In rural Cherwell, the population group aged 75 and over is expected to grow by 81% over the next 20 years
- Rural isolation is a key feature of the area affecting older, younger and poorer people more profoundly. 11 rural wards fall into the 10% most deprived in terms of access to housing and services

CDC expenditure with ORCC				
	Urban & Rural	Community Transport	Housing	Total
2009/10	23550	11500	11250	46300
2008/09	23550	11500	6500	41550
2007/08	?	11500	6370	17870
2006/07	?	11500	6180	17680
2005/06	?	11500	6000	17500
Total	47100	57500	36300	

Notes**Urban & Rural Services**

- * Community Development (including Needs Assessment Fund) and Village Halls work
- * Village Shops Development Worker
- * Rural Community Transport Worker

Community Transport

- * Flat fee agreed on an annual basis after discussion with Oxfordshire County Council (who match fund this activity)

Housing

- * 0.5 FTE post for Rural Housing Enabler (monitored against agreed work programme; and based at CDC offices 1 day per 2 weeks to promote joint working with planning and housing officers)
- * Increase in 09/10 budget as national funding stream ended
- * Work activities undertaken by ORCC on behalf of the Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership (CDC housing key partner on this) - each partner contributes to this initiative which is overseen by the ORHP.
- * RHE main deliverer of Cherwell's Rural Affordable Housing Improvement Plan - as recommended by Overview and Scrutiny and endorsed by Executive

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/2009

22 September 2009

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report present the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/2009.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/2009.

Details

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report is attached (Appendix 1). The annual report contains information relating to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board and various task and finish group reviews.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a constitutional obligation “to produce a unified annual report for the whole scrutiny process” and to present it to Council.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the annual report at it’s meeting on 15 September 2009. The Vice-Chairman and Scrutiny Officer will advise the Board of any comments arising from that meeting.

Implications

- Financial:** There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Comments checked by Denise Westlake, CSR Service Accountant, Payroll & Pensions Manager 01295 221982
- Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
- Risk Management:** There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/2009
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager
Contact Information	01295 221587 james.doble@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

2008/09

July 2009

Contents

	Page
Foreword	3
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4
Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board	7
Task and Finish Groups	10
Call in	13
Training and development	14
Statistics	14
Corporate priorities checklist	15
2009/10 and beyond	16

Foreword

"Councillors have a good track record of focused scrutiny and involvement in performance management"

"The overview and scrutiny and task and finish groups have been very proactive in challenging services from an external perspective and holding officers to account"

"The scrutiny process in 2004 was traditionally based and the Council has taken action to ensure additional challenge is now provided"

"The scrutiny members continue to press to improve their role..."¹

I am very pleased to introduce the annual report for Overview and Scrutiny at Cherwell District Council. The report outlines the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Resources and Performance Board and individual Task & Finish Groups over the last year.

The Audit Commission Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) assessment of 2004 identified an underdeveloped scrutiny function; and in response the Council took measures to strengthen and nurture the process. As with any emerging process scrutiny has had its share of growing pains and frustrations but it is now beginning to bear the fruits of maturity and I am pleased to say that this was recognised in the recent CPA assessment which rated Cherwell as an excellent Council.

In early 2008 we started to reposition overview and scrutiny within the Council. We did this because we believe that scrutiny is there to assist the Council in achieving corporate priorities and to work with the Executive to this end. Whilst it is clear that Scrutiny and the Executive should be separate, there are no barriers to joint working on these common goals.

Next year a particular focus for the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board will be the scrutiny of partnerships. Now more than ever this Council has to work with other councils, organisations and voluntary groups to secure funding and deliver services. Overview and scrutiny must provide the check and balance to that process.

I firmly believe that overview and scrutiny has a valuable contribution to make to the continuing success of this Council.

Councillor John Donaldson
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2008/09

¹ Audit Commission: Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Cherwell District Council, March 2009

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Councillor John Donaldson (Ch)	Councillor Dan Sames (V Ch)
Councillor Ken Attack	Councillor Rick Atkinson
Councillor Nick Cotter	Councillor Tony Ilott
Councillor Nick Mawer	Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Les Sibley	Councillor Chris Smithson
Councillor Lawrie Stratford	Councillor Trevor Stevens

Terms of reference

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for the performance of all overview and scrutiny functions (under Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) on behalf of the Council.

The Committee's main functions include:

- To consider Executive decisions after they are put into effect.
- To consider the Forward Plan and comment on key decisions before the Executive takes them.
- To conduct reviews of policy, services and aspects of services by itself or by appointing a Task and Finish Group.
- To make suggestions on the development of existing policies and suggest new policies where appropriate.
- To work with other local authorities and organisations to carry out joint scrutiny.
- To consider and call in any Executive decisions that members feel have not been made in accordance with the Council's decision making principles.

Emergency Planning

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the Council's emergency planning arrangements in the winter of 2008/09 proved timely as there was a significant "snow event" in the county in February 2009. This meant that the Committee could assess the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements against a real life, real time situation. As part of the review members of the Committee visited the County Council's Emergency Planning Unit.

The Committee concluded that the emergency planning arrangements were satisfactory and was pleased to note that amongst the officer team there was a focus on continued review and improvement of the processes and documentation.

The Committee agreed to maintain a watching brief on the planning and preparations for pandemic influenza.

RAF Bicester Conservation Area

Representatives from Bomber Command Heritage gave a presentation on their proposals for a heritage centre at RAF Bicester. They proposed using the centre to educate the public about the nature of conflicts and also provide practical teaching opportunities in relation to the engineering and machinery of the aircraft which would be on site. Members of the Committee also attended a site visit.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing also provided the Committee with background information on the site at RAF Bicester and its status as a conservation area which meant that it would not be developed for housing. The Portfolio Holder identified the challenges surrounding RAF Bicester including: finding a suitable use for the site and addressing the disrepair of the buildings as a matter of urgency.

The Committee recommended that the Executive should confirm and recognise the historic status of the site and make a commitment to ensure that the appropriate organisations maintain the historic buildings.



Rural Affordable Housing and Exception Sites

In December 2008 the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing invited the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review the Council's policy and procedures for the delivery of affordable housing on rural exception sites. The topic had been raised at a Parish Liaison meeting in November 2008 a number of Parish Councils who were concerned and frustrated by their experience of the process.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to focus their review on the following issues:

- Customer satisfaction with the process
- The service offering (performance, costs etc)
- The partnership interface with the Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council and the lead Registered Social Landlord
- The implications for future planning policy (the Local Development Framework - LDF)

The Committee wrote to all Parish Councils asking for their comments and observations and inviting them to give evidence at a committee meeting. About one third of the parish councils responded and councillors from three parishes attended a committee meeting in March 2009.

There was a common theme underpinning all of the evidence considered by the Committee: the desire for a closer working relationship between the District Council and its partners and the parishes seeking rural affordable housing.

The Committee's recommendations, accepted by the Executive, called for a review of the relevant policies for the location of general rural affordable housing (including the potential to generate opportunities for some integral affordable provision), and of the criteria against which exception sites are assessed; and advocated an open and transparent approach to communications associated with the delivery of rural affordable housing and exception sites.

The conclusions of the scrutiny review were presented to the Parish Liaison meeting in June 2009, where they were generally well received and the work of the Committee and the report was commended.



Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board

Membership

Councillor Colin Clarke (Ch)	Councillor Victoria Irvine (V Ch)
Councillor Alyas Ahmed	Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Margaret Cullip	Councillor Diana Edwards
Councillor Devena Rae	Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Carol Steward	Councillor Pat Tompson
Councillor Doug Webb	Councillor Martin Weir

Terms of reference

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board has responsibility for carrying out overview and scrutiny for the Council's resources, performance and effectiveness of Partnerships to which the Council appoints representatives.

The Board's main functions include:

- To scrutinise the Council's performance in relation to financial planning, including budgets and target setting.
- To assist and monitor the Executive in the continued development of a medium term budget strategy.
- To review the management of resources and to scrutinise the financial management, treasury management, property and asset acquisition and disposal, capital programme.
- To perform the overview and scrutiny function in relation to all of the Council's corporate performance and value for money activity.
- To carry out the scrutiny of partnerships as set out in Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- To monitor year-on-year performance indicators.

The members of the Board have divided into two informal working groups that each meet about five times per year to undertake more detailed assessments of the Board's areas of responsibility.

Finance Scrutiny Working Group

Membership:

Cllr Clarke (Chairman) and Cllrs Edwards, Tompson, Rae, Webb and Weir

The Finance Scrutiny Working Group is made up of six members from the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board. It is supported by the Head of Finance and a Scrutiny Officer.

The Group's role is to carry out detailed consideration of the Council's finances and budgets. At every meeting it reviews the Council's performance against a range of financial indicators covering income, debt, investment, creditors and risk. In 2008/09 much of its focus has been on the Council's response to the Icelandic banking crisis and to the recession, and it has been

working closely with members of the Finance team to look at the Council's treasury management strategy and asset management plan.

Performance Scrutiny Working Group

Membership:

Cllr Irvine (Chairman) and Cllrs Ahmed, Billington, Cullip, Sibley and Steward.

The Performance Scrutiny Working Group is made up of six members from the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board. The Head of Improvement and a Scrutiny Officer support the work of the Group. It meets informally, usually about four times each year to coincide with the quarterly publication of the performance management information.

The Group's role is to consider the Council's performance, using the Performance Management Framework data as its baseline evidence. During 2008/09 it looked at the Council's performance across a number of areas, including: customer service standards, planning application targets, fly tipping and equalities.

Budget scrutiny: Fees and charges

In 2008 the Board's involvement in budget scrutiny centred on a specific project to look at the Council's fees and charges structure. The primary purpose of the scrutiny review was to identify those service areas where, through reviewing fees and charges, a fair balance could be struck between cost of service provision and income for the Council. The Board paid close attention to those fees and charges which had not been reviewed for some time and had fallen behind being a 'reasonable' charge for the service provided. The objective was to identify service areas which could deliver increased income to help to alleviate future budget pressures.

The Board conducted the review during the autumn and were supported by the Finance Director, Service Accountants and the Scrutiny Officer. Members of the Board met informally on four occasions to gather evidence and discuss ideas with specific Heads of Service. The conclusion was a formal committee meeting on 18 November when the Board "challenged" specific Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service on proposals for income generation.

In addition to a number of specific, and often contentious, recommendations relating to individual fees and charges (e.g. to increase car parking charges) the Board made a number of more general observations:

- That the absence of a uniform policy or system for the review of fees and charges within the Council had resulted in a confusion of individual charges and policies, many of which could not be explained or justified.
- That there should be a regular (annual) review of all fees and charges; and that this should involve objective/independent comment from councillors/officers outside the portfolio/service area.
- That there should be a clear and consistent approach to charging across the Council.

- That any discretionary charge must recover the cost of provision of the service.
- That there was a need for improved management information to inform the review and decision making process. This same information should support and assist Service Heads in the ongoing operation of the service area.

All of the Board's recommendations and observations were welcomed and accepted by the Executive and Council as part of the 2009/10 Budget.

Task and Finish Groups

The future of markets in Cherwell

Membership:

Cllrs Billington, Clarke, Edwards, Ilott, Sibley, Steward and Tompson

The objective of this review was to understand what factors were influencing the current state and prosperity of the district's traditional markets and consider what steps were needed to "retain and enhance" them.

The Task & Finish Group made a number of site visits to each of district's three markets and spoke informally to market traders and customers. This gave them a valuable insight into how the markets change as a result of seasonal and economic influences. They also held discussions with the trader representatives and the market operators to establish their views on the future of the district's markets. Finally the Group met with council officers and representatives from the town and parish councils to find out what they valued about the district's markets and what they would like to see improve.

At the end of this year long review the Group agreed that the three traditional markets in Cherwell have a number of strengths:

- An established history and tradition of market trading.
- A strong desire by those involved in each of the markets (shoppers, traders and elected representatives) to retain a traditional market and bring prosperity to the market towns.
- Town centre locations linked to other retail outlets
- good public transport access from a large catchment area.
- inexpensive car parking available close to the markets.

And weaknesses:

- The recognised national decline of traditional markets in recent years.
- The absence of a clear vision and strategic direction for the markets.
- The absence of established communication channels between the various market stakeholders (councils, operators, traders, retailers, customers).

Recommendations agreed by the Executive included:

- That the future commercial success of the markets in Cherwell is dependent on the development and execution of a clear vision of the role they can play in a district of opportunity.
- That the Council must assume a pro-active role and demonstrate a renewed commitment to the management of its markets.
- The introduction of regular, structured dialogue and communication channels with the local town and parish councils, and trader and retail groups regarding each individual market.
- That all three markets would benefit from greater publicity and improved promotional activities and new initiatives.

Concessionary Travel

Cllrs Attack, Clarke, Rae, Milne Home, Sibley and L Stratford.

The new national concessionary bus pass scheme was implemented on 1 April 2008 and allows any pass holder free travel on any local bus service anywhere in England. The statutory start time for the scheme is 9:30 am, but local authorities have discretion to increase the hours of operation. Within Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Vale of White Horse opted for the statutory start time of 9.30am whilst the other three councils then decided to operate from 9am. As a result some Cherwell pass holders have been unable to benefit from free travel on some cross-border routes whilst for example, a West Oxfordshire resident can.

Age Concern Oxfordshire submitted a petition containing 368 signatures to the Council at its meeting on 21 April 2008 when. The petition set out concerns including that older people would not be able to travel until late into the morning, disabled people will not be able to attend their day services and work placements on time and that many older and disabled people are vulnerable to becoming isolated from community services.

A six member Task & Finish Group was convened to look at the issue and to consider the financial implications of extending the start time of the national concessionary bus pass scheme to 9:00 am. Mindful of the wider economic context and the financial constraints facing the Council the Task & Finish Group could not advocate funding the revised start time at the expense of other Council services.

However, in the course of their work the Task & Finish Group identified a number of wider issues relating to concessionary travel that they agreed to explore in more detail in 2009. Specifically they chose to concentrate on the feasibility of introducing a smart card reader scheme to address concerns about management information and data accuracy of concessionary travel and also to broaden the scope of the review to consider the Council's overall concessionary and community travel offering, which accounts for about £1.3M of Council expenditure per year.

The Task & Finish Group met regularly on eight occasions from January to May 2009. They also held formal and informal discussions with members of their local communities to gather views and opinions on concessionary and community travel. In April 2009 members of the Task & Finish Group attended an open meeting at Age Concern, Banbury.

The Task & Finish Group also sought the views of representatives of some of the bus companies operating the concessionary travel scheme in the district; the Public Transport Policy Officer at Oxfordshire County Council; the Rural Transport Partnership Officer from the Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council; and officers involved in the implementation of a smart card enabled concessionary travel scheme in Northamptonshire. Throughout the review the Task & Finish Group sought to involve the Older People's Champion and the

Portfolio Holder, Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural, in their investigations.

Recommendations agreed by the Executive included:

- not to invest in a Smart Card Reader scheme due to the significant financial investment required and reservations about the current technical capacity of such schemes to meet the Council's needs.
- to monitor the scale and value of the mis-ticketing problem.
- To commission research into the feasibility of introducing alternative community transport schemes in those parts of the district where residents do not benefit from the concessionary bus pass, national travel tokens or the Dial-A-Ride service.
- To talk to the County Council and the District/City councils about a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of the national concessionary travel scheme.



Call-in

There have been no Call-ins during the municipal year 2008/09.

However, there was a Call-in right at the end of the previous municipal year, which was not reported in the last Annual Report. That Call-in considered a Portfolio Holder decision not to award grant funding to the Banbury Benefits Advice Project. The scrutiny committee heard the Call-in at a meeting on 18 March 2008.

The Committee upheld the original Portfolio Holder decision as it was in line with the Council's published policy on grant funding: that "*Grants will be less likely for organisations that displace or compete with the work of other organisations*" in so far as the Banbury Benefits Advice Project offered services similar to those of the Citizens Advice Bureau. The Committee also recommended that the Portfolio Holder should commission a review of the Council's grants and voluntary organisations policy criteria for 2008/09 to ensure that in future the decision making process was open and transparent.

Review of the Call-in process

Although this most recent Call-in at Cherwell in March 2008 was conducted in accordance with the constitution it raised a number of practical concerns for both councillors and officers. It was felt that the process was not "fit for purpose", that the timescales for parts of the process were too long and that overall it was unclear in the expectation that it created as it contained no guidance on the practicalities of preparing for and conducting the hearing.

In response to these concerns the Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of the Call-in procedures. The review proposals were based on the following assumptions:

- Call-in should be used sparingly as a process of last resort.
- There needs to be a clear, simple process to trigger a Call-in.
- The process needs to be balanced to ensure that it can not be hijacked for political purposes.
- Call-in needs to enfranchise all non-executive Councillors.
- Call-in should not limit the Council through creating unnecessary delays to implementation.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee sent a questionnaire to all members of the Council and a review meeting was held with scrutiny members. The input from both these exercises was used to inform the discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Executive and Full Council which resulted in a series of recommendations and changes to the Constitution in February 2009. The main outcomes were tighter timescales for conducting and responding to a Call-in, a written protocol for the submission of evidence and the conduct of a Call-in hearing. All of these points were incorporated into the revised constitution in April 2009.

Training and Development

There were three scrutiny related training events for members in 2008/09:

- 10 councillors attended the introduction to overview and scrutiny on 23 May 2009 as part of the induction programme.
- 18 councillors attended the questioning skills sessions held on 19 August and 23 September 2008.

In addition members and officers attended a number of conferences and seminars during the year:

Event	Members	Officers
Centre for Public Scrutiny Conference (CfPS) in June 2008	2	2
LAA scrutiny seminar October 2008		1
CfPS / Parliamentary Select Committee seminar	1	1
CfPS seminar March 2009 (Scrutiny of Partnerships)	1	
CfPS seminar March 2009 (Negotiating skills for scrutiny)		1
LGA Introduction to Overview & Scrutiny March 2009		1
Crime and Community Partnerships May 2009	1	

Statistics

Statistic	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Number of scrutiny committee meetings	25	20	20
% attendance at scrutiny committee meetings	76%	78%	82%
Number of completed reviews	7	6	6
Number of committee reviews undertaken	1	1	4
Number of Task & Finish Groups established	12	2	2
Number of Call-ins	0	1	0
% scrutiny recommendations accepted by Executive or other body	-	90%	97%

Corporate priorities checklist

How does the overview and scrutiny function contribute to the Council's corporate priorities?

Corporate priority	Completed reviews					
	Markets	Fees & Charges	Emergency Planning	RAF Bicester	Rural Affordable Housing	Concessionary Travel
A district of opportunity						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balance employment and housing growth 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local economic development 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support business success by... innovation... helping to recruit and retain skilled employees 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure housing growth... through a mix of market and affordable housing 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give you advice and support to find a home 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the standard of housing 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve local services and opportunities in rural areas 		✓				✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop safe and pleasant urban centres 	✓					
A safe and healthy Cherwell						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make it easy for you to lead a healthy and active life through our countryside, leisure facilities and tourist attractions 		✓				✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide community facilities and activities to meet local need 	✓			✓		✓
A cleaner, greener Cherwell						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep streets and open spaces clean and free... 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect our environment... 		✓				
An accessible, value for money Council						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put things right quickly if they go wrong 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver value for money... 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce financial burden to local taxpayers 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how your council tax is spent and why 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other to provide you with local services and access to information about them 	✓			✓		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the way we communicate with the public 			✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to your views and comments 					✓	✓

2009/10 and beyond

As in previous years, scrutiny councillors have continued to identify opportunities to further improve and develop the scrutiny function. This positive approach will be critical in meeting the requirements of the Comprehensive Area Agreement (CAA) and the scrutiny related legislation in the Police and Justice Act 2006 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Scrutiny and CAA will be a two-way process. Scrutiny reviews carried out locally will provide valuable evidence that can feed in to CAA and may help inspectorates understand issues without having to carry out additional work. In return, the findings from CAA will also be helpful to scrutiny committees in identifying potential areas for future reviews.

This will mean that the scrutiny work undertaken by County and District level scrutiny committees will increasingly need to avoid duplication and illustrate a coordinated approach to scrutinising the issues that matter to citizens.

Our challenge in 2009/10 is to embed these new powers into our scrutiny culture and develop the relationships necessary for effective scrutiny with partners.

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board

The Councillor Call for Action

22 September 2009

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report advises Members of the introduction of a Councillor Call for Action as determined by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the contents of this report and to consider the implications for this Council of the Councillor Call for Action
- (2) Note the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Councillor Call for Action Guidance (Appendix 1).

Details

Introduction

- 1.1 The Councillor Call for Action is one of a number of recent changes in legislation that provide new powers for overview and scrutiny committees. In principle the changes seek to empower communities and enable local people, through their councillors, to participate in decisions that affect their day to day lives.
- 1.2 In practice the introduction of the Councillor Call for Action will not alter significantly the powers that members of Cherwell District Council already have. It simply formalises an arrangement that we have followed for a number of years in so far as members have always been able to refer an item to overview and scrutiny for consideration.
- 1.3 The issue for debate is not the formal introduction of the Councillor Call for Action but the extent to which it is taken up and used and what implication it has regarding the expectations of residents.

- 1.4 The Councillor Call for Action and the guidance note (Appendix 1) were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15 September 2009. The Vice-Chairman and Scrutiny Officer will advise the Board of any comments arising from that meeting.

Proposals

The Local Government Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007

- 2.1 Although the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act was published in December 2007 the regulations relating to overview and scrutiny and the introduction of the Councillor Call for Action did not come into force until 1 April 2009.
- 2.2 The Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) provides all members of the Council with the opportunity to refer a local government matter¹ to an overview and scrutiny committee for consideration.
- 2.3 The main points of the Councillor Call for Action legislation are as follows:
- It will be up to individual councillors to determine which issues to take forward as a Councillor Call for Action – but it should represent genuine local community concern and apply only to a single ward;
 - there will be no requirement for councillors in multi-member wards to agree to the referral as this matter is for each individual Councillor;
 - Councillor Call for Action applies to any council or council partnership function;
 - If a councillor decides not to refer a matter, no further action is taken under a Councillor Call for Action;
 - It will be up to overview and scrutiny to determine whether or not to hold a scrutiny inquiry into the matter and to respond to the councillor accordingly;
 - There will be no right of appeal for a constituent via the Council's executive or committee processes if a councillor or committee decides not to pursue an issue as a Councillor Call for Action;
 - Councillors should regard the Councillor Call for Action as a last

¹ This is defined as a matter “which relates to the discharge of any function of the Authority, affects all or part of the electoral area for which the Member is elected or any person who lives or works in that area, and is not an excluded matter”. (See Constitution, page 17 for a list of ‘excluded matters’). The definition has been extended (under the Police and Justice Act 2006) to include crime and disorder matters in a Councillor Call for Action.

resort for difficult and intractable problems, and they will have to demonstrate that they have exhausted all other steps formally and informally to resolve the issue in their ward.

- 2.4 Whilst 'a local government matter' could be interpreted narrowly, to mean only those issues under the direct control of the authority the guidance suggests that to give full effect to the Councillor Call for Action the interpretation of 'local government matter' needs to be broader. This includes issues relating to the council's partners, in line with the area focus of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the fact that an authority's duties increasingly impact on other organisations and involve partners within and outside the Local Strategic Partnership.
- 2.5 The legislation is not prescriptive as to the manner in which Councils are required to put the Councillor Call for Action into operation. However, the guidance does stress the importance of ensuring that the Councillor Call for Action is a responsive and un-bureaucratic process which delivers tangible outcomes on short timescales.

Conclusion

- 3.1 The Constitution already allows that 'any member of the Council may give written notice to the Chief Executive that they wish a local matter relating to the work of the authority to be considered for inclusion in the overview and scrutiny work programme' and this has long been the practice at Cherwell.
- 3.2 Accordingly there does not appear to be a case for the creation of a separate Councillor Call for Action protocol or documentation at this time, although it may be necessary to revisit this decision in the future, in the light of practical experience of a Councillor Call for Action request.
- 3.3 In the meantime members may find it helpful to refer to the attached guidance note which provides a general illustration of how the Councillor Call for Action might operate (Appendix 1).

Implications

Financial:

At this stage it is not possible to predict the extent to which members will use the Councillor Call for Action mechanism and it is not possible to quantify the level of resource required to support those activities. But it is expected that the resources required to deliver the requirements of the new legislation will be delivered from existing provision. Regular monitoring will need to take place to consider the impact on officers to resource these additional activities.

Comments checked by Denise Westlake, CSR
Service Accountant, Payroll & Pensions Manager
01295 221982

Legal: The revisions to the Constitution in April 2009 took account of the most recent legislative changes to overview and scrutiny. The way in which overview and scrutiny is undertaken at the Council will continue to evolve in the light of recent legislation and guidance and further (minor) revisions to the Constitution may be necessary.

Comments checked by Pam Wilkinson, Principal Solicitor, 01295 221688

Risk Management: The Councillor Call for Action may increase the workload of the overview and scrutiny committees. If too many items are included on the work programme there is a risk that scrutiny agendas become overloaded. This undermines effective scrutiny because Members are unable to concentrate on the key issues and officer resources are over-stretched.

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

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

The new powers for overview and scrutiny are relevant to all the Council's corporate priorities.

Executive Portfolio

All

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Councillor Call for Action – Guidance for Councillors in Cherwell
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Catherine Phythian, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Contact Information	01295 221583 Catherine.phythian@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Councillor Call for Action

Guidance for Councillors in Cherwell

With the implementation of new legislation¹, a councillor may now formally request a relevant scrutiny committee to consider an issue – formally known as a ‘Local Government matter’ – in their ward for further investigation through a ‘Councillor Call for Action’ (CCfA).

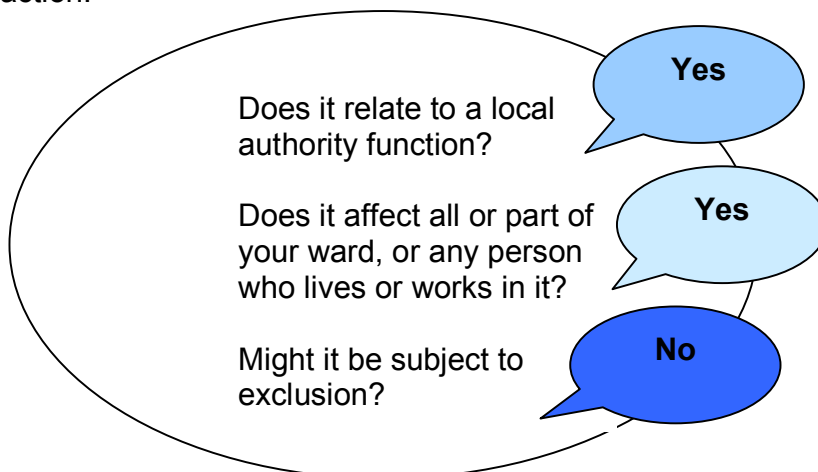
Many authorities, including Cherwell, already have in place mechanisms for members to raise an issue with scrutiny within their own authority.

However, the legislation now extends the rights of members to refer a local government matter not just to the committees of their own Authority, but in the case of two-tier areas such as Oxfordshire, to the committees of the relevant District, City or County scrutiny committee, irrespective of whether they are a member of that authority.

This guidance is to help councillors decide whether they have a valid Call for Action, and provides details of how to lodge a Call for Action in Cherwell.

What is a valid Councillor Call for Action?

In very simple terms, you must be able to answer yes, yes and no to the following questions to determine whether it is a ‘local government matter’ and a valid Councillor Call for action:



¹ Local Government Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007

The powers that a local authority has for the 'well-being' of its area might mean in effect that there are quite broad interpretations of a local authority function as is demonstrated by the examples given later in this guidance.

There are exclusions in statutory guidance for the Councillor Call for Action. The exclusions include:

- Vexatious or persistent requests
- Requests which could be dealt with by formal complaints or appeals' processes (unless systematic failure can be demonstrated)

Before submitting a Councillor Call for Action, it would be expected that you will have tried to resolve the issue using existing channels open to you, such as discussions with staff and other members; formal letters and motions at Council. The intention behind the legislation is that the Councillor Call for Action should be used as a last resort, where all other avenues have failed.

How do I submit my Councillor Call for Action?

You should make a written or email submission to the Chief Executive (copied to the Scrutiny team) setting out the basis of your Councillor Call for Action. You should aim to include the following information:

- Your contact details
- The Authority and Ward that you represent
- Title of your Councillor Call for Action
- Brief synopsis of the Councillor Call for Action issue
- What evidence you have to support your Councillor Call for Action
- Which areas or community groups are affected by your Councillor Call for Action
- How you have tried to resolve the issue
- Any deadlines associated with the Councillor Call for Action
- What outcomes you hope to achieve through this Councillor Call for Action

If it is agreed that it is a valid local government matter, you will then be informed of the date and time of the scrutiny committee which will consider your Councillor Call for Action, and whether the Committee wishes to hear any further representations from you or other parties.

If the Committee decides to not to take the 'matter' further, it must explain the reasons, and if it does take the matter up, it must make sure that you have a copy of any reports or recommendations that it makes.

The following examples may be helpful:

Example 1:

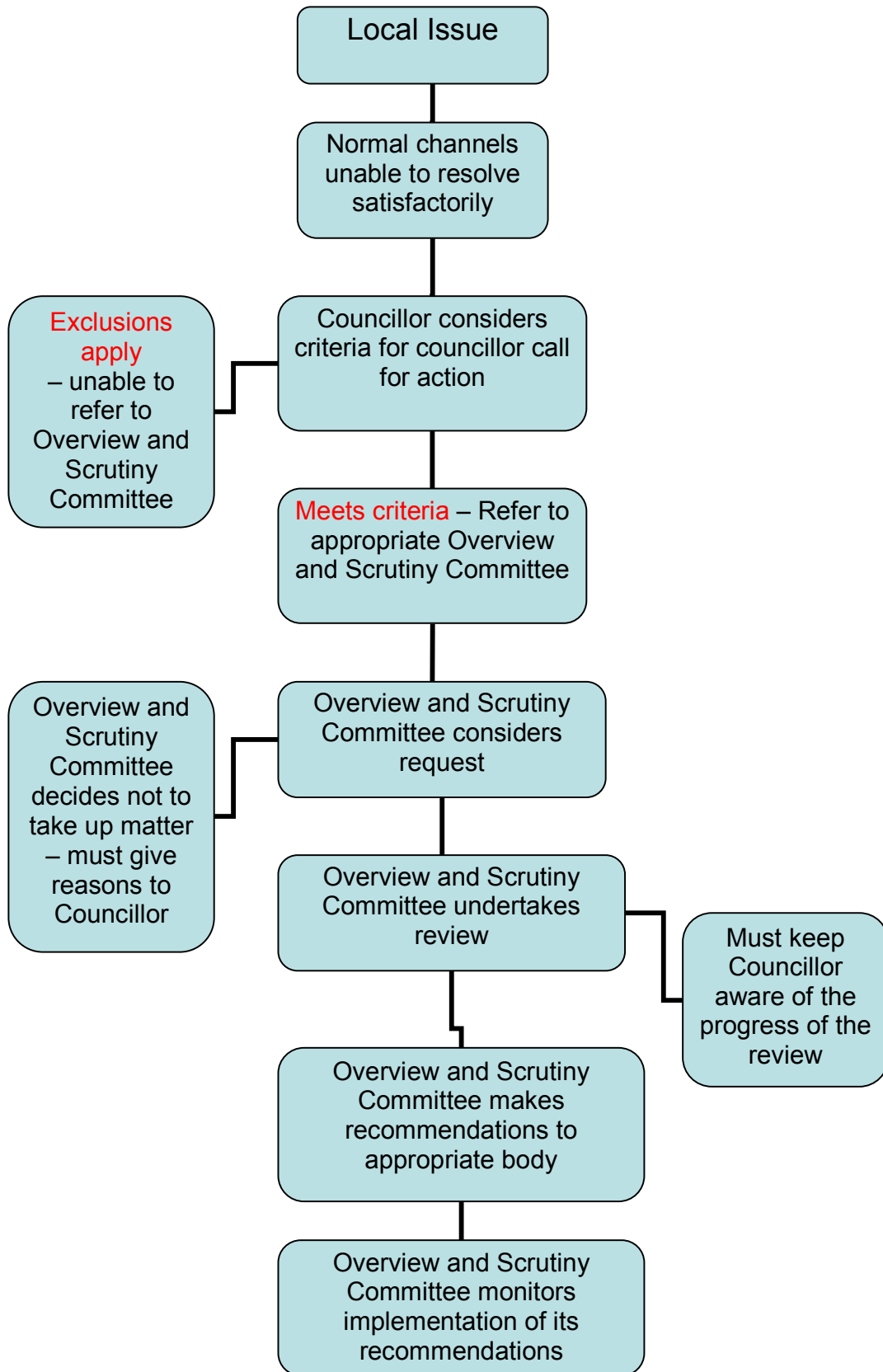
Councillor Green is a member of a District Council. At her ward surgeries, and when out and about, she receives regular comments about fly tipping in the area. A number of individual complaints have been put to the authority, but there has been no discernable improvement. Councillor Green wonders whether she can refer this matter to the relevant overview and scrutiny committee, so asks herself the following questions:

1. Does it relate to the discharge of any function of the Local Authority? **Yes.** Dealing with fly tipping is a local government function, and in Oxfordshire, is the responsibility of District Councils.
2. Does it affect all or part of her ward, or anyone living or working in it? **Yes**
3. Have other avenues failed to resolve the issue? **Yes.** There have been several complaints which have failed to resolve the issue, which could be considered as a systematic failure to resolve the issue.

Example 2:

Councillor Brown is a member of a County Council. He has been approached by a group of residents regarding the poor response of the local water company in responding to burst mains pipes, causing flooding in a local street. This issue has also received wide coverage in the local press. Councillor Brown is considering a Councillor Call for Action as a means to getting a promise of action from the water company. He asks himself the three qualifying questions.

1. Does it relate to the discharge of any function of the Local Authority? **It depends.** The provision and management of utility services such as water is not a function of local authorities. So initially the answer is no. However, there are other areas of local government responsibility which might be affected, for example the power to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area, introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. So a scrutiny committee may judge that this is a valid Call for Action, although they will not have any power to 'require' co-operation from the water company.
2. Does it affect all or part of his ward, or anyone living or working in it? **Yes**
3. Have other avenues failed to resolve the issue? **Possibly.** It may require further research to establish what residents have done so far to resolve the issue, and whether there are a number of areas suffering from similar levels of perceived poor service.



Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/2010

22 September 2009

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Board with an update on the overview and scrutiny work programme for 2009/10.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the current Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board element of the work programme for 2009/10 as set out at Appendix 1.
- (2) Note the update on elements of the 2009/10 budget scrutiny (fees and charges).
- (3) Note the update from the Finance Scrutiny and Performance Scrutiny Working Groups.
- (4) Note the update on the food waste processing initiative.

Details

1 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/2010

- 1.1 Appendix 1 sets out the existing work programme for both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board, as agreed at the committee meetings in July 2009.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee discussed the work programme (Appendix 1) on 15 September. The Vice-Chairman or Scrutiny Officer will update the Board of the Committee's comments.

1.3 Future meetings schedule:

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board	20 October 2009, 7.00pm 24 November 2009, 7.00pm 1 December 2009, 7.00pm 12 January 2010, 7.00pm 16 February 2010, 7.00pm 20 April 2010, 7.00pm
Finance Scrutiny Working Group	29 Sept 2009, 6.30pm 26 November 2009, 6.30pm 27 April 2010, 6.30pm
Performance Scrutiny Working Group	17 November 2009, 6.30pm 10 February 2010, 6.30pm
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 October 2009, 6.30pm 10 November 2009, 6.30pm 5 January 2010, 6.30pm 9 February 2010, 6.30pm

2 Fees and Charges Update

2.1 At the last meeting the Board received an update on the fees and charges review and the progress against recommendations from the scrutiny review. The Board asked the Head of Finance to provide some supplementary information on a number of issues.

2.2 Excess Charge Notices

A breakdown of Excess Charge Notice income to show the proportion paid in the initial discount period.

The only Excess Charges issued with a discount available for prompt payment are for Expired tickets. Payment of £40 is required within 14 days, after which the amount increases to £50.

		Discounted rate - No.Paid £40	Full Rate - No.Paid £50
No. of Excess Charge Notices raised for Expired Tickets	1886	1544	342
	Value	£61,760	£17,100
	% Paid	82%	18%

NB - Total Income processed for Excess Charges as at 8/9/09 £169K

2.3 Abandoned vehicles

Incident rates for abandoned vehicles	
From 01/04/09 to 31/07/09	
Reports / Investigations	137
Owner Requests to remove Vehicles	8
Total	145
of which	
Removed by Smiths (8 were owner paid requests see above)	25
Moved onto Private driveways / taxed or gone when second inspection undertaken.	120
Total	145

2.4 The information relating to income from the Ringo and car parking data from neighbouring authorities is at Appendix 2 and 3 respectively.

3 Finance Scrutiny Working Group

3.1 The Finance Scrutiny Working Group met on 30 July 2009 to consider the Quarter 1 Financial Indicators and the status of the Council's Sports Centre Modernisation programme.

3.2 Members of the Group will advise the Board of any issues that arose from the meeting that the Board should consider.

4 Performance Scrutiny Working Group

4.1 The Performance Scrutiny Working Group met on 9 September 2009 to consider the Performance Management Framework 2009/2010 Quarter 1 Performance data.

4.2 Members of the Group will advise the Board of any issues that arose from the meeting that the Board should consider.

5 Food Waste Processing Initiative

5.1 At the meeting on 7 April 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board should retain food waste processing on its work programme for monitoring and conduct a review in autumn 2010, six months after the final stage of the roll-out programme.

- 5.2 The Board will wish to note the latest update on plans to extend Cherwell's recycling service so that all food waste can be collected for composting. The council plans to introduce the new food waste collection service to around 17,000 homes in villages around Banbury and in Kidlington before Christmas 2009 and then to roll it out to the remaining 40,000 homes in the district in 2010.
- 5.3 The Council's Environmental Services Team have arranged four presentations for district, town and parish councillors to explain the extended service in more detail and give councillors the chance to ask any questions. The presentations will be held on:

Date	Time	Venue
14 September	6.30 – 8.00 pm	The Garth
16 September	6.30 – 8.00 pm	Bodicote House
17 September	6.30 – 8.00 pm	Bodicote House
18 September	6.30 – 8.00 pm	Exeter Hall

Implications

- Financial:** There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.
Comments checked by Denise Westlake, Service Accountant, 01295 221559
- Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.
- Risk Management:** If too many items are included on the work programme there is a risk that scrutiny agendas become overloaded. This undermines effective scrutiny because Members are unable to concentrate on the key issues and officer resources are over-stretched. It may be necessary to hold further meetings during the year if the risk of not achieving the work programme becomes apparent. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific risk issues.
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Overview and scrutiny work programme
Appendix 2	CDC Ringo Income
Appendix 3	Car parking data from other Local Authorities
Background Papers	
Fees and Charges Update Report, Report to Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board, 21 July 2009	
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes, 7 April 2009	
Report Author	Natasha Clark, Trainee Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Contact Information	01295 221589 natasha.clark@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/10 ~ as @ 01/09/09

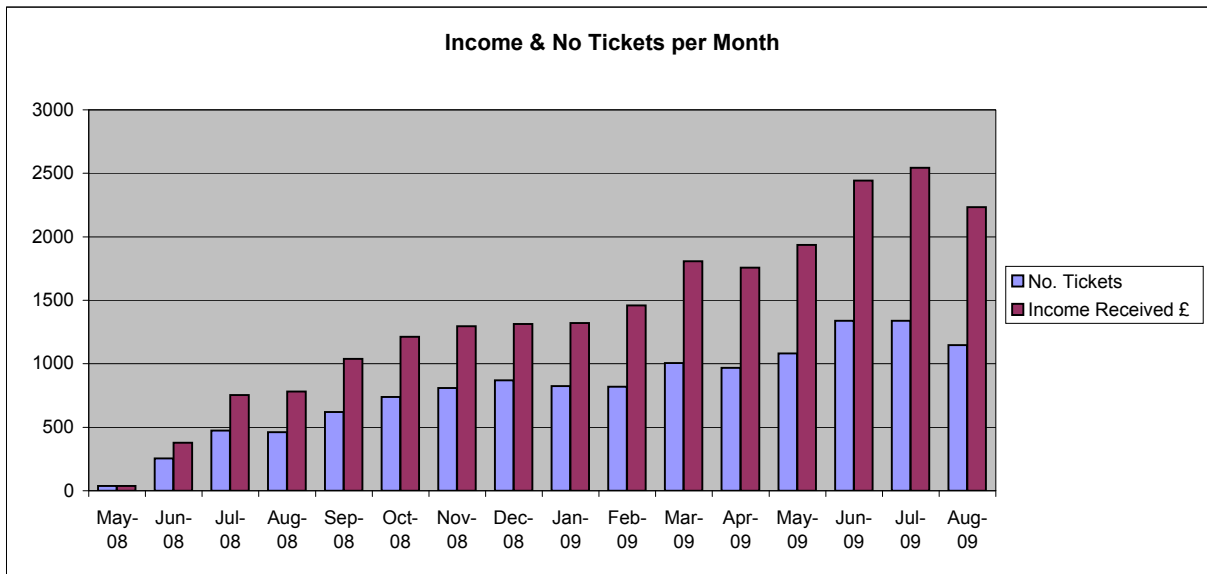
Title	Committee/T&FG	Comments	Meeting				
			Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Later
Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny							
Preparations for an ageing population	OSC	Cllr R Stratford to monitor developments Invite representatives of Oxfordshire Health & Well-Being Board to attend future meeting		?	?		
Youth Facility Provision	OSC	Work programme item for 15 September Possible joint scrutiny with other Oxfordshire authorities; to note developments.	✓				
Engaging with young people	OSC	Agenda item for 15 September Consider draft scoping document for possible review	✓				
Young People's VFM review	OSC	To consider the outcomes and conclusions of the VFM review into young people's services				✓	
Registered Social Landlords' Management Partnership and related standards	R&PSB	Work programme item for 20 October To consider as possible topic for partnership scrutiny		✓			
Scrutiny – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings							
Sustainable Communities Strategy	OSC	Agenda item for 10 November Claire Taylor to present consultation outcomes, draft service delivery plan and leadership plans			✓		
Preparation for the 2012 Olympics tourism potential in the district	OSC	Agenda item for October or November meeting Invite PfH (Customer Service & ICT) to attend. Executive report scheduled for November.		✓	✓		

Title	Committee/T&FG	Comments	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Later
2010/2011 Budget	R&PSB	Agenda item for 22 September To agree approach/topic for budget scrutiny.	✓				
Partnerships: ORCC	R&PSB	Agenda item for Sept/Oct To review effectiveness of partnership with ORCC.	✓	✓			
Partnerships: Cherwell Safer Communities	R&PSB	Work programme item for 20 October To agree scoping document and project plan.		✓			
Improving Partnership Working	R&PSB	Agenda item for 22 September To consider the improvements proposals identified by the Improving Partnership Working project team.	✓				
Contracts review	R&PSB	Agenda item for 22 September To consider and agree an approach for contract scrutiny	✓				
Task & Finish Groups – agreed topics for review outside committee meetings							
Private Sector Housing Strategy	Cllr Rose Stratford (Ch) Cllr Stevens (VC) Cllr Smithson Cllr Tompson	Cllr Rae Cllr Sibley	Policy development work on the private sector housing strategy.				✓
Crime & Anti-social behaviour	Cllr Irvine Cllr Billington Cllr Tompson Cllr Smithson Cllr Sibley	Cllr Ahmed Cllr Cullip	Active – final report scheduled for Executive in autumn 2009 Chairman of T&FG to attend OSC meeting in Sept to brief on progress	✓			
Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to check on progress on implementation of recommendations							
Concessionary Fares	OSC	Work programme item for early 2010 meeting PfH to attend and brief on progress on recommendations and developments on government consultation					✓

Title	Committee/T&FG	Comments	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Later
Affordable Housing & Rural Exception Sites	OSC	Agenda item for 10 November meeting PfH to attend and brief on progress on recommendations			✓		
Markets in Cherwell	OSC	Agenda item for 13 October meeting PfH to attend and brief on progress		✓			
Partnerships: Bicester Vision	R&PSB	Work programme item for 24 November To agree scope and project plan for review in early 2010.			✓		✓
Fees and Charges	R&PSB	Agenda item for 12 January meeting Review of progress against recommendations and in advance of next budget round				✓	
Food Waste Processing	R&PSB/PSWG	Review autumn 2010 6 months after final stage of roll-out programme.					✓
Sports Centre Modernisation	FSWG	Refurbished centres due to open summer 2009; new Spiceball due to open winter 2009. FSWG to review at July 2009 meeting.	✓				
Residents' Parking Schemes	OSC	Work programme item for November To note current position			✓		
RAF Bicester	OSC	Work programme item for 15 September Chairman to brief on current position	✓				

**Cherwell District Council
RINGO Income by Month May 2008 - August 2009**

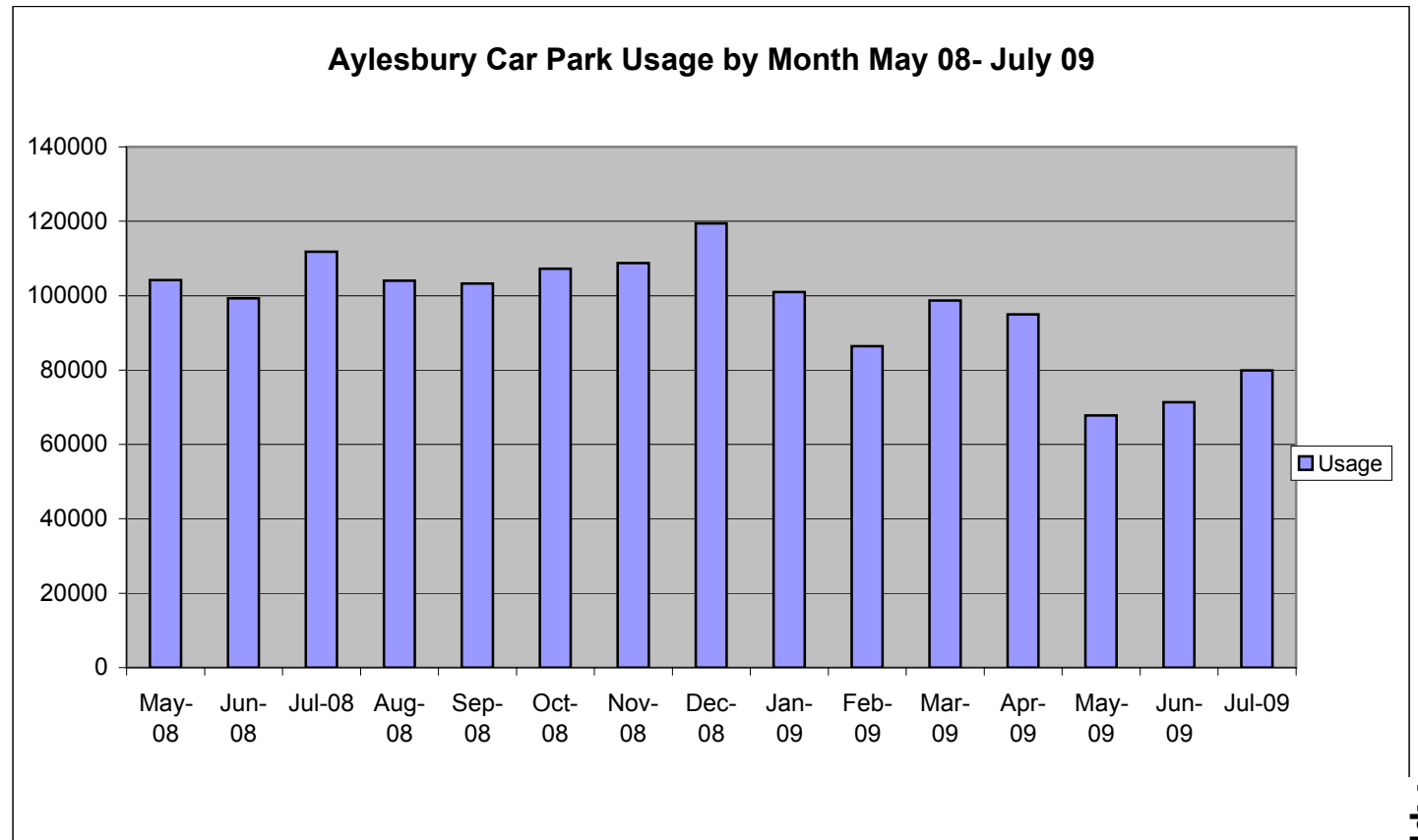
Month	No. Tickets	Income Received £
May-08	37	£37.00
Jun-08	254	£378.50
Jul-08	475	£753.20
Aug-08	462	£782.10
Sep-08	619	£1,038.40
Oct-08	738	£1,213.50
Nov-08	810	£1,294.70
Dec-08	871	£1,312.60
Jan-09	824	£1,322.10
Feb-09	819	£1,458.80
Mar-09	1007	£1,808.60
Apr-09	968	£1,757.00
May-09	1081	£1,936.50
Jun-09	1338	£2,442.00
Jul-09	1339	£2,543.20
Aug-09	1148	£2,234.50
Grand Total	12790	£22,312.70



Aylesbury Vale District Council

Car Park Usage per Month

Month	Usage
May-08	104194
Jun-08	99270
Jul-08	111773
Aug-08	104064
Sep-08	103248
Oct-08	107246
Nov-08	108763
Dec-08	119447
Jan-09	101009
Feb-09	86406
Mar-09	98736
Apr-09	94969
May-09	67841
Jun-09	71350
Jul-09	79888
Grand Total	1144156



**Oxford City Council
3 CAR PARKS AS SAMPLE - Headington , Gloucester Green and Summertown.**

Car Park Usage per Month

Month	Usage
May-08	10009
Jun-08	10098
Jul-08	10650
Aug-08	11476
Sep-08	9847
Oct-08	10589
Nov-08	10063
Dec-08	10604
Jan-09	7754
Feb-09	7561
Mar-09	9242
Apr-09	9571
May-09	10065
Jun-09	8860
Jul-09	10074
Aug-09	10108
Grand Total	107893

