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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: Tuesday 10 September 2024
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA

Membership

**Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
(Chairman)**

Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Lynne Parsons

Councillor Nigel Simpson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor John Broad
Councillor Grace Conway-Murray
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitutes Any member of the relevant political group, excluding Executive members

AGENDA

Overview and Scrutiny Members should not normally be subject to the party whip. Where a member is subject to a party whip, they must declare this at the beginning of the meeting and it should be recorded in the minutes.

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. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2024.

4. Chairman's Announcements

To receive communications from the Chairman.

5. Urgent Business

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

6. Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2024 - 2025 (Pages 9 - 56)

Report of Assistant Director Customer Focus

Purpose of report

To report to the committee the council's performance position at the end of Quarter 1 2024-25.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To consider the contents of the council's performance Quarter 1 report and agree comments to the Executive for consideration.

7. New Cherwell District Council Allocations Scheme (Pages 57 - 142)

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

Purpose of report

To consider the draft Housing Allocations Scheme and make comments for consideration by Executive.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the new drafted Housing Allocations Scheme and recommend adoption by the Executive.
- 1.2 Recommend to Executive that they receive a summary of the consultation responses and give those consideration.

8. Cost of Living 2023/2024 Review and 2024/2025 Activities (Pages 143 - 160)

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the additional activity described in the 2023/24 Cost of Living action plan and to note proposed future approaches and activity.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To request the Executive to note the review of the 2023/24 cost of living plan and proposed range of activities planned for 2024/25.

9. Work Programme 2024 - 2025 (Pages 161 - 166)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook work programme planning at its 18 July 2024 meeting and requested the Chair and Vice-Chair to meet with officers to discuss suggested scrutiny topics. The work programme has been updated accordingly and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

For information, the Executive Forward Plan is available on the [Cherwell District Council website](#) (please ensure you choose the most recently published version).

At the 18 July 2024 meeting, the Committee agreed that three working groups should continue in the 2024/2025 municipal year: Climate Action; Food Insecurity; and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (joint with Personnel Committee). Nominations for working group member have been sought and the Chair and Democratic and Elections Team will update the Committee at the meeting.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves

- 1.1 To consider and endorse the 2024/2025 work programme.
- 1.2 To consider the update on the scrutiny working groups.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.

Information about this Meeting

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 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.

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.

Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

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Mobile Phones

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If you make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed by the council to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or joining virtually, you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Emma Faulkner / Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections
democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

Shiraz Sheikh
Monitoring Officer

Published on Monday 2 September 2024

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 18 July 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Dr Isabel Creed (Chairman)
Councillor Nigel Simpson (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Grace Conway-Murray
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Barry Wood

Guest:

Councillor Chris Brant, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Minutes

The Chairman advised that there was spelling mistake 12 March 2024 meeting minute 71, 2024-35 should read 2024-25. This had been corrected in the minute book. Subject to this correction, the minutes of the meetings of the

Committee held on 12 March 2024 and 13 June 2024 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

6 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

7 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

8 Performance Monitoring Report End of year 2023 - 2024

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director – Customer Focus that detailed the council's performance position at the end of the financial year 2023-2024.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services advised that 26 of the 27 Business Plan measures had been achieved. The one measure not achieved was "Net Additional Housing Completions to meet Cherwell Needs" with a final figure of 792 completions, which was 70% of the set target. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services advised that this measure had been heavily affected by the national context, circumstances such as inflation, high building costs, and high interest rates which resulted in the lower than expected number of completions.

Following a question from the Committee on how the Council's measured targets were set as and could the targets be more challenging as most targets had been met, the Performance Team Leader advised that the Council use national targets and benchmark from previous years and took into consideration local context to set ambitious targets.

In response to a question from the Committee asking why the number of housing completions target was missed by 30%, the Corporate Director of Communities advised that housing delivery had been good in respect of the requirements of the Cherwell Local Plan 2015 with an average of 1281 homes built a year. In 2023-2024, the number fell to 792 homes built however this was consistent with national figures linked to issues with house building across the country. The Corporate Director of Communities also advised that there 6000 homes had been granted planning permission within the district but had not yet been built.

Resolved

(1) That the Council's End of year performance report for 2023/24 be noted.

9 Work Programme Planning for 2024-2025

The Chairman referred to the three working groups that had been established in 2023-2024: Climate Action; Food Insecurity; and, Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (joint with Personnel Committee) and asked for Members' views on whether the working groups should continue. The Committee agreed that all working groups should continue and asked the Assistant Director Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to liaise with Group Leaders regarding membership of the working groups.

The Committee asked if it was possible for experts in the topic fields to attend working group meetings to give guidance to working group members. The Chairman advised that working groups should discuss in their meetings if experts in that field would be invited to attend the working group meetings.

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance advised the Committee that within the working group meetings, targets should be decided by the working group to focus discussion and not make to topic of discussion wide.

The Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead presented the list of suggested topics that Officers and Members had put forward for inclusion on the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. The Committee endorsed all topics and agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman work with officers to bring forward a work programme incorporating the topics to the next meeting of the Committee.

As part of the work programme planning, the Committee requested that officers be advised that presentations be kept short and more interactive for the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman work with officers to bring forward a work programme, incorporating the topics suggested, to the next Committee meeting.
- (2) That the following working groups continue into 2024/25, with authority being delegated to the Assistant Director Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to liaise with Group Leaders regarding nominations to each group:
 - Climate Action
 - Food Insecurity
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (joint group with Personnel Committee)

The meeting ended at 7.35 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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This report is public	
Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2024 – 2025	
Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Committee	10 September 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	20 August 2024
Report of	Assistant Director – Customer Focus, Shona Ware

Purpose of report

To report to the committee the council’s performance position at the end of Quarter 1 2024-25.

1. Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To consider the contents of the council’s performance Quarter 1 report and agree comments to the Executive for consideration.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Performance section sets out how the council has performed against its priorities for 2024-25, which are set out in its Outcomes Framework.

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance, 27 August 2024			
Legal	There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services, 23 August 2024			
Risk Management	There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 August 2024			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary

Equality Impact		X		There are no direct equalities and inclusion implications as a consequence of this report. The report includes a summary on our performance against the Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Action plans during Quarter 1 2024-25 Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 August 2024
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Climate & Environmental Impact		x		N/A
ICT & Digital Impact		x		N/A
Data Impact		x		N/A
Procurement & subsidy		x		N/A
Council Priorities	This report links to all council's priorities, as it summarises our progress against them during Quarter 1 2024-25			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	N/A			

Supporting Information

3. Background

3.1 The council actively and regularly monitors its performance to ensure it can deliver its corporate priorities and respond effectively to emerging issues.

- 3.2 This monitoring takes place at least quarterly for performance, so the council can identify potential issues at the earliest opportunity and put measures in place to mitigate them.
- 3.3 These updates are consolidated into a single report given the implications and interdependencies between them, and this is the summary for the end of Quarter 1 2024-25. Please note that this report covers two administrations (before and post-election period).

4. Details

4.1 Performance Summary

- 4.2 The council is performing well against its Quarter 1 objectives, which consist of 27 Business Plan Measures, 16 Annual Delivery Plan actions, and 26 Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan activities.
- 4.3 Of the 57 measures with targets for Quarter 1, the majority were on track or within the agreed tolerance, six were slightly behind target and just one behind target.

4.4 Business Plan Measures

- 4.5 Of the 16 business plan measures with set targets, 13 were either achieved or within the agreed tolerance, two were slightly behind target, and one behind target:

“Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation”

There were 68 households living in temporary accommodation against the maximum target of 45.

Temporary Accommodation usage has increased steadily in Q4 23-24 and in Quarter 1 of 2024-25, to 68. The number of new placements is now more comparable to the numbers moving out into other housing options, such as permanent accommodation offers, therefore the increase has shown signs of slowing. Increasing temporary accommodation usage reflects national trends of increases being seen due to rising demand and an increase of vulnerable people requiring temporary accommodation in turn.

“Percentage of Major Applications overturned at appeal”

18.8% of major applications were overturned on appeal against a target of 10% for Quarter 1.

There has been an increase in the number of appeals this year in comparison to previous years, which has resulted in more appeals allowed. The team is reviewing the situation, seeking to ensure that the recommendations provided are up to the highest standard, providing guidance and advice to the planning committee members to ensure they are fully informed when determining applications at planning committee.

“Percentage of Building Control full plans assessed within 5 weeks (or longer with applicant's agreement)”

92.3% of building control full plans were assessed within 5 weeks, or longer as per previous agreement with the applicant, against a target of 95% for Quarter 1.

There has been an increase in the number of applications received - our market share is currently 73% compared with 63% in 2023/24. Our target of 95% has therefore not been reached, please note that where there have been delays, the team is always diligent in contacting the applicant to explain why and agree a response date.

- 4.6 There are also 11 measures that the council monitors to be able to identify any emerging trends that might require early intervention from us or partners. There are no targets for these measures as they are dependent on external factors. During Quarter 1 no particular trends were observed.

Please note some of the graphs included with these measures would not include previous year comparison due to the metrics being new.

See Appendix 1 for the full list of targeted and monitoring measures.

4.7 Annual Delivery Plan Priorities

- 4.8 All Annual Delivery plan milestones set for Quarter 1 (15) were achieved or within the agreed tolerance.

Please note the appendix shows the priority outdented and underneath the quarterly milestones from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4, the status for each milestone will be RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated to show the status per quarter. If activity starts ahead of time, this will also be RAG rated and will have commentary.

See Appendix 2 for Quarter 1 updates on the Annual delivery plan.

4.9 Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Action plans

- 4.10 Of the 26 actions, 22 were achieved or within the agreed tolerance, and four were reported slightly behind scheduled, as follows:

“Work with partners to promote an ethnically diverse representation at our voluntary sector forum”

Reported slightly behind schedule during Quarter 1.

Plans are being made for invitations to the voluntary sector forum to be widened in an effort to hold a more representative event.

“Collaborate with partner organisations to involve young people in volunteering activities and engage with them to undertake active participation in their local communities”

Reported slightly behind schedule during Quarter 1.

Initial discussions with some of our partners has highlighted the costs and challenges associated with young people undertaking volunteering activities, the next step will be to explore how these challenges can be best supported, with input from schools.

“Raise awareness of the role of councillors and routes to be becoming a councillor targeted at underrepresented group”

Reported slightly behind schedule during Quarter 1.
 During Q1 training has been delivered to new members, however specific work to raise awareness across Members has been delayed due to general elections during this period.

“Implement the recommendations proposed by the strategic review of partnerships”

Reported slightly behind schedule during Quarter 1.
 The review recommended that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion actions to be incorporated into Terms of reference and service level agreements where Cherwell District Council was the lead organisation, changes will be added accordingly.

See Appendix 3 for Quarter 1 updates on Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Action plans.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

Option 1: This report summarises the council’s financial position up to the end of Quarter 1 2024, therefore there are no alternative options to consider.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that the contents of the report are noted.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All







Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Business Plan & Monitoring measures Quarter 1 2024-25
Appendix 2	Annual Delivery Plan Quarter 1 2024-25
Appendix 3	EDI Action Plans Quarter 1 2024-25
Background Papers	N/A
Reference Papers	N/A
Report Author	Celia Prado-Teeling - Performance Team Leader
Report Author contact details	Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk , 01295 221556

Housing that meets your needs - KPI's 2024-2025

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	Direction of Change
BP1.2.01 Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	CLlr C Pruden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Boll ▪ Nicola Riley 	Smaller Is Better	68	45	▲	➔
<p>Commentary Those homeless and housed in temporary accommodation has remained above target throughout the last quarter. This is due to an increase in vulnerable homeless households approaching the Council for support. The number represents those who are accommodated as an average throughout the quarter. Therefore at times it is higher and lower as people move in and out. There can typically be 20 new placements within a month, so a considerable number of people are moving out similarly. The number also represents both those in hotels and in self contained units of temporary accommodation. The affordability of accommodation locally combined with high demand for social housing is leading to increased demands on homelessness services and temporary accommodation in turn.</p>							
BP1.2.04 No of affordable homes delivered	CLlr C Pruden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Boll ▪ Nicola Riley 	Bigger Is Better	71	50	★	➔
<p>Commentary The 71 homes delivered comprised 48 for affordable rent, 12 social rent and 11 shared ownership.</p>							
BP1.2.05 % of Homelessness cases successfully prevented rather than relief/main duty being applied	CLlr C Pruden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Boll ▪ Richard Smith 	Bigger Is Better	78%	60%	★	n/a
<p>Commentary Caseloads have increased by about 11% this quarter and the service remains very busy. Despite these challenges the team are still managing to prevent homelessness negating the need for temporary accommodation.</p>							

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	Direction of Change
BP1.2.06 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit New Claims and council tax reduction (Days)	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Furness ▪ Stephen Hinds 	Smaller Is Better	15 days	18 days	★	↘
Commentary We are continuing to monitor the work in this area							
BP1.2.07 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit Change Events & council tax reduction (Days)	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Furness ▪ Stephen Hinds 	Smaller Is Better	3 days	8 days	★	↘
Commentary We are continuing to monitor the work in this area							
BP1.2.08 % of Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Peckford ▪ Ian Boll 	Bigger Is Better	93.8%	60.0%	★	↗
Commentary 16 Major Planning Applications were determined during Q1 2024/25, 15 of which were determined within the National Indicator target or agreed timeframe.							
BP1.2.09 % of Non-Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Peckford ▪ Ian Boll 	Bigger Is Better	86.5%	70.0%	★	↗
Commentary 310 Non-Major Planning Applications were determined during Q1 2024/25, 268 of them within National Indicator target or agreed timeframe.							

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	Direction of Change
BP1.2.10 % of Major Applications overturned at appeal	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Peckford ▪ Ian Boll 	Smaller Is Better	18.8%	10.0%		
<p>Commentary We have had a high number of appeals this year compared to previous years and as a result there have also been more appeals allowed. We are reviewing this and seeking to ensure that the recommendations we make on major applications are sound. We will also provide guidance and advice to the planning committee members to ensure they are fully informed when determining applications at planning committee.</p>							
BP1.2.11 % of Non-Major Applications overturned at appeal	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Peckford ▪ Ian Boll 	Smaller Is Better	1.0%	10%		
<p>Commentary 3 Non-Major Planning Applications were allowed at Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate during Q1 2024/25, set against a total of 310 Non-Major Planning Applications determined by the Council during that period.</p>							
BP1.2.12 Average time taken for new applications to be responded to within 15 working days	Cllr C Pruden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Boll ▪ Richard Smith 	Smaller Is Better	13 days	15 days		n/a
<p>Commentary The average time taken to respond to new housing register applications during the quarter was 13 working days. Due to a high number of applications received at the start of the year the time taken to respond was higher at the start of the quarter. Measures were implemented to help reduce this and the time taken to respond has steadily reduced throughout the quarter as a result, to an average of 13 days.</p>							
BP1.2.14 % of Building Control full plans assessed within 5 weeks (or longer with applicant's agreement)	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Boll ▪ Tony Brummell 	Bigger Is Better	92.30%	95%		n/a
<p>Commentary We have seen an upturn in the number of applications received - our market share is currently 73% compared with 63% in 2023/24. Our target of 95% has therefore not been reached. Where there have been delays we always contact the applicant to explain why and agree a target response date.</p>							

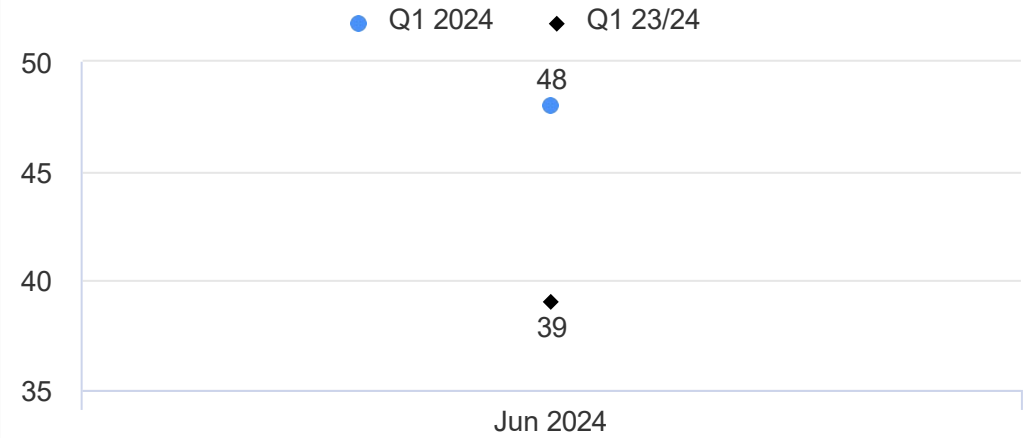
Housing that meets your needs - Monitoring Measures

Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP1.2.03 Homes improved through enforcement action

Commentary

This quarter the Housing Standards Team closed 48 cases which resulted in works being undertaken to properties following formal or significant informal action by the team. This shows Housing Standards Team have increased enforcement actions compared with the same period last year. Overall we closed 106 reactive service requests in Q1 of this year, of which 45% were classified as formal or informal action upon closure. In Q1 of 2023 we closed 100 reactive service requests, of which 30% were classified as formal or informal action.



Supporting environmental sustainability - KPIs 2024-2025

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	Direction of Change
BP2.2.01 % Waste Recycled & Composted	Cllr I Middleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ed Potter ■ Ian Boll 	Bigger Is Better	55.74%	54%	★	↗
BP2.2.03 % of Climate Action Plan delivering to target	Cllr D Hingley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Jo Miskin 	Bigger Is Better	61.48%	66%	★	n/a

Commentary

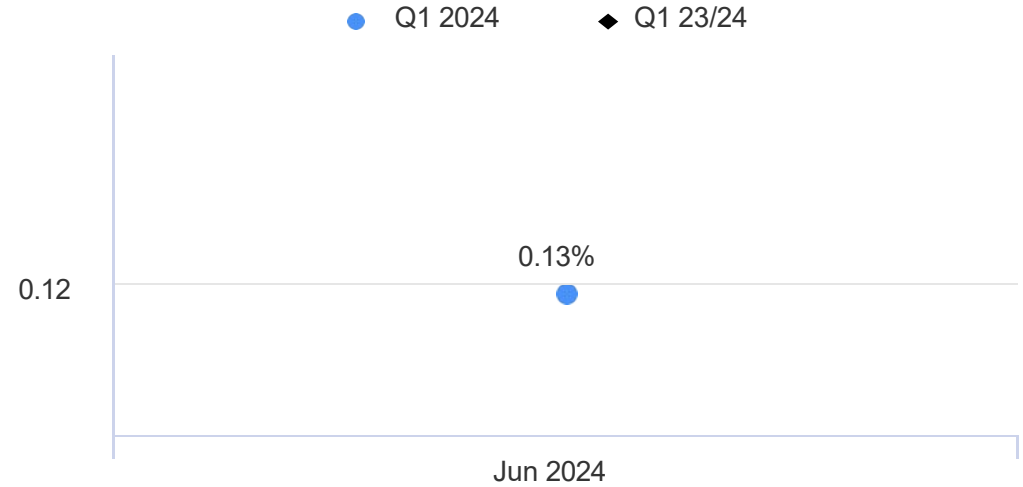
In the Q1, out of total 122 Climate Actions, 91 actions were On-going, 16 actions were On-hold, and 15 actions were got Completed. The actions were further marked as per their RAG ratings for Q1, and out of total 122 Climate Actions, 75 actions were in Green, 37 were in Amber and 10 actions were in Red. The Climate Action Team has grown from 1 team member to 3 in this quarter and this has helped and will help in improving the rate of working and achieving Climate Targets further for the Council and Cherwell overall. We are continuously building the team and strengthening relations with internal and external stakeholders/networks to accelerate Climate Actions.

Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP2.2.04 % of missed waste containers

Commentary

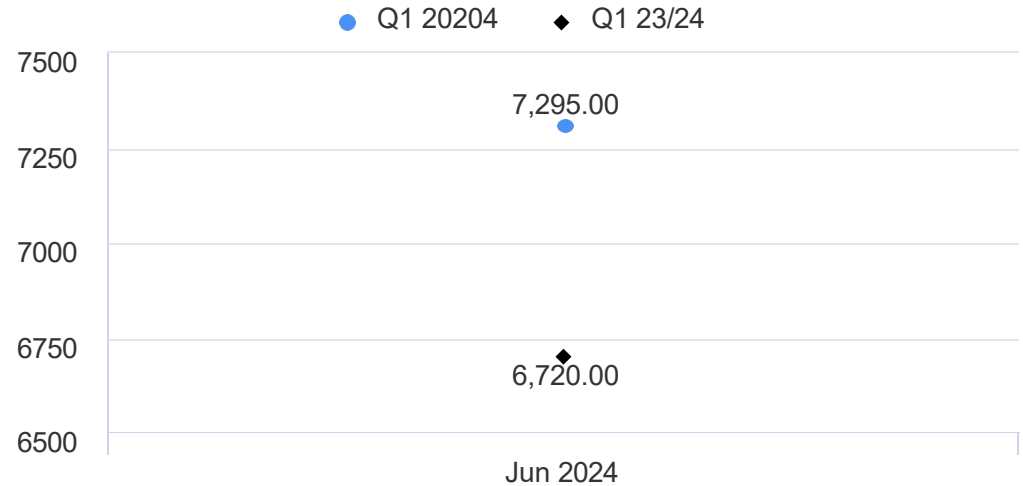
0.13% missed collections is on average 8 per crew per week with each crew collecting 6,350 containers per week. This measure is new for 2024/2025 therefore no comparison data for the previous year is available.



BP2.2.01d Tonnes residual household waste collected

Commentary

Now all the verified figures are in from OCC the Residual Waste is 50 tonnes up compared to 1st Quarter of last year. This is a good performance as with 2,000 more properties we would expect the residual tonnage to have increased by approximately 250 tonnes in the first quarter.

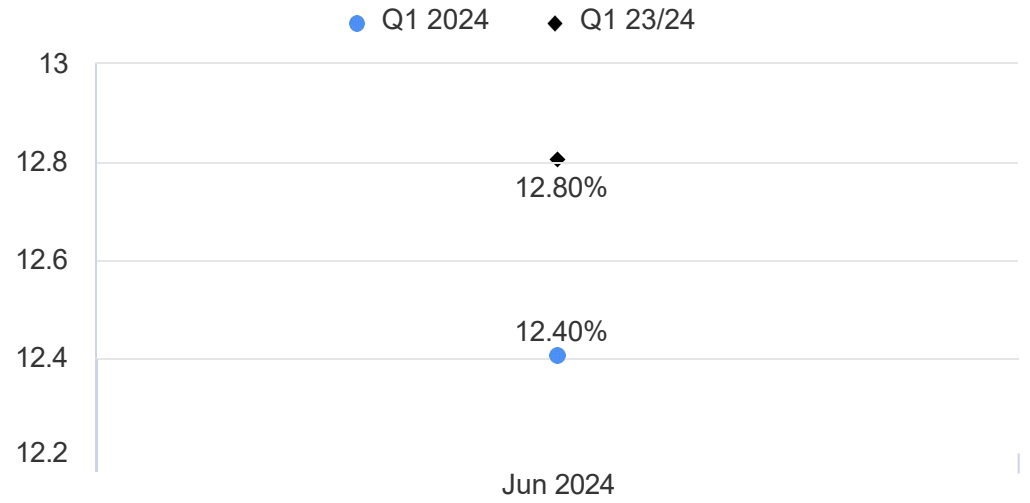


BP2.2.07 % of Recycling Contamination rate

Commentary

The percentage of contamination in the Blue bin is down by 0.4% compared to last year this is because of the continued work of the service development team educating residents with social media, events and visiting residents.

These figures are reported monthly to CDC by the processor Casepak and the average contamination for the Dry Recycling in the first three months was 12.4% with last year the contamination being 12.8%. These contamination rates are very good compared to the other councils that Casepak service.



An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres - KPIs 2024-2025

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	Direction of Change
BP3.2.01 % of Council Tax collected, increase Council Tax Base	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michael Furness ■ Stephen Hinds 	Bigger Is Better	29.22%	29%	★	↓
BP3.2.02 % of Business Rates collected, increasing NNDR Base	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michael Furness ■ Stephen Hinds 	Bigger Is Better	34.15%	31%	★	↕

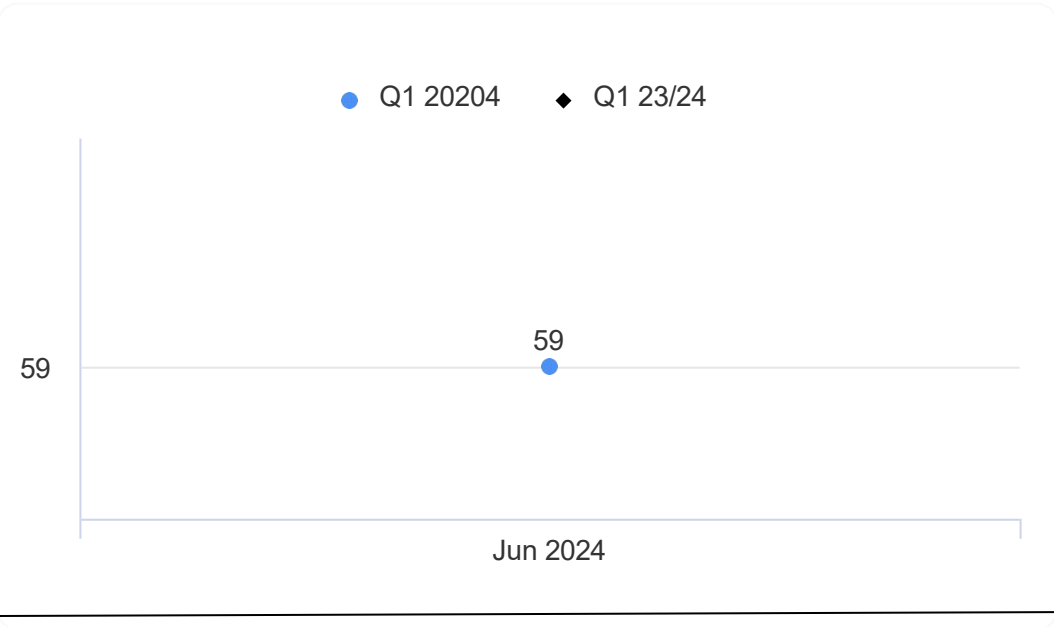
Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP3.2.04 No. of businesses engaged through UKSPF and REPF funded programmes

59 businesses were engaged, benefitting from
 * Business enterprise activity in a secondary school.
 * Support to the Cherwell Business Awards, in order to recognise and showcase the achievements of Cherwell businesses.

This measure is new for 2024/2025 therefore no comparison data for the previous year is available.

Commentary

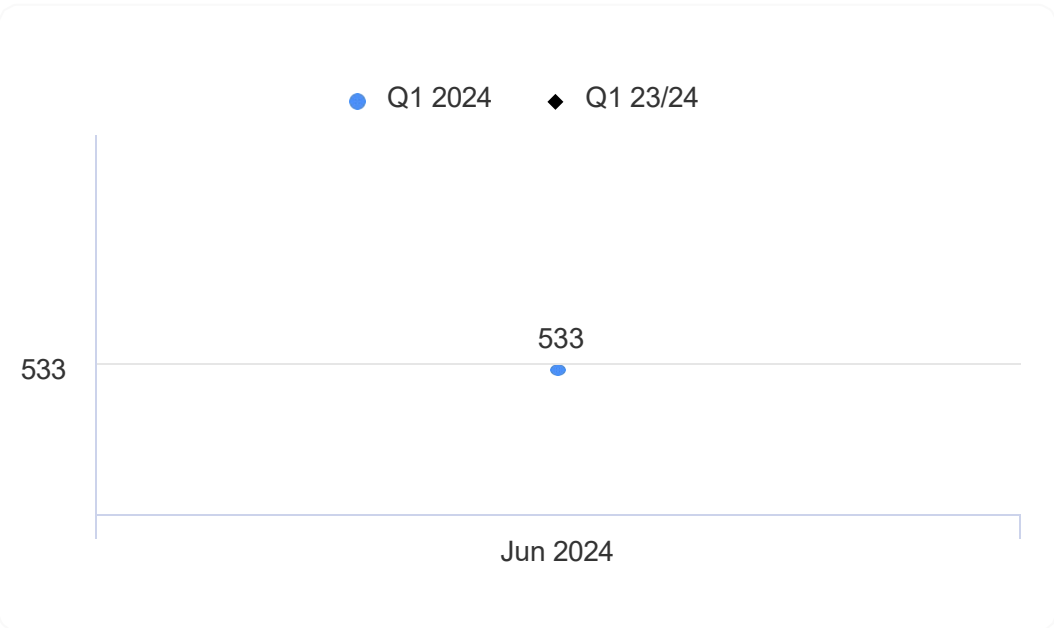


BP3.2.05 No. of residents engaged through UKSPF and REPF funded programmes

533 residents were engaged, benefitting from
 * Increased access to cultural and arts activities through drama clubs in primary schools in deprived wards; a community music workshop programme; and widened participation in cultural activities and attendance at performances at a theatre and arts centre.
 *Widened access to an existing community garden through new events to bring communities together.
 *Students engaged in enterprise activity in secondary schools in partnership with Young Enterprise.

This measure is new for 2024/2025 therefore no comparison data for the previous year is available.

Commentary



Healthy, resilient and engaged communities - KPIs 2024-2025

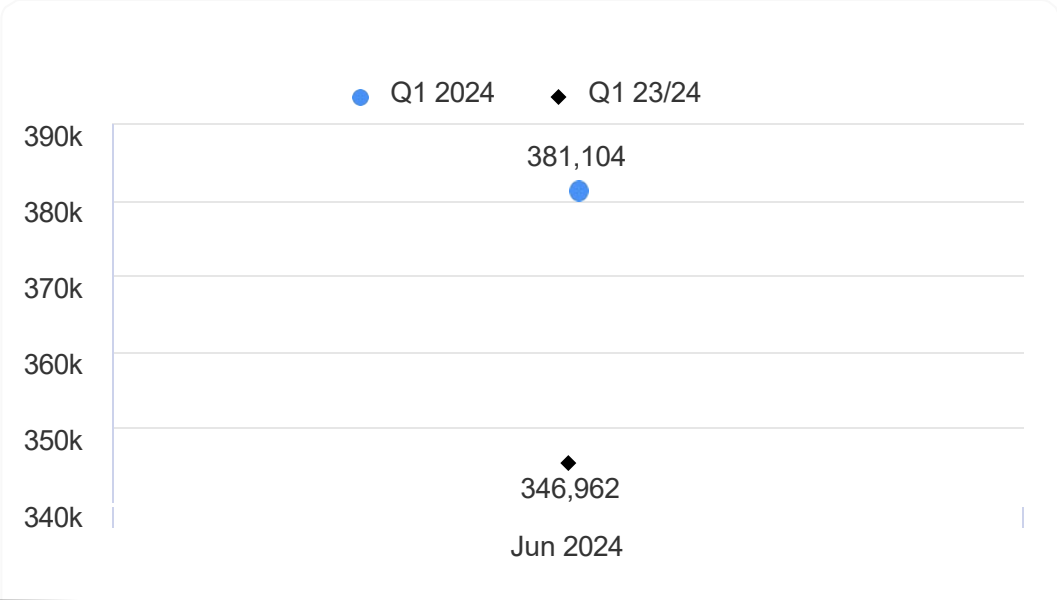
Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	Direction of Change
BP4.2.04 % of due food hygiene inspections of premises rated A-D completed	Cllr R Parkinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Boll ▪ Tim Hughes 	Bigger Is Better	98.63%	95%	★	↕
<p>Commentary 72 out of 73 completed, the one not completed was due to the premises being shut as the owner was on holiday (1 Month)</p>							

Healthy, resilient and engaged communities – Monitoring Measures

Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

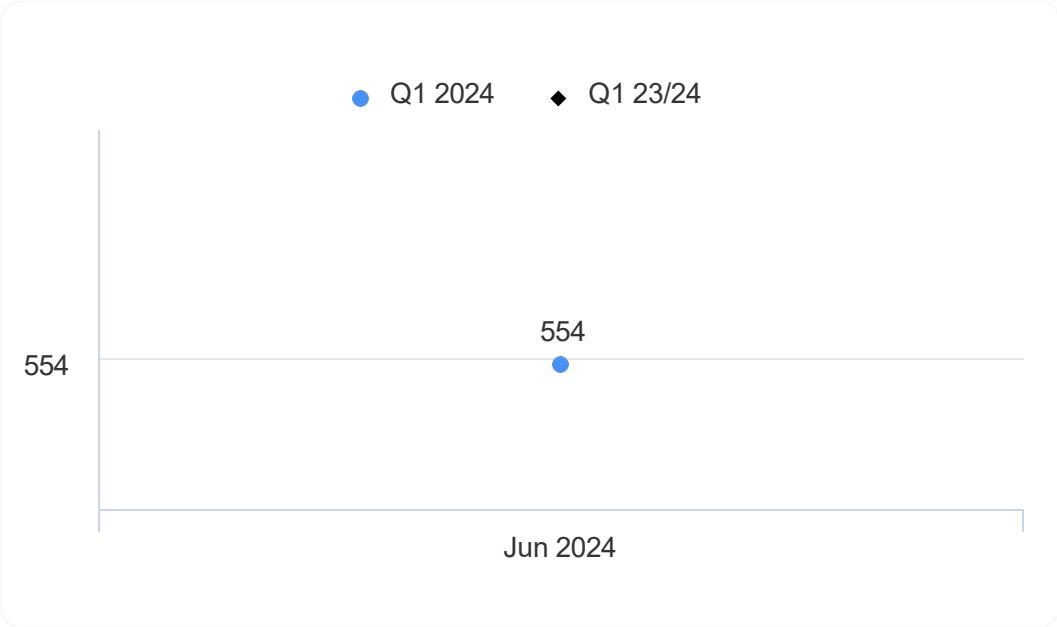
BP4.2.01 Number of Visits/Usage of all Leisure Facilities within the District

Commentary Usage figures for the Leisure Centres/Facilities have increased against the same period last year. Bicester visits are up 13,000 on April to June 24, Kidlington by circa 13,000 and Spiceball by 14,000



BP4.2.02 Residents who have taken part in programmes contributing to improving health inequalities

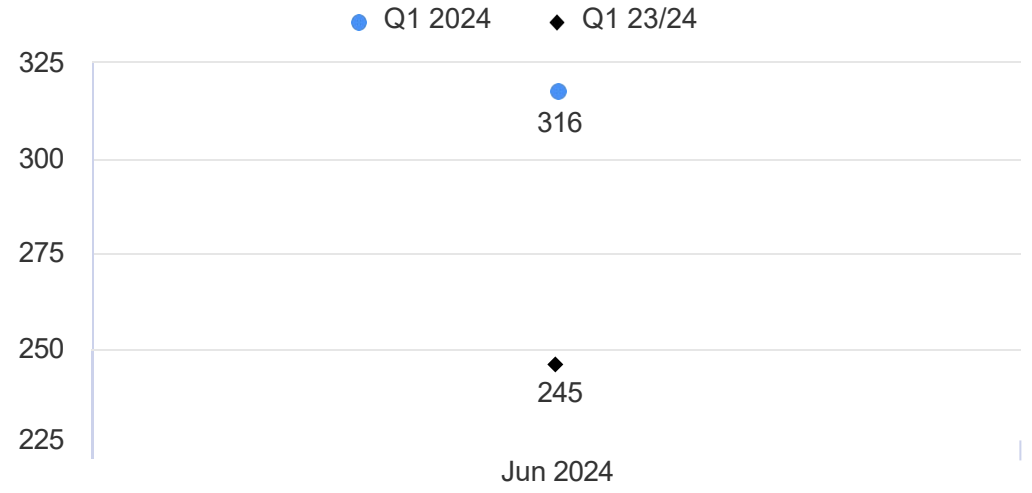
Commentary The 554 figure is the number of residents that have registered in April - June on Health prevention programmes You Move and Move Together. You Move a programme helping families access opportunities and Move Together working with adults with long term conditions are having a big impact on residents health and few examples of this from the end of year reports are below.
 You Move - 49% of Adults and 52% of children have increased their activity levels. 50% of adults and 42% of children have reported and improvement in their wellbeing and happiness. 24% of all children eligible for Free School Meals are on the programme demonstrating targeted nature.
 Move Together 60% of adults have increased their activity levels while being on Move Together. 54% of participants reported their perception of health had improved after 3 months.
 This measure is new for 2024/2025 therefore no comparison data for the previous year is available.



BP4.2.05 Number of Illegal Fly Tips

This is an increase of 71 on the same period in 2023. Of the 316 reports received 261 were investigated.

Commentary

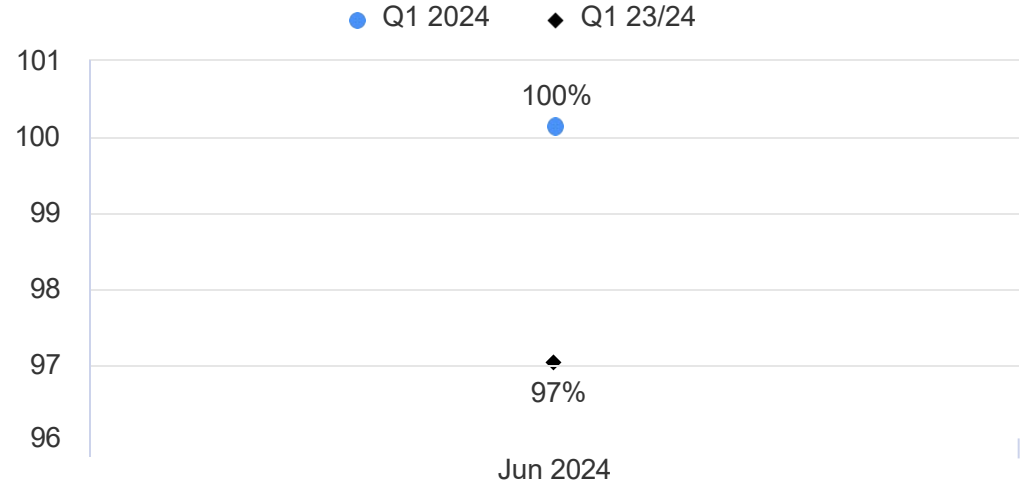


Organisational Health - Monitoring Measures

Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

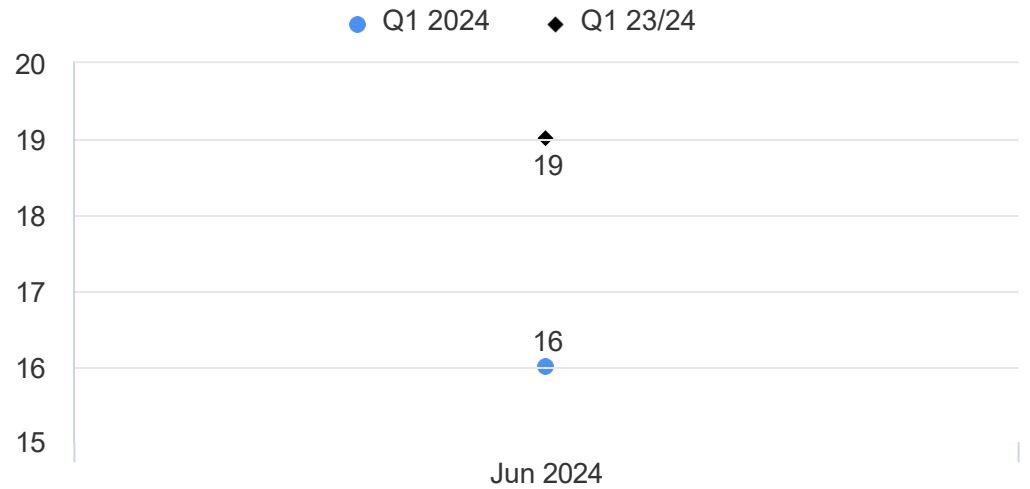
BP5.1.02 Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of service spend

Commentary 4.8% decrease on Q4 of 2023/24, due to service spend forecast to be slightly higher than 2023/24 and some usage of reserves approved in Q1 of 2024/25.



BP5.1.07 Number of upheld complaints

Commentary There were 16 upheld complaints comprising of: Environmental Services - due to delays, missed bins or delay in responding to complaints or the manner it was handled, 10. Finance and Governance + S151 - mostly related to system problems affecting benefits or tax payments, 5. And Customers and Service Development, at specific aspects of complaint which had to be reviewed by service officer, 1.



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Annual Delivery Plan - Housing that meets your needs

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HMN1 Work with partners and landlords to settle refugees into suitable accommodation in Cherwell through a Migration Moving Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
HMN1 Q1 - Q4 Deliver properties identified through LAHF 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	Of the 20 properties due to delivered this financial year, 4 were completed which is in line with delivery plan. Sales and refurbishment works are progressing for the remaining 5 homes being delivered by Soha. For the 11 Sanctuary homes, a contractor for the refurbishment works has been instructed and works have commenced. Regular progress meetings with Soha and Sanctuary are in place to help ensure delivery remains on target.
HMN1 Q2 Extend community liaison and settlement support provided for new residents to capture newly settled families from Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	Delivering to Plan	Regular ESOL classes have been arranged. A recent job fair event was successful and attracted both local residents and local refugees seeking work. Work continues to help refugee families settle well.
HMN1 Q3 Continue to identify hosts and work across Oxfordshire system to identify suitable properties and protocols for dealing with PRS Landlords.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	Delivering to Plan	Regular ESOL classes have been arranged. A recent job fair event was successful and attracted both local residents and local refugees seeking work. Work continues to help refugee families settle well.

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
<p>HMN1 Q4 Re-let accommodation in Town Centre House following successful completion of restoration work funded through LAHF1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	<p>Cllr C Pruden</p>	<p>01 Jan 2025</p>	<p>31 Mar 2025</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4</p>

Annual Delivery Plan - Housing that meets your needs

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HMN2 To continue delivering on our Housing that meets our needs priority through the development of a new housing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Richard Smith 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HMN2 Q1 Review existing strategy and develop evidence base for new strategy and its goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Richard Smith 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	The existing strategy has been reviewed as well as the evidence base, reviewing a variety of data sources and documents. A draft is being created currently based on these findings
Page 31 HMN2 Q2 Identify key themes and objectives, feeding into Local Plan consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Richard Smith 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2
HMN2 Q3 Deliver draft strategy for consultation with stakeholders and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Richard Smith 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3
HMN2 Q4 Launch new strategy and communicate with widest stakeholder group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Richard Smith 	Cllr C Pruden	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - Housing that meets your needs

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HMN3 Identify the Housing and Infrastructure our communities need in the future to create a healthy, thriving and sustainable Cherwell through developing our new Local Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ David Peckford ■ Ian Boll 	Cllr J Conway	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HMN3 Q1 Evidence gathering and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ David Peckford ■ Ian Boll 	Cllr J Conway	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Evidence gathering and the preparation of the LP is on track to meet the Q3 target.
Page 32 HMN3 Q2 Evidence gathering and preparation		Cllr J Conway	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2
HMN3 Q3 Present the Proposed Plan (Reg. 19) to the Council's Executive for approval and then consult on the Proposed Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ David Peckford ■ Ian Boll 	Cllr J Conway	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3
HMN3 Q4 Consider response to consultation and present Submission Plan to Council for approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ David Peckford ■ Ian Boll 	Cllr J Conway	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - Supporting environmental sustainability

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ SES1 As part of our climate action commitments, we will review and update our Air Quality Management Action plan to ensure its effectiveness and suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
SES1 Q1 to produce report for Exec to provide update on air quality monitoring for 2023. To approve the draft revised existing air quality action plan. To consider revocation of a number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	The Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) was updated in consultation with partners including Oxfordshire County Council Highways, Oxfordshire County Council Public Health and Community Safety, Environmental Services (Climate Action), and Planning and Development. A report on the updated AQAP, and also proposals to revoke two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS) was presented to the Executive at its meeting on 4 March 2024. The Executive approved the updated AQAP and the revocation of the Horsefair/North Bar, Banbury and the Bicester Road, Kidlington AQMAS.
SES1 Q2 Follow up actions from Executive decisions i.e. revoke the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2
SES1 Q3 Review and produce new Air Quality Management Action Plan and submit to DEFRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
SES1 Q4 Engage with partners on the revised actions arising as a result of the new plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	02 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - Supporting environmental sustainability

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ SES2 To progress activity within Climate Action Plan to support communities to develop and implement plans to make all of the district a more sustainable place to live and work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Jo Miskin 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
Page 35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Jo Miskin 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	In the Q1, out of total 122 Climate Actions, 91 actions were On-going, 16 actions were On-hold, and 15 actions were got Completed. The actions were further marked as per their RAG ratings for Q1, and out of total 122 Climate Actions, 75 actions were in Green, 37 were in Amber and 10 actions were in Red. In this quarter we have completed a Scope 3 Emission study done for the council. The EV Pool Car is now active and available for staff use. We have supported and will continue to support on Pre-deployment work of Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP). The specification for the solar strategy for the district is underway and is due to be finalised by early in Q2. We are in the process of commissioning three studies on Carbon Baseline for the District and decarbonizing Council's Estate and Fleet.
SES2 Q2 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Jo Miskin 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2
SES2 Q3 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Jo Miskin 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
SES2 Q4 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q4 and report on conclusion of the three year programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Jo Miskin 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - Supporting environmental sustainability

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ SES3 Move to a smaller, greener HQ with better public transport, walking and cycling opportunities to reduce costs and reliance on cars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mona Walsh ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering slightly behind schedule
SES3 Q1 Appoint contractor to undertake Castle Quay fit-out refurbishment works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mona Walsh ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Delegated Authority to award contract approved 8 July. Timescale have slipped from original target date due to extended procurement timelines. Tenders returned 19th June, evaluation completed, preferred bidder identified and standstill period expired on the 22nd July. Value engineering underway with preferred contractor to be followed by contractor award.
SES3 Q2 Carry out Castle Quay fit out refurbishment works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mona Walsh ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2
SES3 Q3 Office preparation and relocation works to enable transfer of staff to new accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mona Walsh ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2
SES3 Q4 Bodicote House cleared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mona Walsh ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV1 To deliver key projects within the third year of the UK Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
EEV1 Q1 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	During Q1 project delivery progressed to schedule. Thirteen projects were live and will continue during Q2, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to Community Centre facilities • Whitelands sports ground, Bicester - floodlighting • Cherwell urban centres - vacant premises study • Development of public realm strategy frameworks • Increasing access to and use of Bridge Street Community Garden, Banbury • Enterprise support for students in secondary schools • Cherwell Business Awards • Two urban centre projects (public realm improvements) • Four projects to increase participation in cultural and arts activities
EEV1 Q2 13 Projects from Q1 continue. Four projects start in Q2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for Economically Inactive residents • Green Construction Skills courses • Business Support scheme • Rural Business grants scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
<p>EEV1 Q3 Flood lighting at Whitelands sports ground, Bicester completed 16 Projects from Q1 and Q2 continue Three projects start in Q3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel scheme in rural areas • Creation of village growing spaces • Decarbonisation support for businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
<p>EEV1 Q4 All projects are scheduled to be complete in Q4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update	
✓ EEV2 To continue the development of the Banbury Vision 2050, which will identify short and long terms measures to regenerate the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule	
EEV2 Q1 Master planners appointed to prepare non-statutory Banbury 2050 masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Feedback from a pre-procurement exercise, together with study of the consultants' draft Banbury Vision 2050 survey and engagement findings, prompted an options review of the development of a non-statutory Masterplan.	
Page 40	EEV2 Q2 Masterplan engagement complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
EEV2 Q3 Draft masterplan prepared and consultation completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.	
EEV2 Q4 Banbury 2050 masterplan approved and endorsed by partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.	

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV3 To develop a plan for reimagining Bicester and ensure existing and new communities benefit from short and long-term measures of the Garden Town principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
EEV3 Q1 Procurement of design consultants to Market Square Project. Programme of stakeholder consultation events/surveys. Master planners appointed to prepare non-statutory Bicester masterplan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	The Council's procurement process to contract consultants for the Market Square Project concluded with the appointment of WSP, an expert in town centre regeneration, and a programme of stakeholder consultation events and surveys is scheduled for Q2. Feedback from a pre-procurement exercise prompted an options review of the development of a non-statutory Masterplan.
EEV3 Q2 Market square consultation continues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
EEV3 Q3 Market Square final scheme design fix. Draft masterplan prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
EEV3 Q4 Market Square approval of plans and Planning App/construction phase. Bicester masterplan approved and endorsed by partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV4 Developing a Kidlington Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
EEV4 Q1 Establish oversight board for Kidlington Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Membership of the Oversight Board has been established and a first meeting scheduled for July 2024.
EEV4 Q2 Commence engagement with communities and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
EEV4 Q3 Develop draft Kidlington Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
EEV4 Q4 Consult on draft Kidlington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Robert Jolley 	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE1 To develop a framework that determines the effectiveness and positive impact of the wellbeing strategy on our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HRE1 Q1 Draft impact framework based on current data capture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Everybody's Wellbeing Strategy has been promoted to partners and residents at events such as Brighter Futures, Healthy Bicester, Parish Liaison and more. A draft evaluation framework to measure the impact of the strategy has been developed and will provide a quarterly review of the seven areas within the strategy to monitor performance and showcase impact.
Page 43 HRE1 Q2 Consult stakeholders on their contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
HRE1 Q3 Present for sign off and disseminate		Cllr R Pattenden	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HRE1 Q4 Capture impact of the actions delivered from the strategy action plan, including annual surveys and partner contributions. Report on it.		Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE2 To respond to the Food Insecurity Emergency and improve outcomes for our residents through delivery of the Cherwell Food Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HRE2 Q1 Develop an annual delivery plan and report to Overview and Scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Food action delivery plan has been created and is being delivered with community and statutory partners. Due to take this O & S to complete this task.
Page 44 HRE2 Q2 Hold stakeholder event to generate interest and encourage new delivery partners involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
HRE2 Q3 Consider future budget and funding need beyond our own resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HRE2 Q4 Reset Year 2 targets and report on achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE3 To work with partners on delivering against agreed actions to protect women and girls from violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HRE3 Q1 To Review and report on partner activity as agreed in the delivery plan for Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Report received from partner delivering project focussed on reducing violence against women and girls. Milestones as per delivery plan are being met. Highlights include: Two young people supported to complete programme of support and transition out of the project. Supporting the transition of 4 young people to continue engagement following a change of youth worker. Successful recruitment of new Young Women and Girls project coordinator. Delivery of 2 professional trainings to 34 professionals working with young people
HRE3 Q2 To review and report on partner activity as agreed in delivery plan for Q	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
HRE3 Q3 Review and report on Q3 milestones as set out in delivery plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HRE3 Q4 Review success and outcomes and explore opportunities to sustainably continue the work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Tim Hughes 	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE4 To consider and deliver actions that will improve the experience of residents in relation to the cost of living by enabling voluntary and community groups to deliver services through the redistribution of central government grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HRE4 Q1 Refresh the Cost of Living action plan based on the delivery of the 23/24 plan. Search for and secure external funding for this area of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Currently on track with consultation taking place with teams across CDC. Due for submission to O & S for scrutiny in order to complete the task.
HRE4 Q2 Undertake stakeholder engagement to help reflect on good practice and degrees of success and replicability in current programme. Search for and secure external funding for this area or work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
HRE4 Q3 Develop a winter impact strategy and deliver. Search for and secure external funding for this area of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
HRE4 Q4 Monitor and evaluation to coincide with the work of the FIWG. Search for and secure external funding for this area of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ian Boll ■ Nicola Riley 	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - Organisational Health

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ COR1 Identifying future services delivery options, to ensure efficiency, best use of resources and continuous improvement through Transformation Programme and Balanced MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shona Ware ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
COR1 Q1 Agree transformation and budget process/complete current transformation reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shona Ware ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delivering to Plan	Current service reviews have now concluded and where appropriate, recommendations will feed into the agreed 25/26 Transformation & budget process.
Page 48 COR1 Q2 Develop draft transformation and saving proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shona Ware ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q2.
COR1 Q3 Consultation on savings and Transformation Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shona Ware ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
COR1 Q4 Agree Budget and MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shona Ware ■ Stephen Hinds 	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Inclusive Communities

EDI1.01 Engage with, and support local community groups and organisations

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.01.01 Evaluate the quality of council's existing relationships with community groups and organisations which further the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion	Jon Wild	Delivering to plan	All Council network and partnerships have EDI as an ongoing agenda item, working with all partners to identify groups and organisations who may not be a current partner. Promotion of networks and partnerships are advertised via the website and community partnerships and encourage groups to contact the council to become an active partner in the future.
EDI1.01.02 Establish new relationships with community groups focused on ethnicity or national identity with priority given to those with the largest number of members in need in the district	Jon Wild	Delivering to plan	All Council events and networks are open and accessible for all, we work with a multi agency approach to continue to make contacts with new groups and organisations delivering opportunities in a wide range of settings to support the needs of the whole district.
EDI1.01.03 Establish a Language Bank where Cherwell staff proficient in community languages can opt-in to assist with outreach efforts to further the Council's EDI objectives	Claire Cox	Delivering to plan	We are pulling together a plan to launch this request to staff. In addition to this, we have liaised with Communities who are looking to pull together information from trusted partners in the community and voluntary sector that could assist our staff if required.

EDI1.02 Promote inclusive behaviour with residents and service users

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.02.01 Promote externally the Council's work to promote inclusivity	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	We continue to highlight and link to EDI-related themes and awareness weeks. An example is explaining how disabled people are catered for and can vote at the general election. We highlighted 'period equality for all' and the fact we offer grant funding to community groups to provide free sanitary products. We flagged Eid Mubarak and other relevant EDI themes too. We celebrated Pride particularly in our internal communication channels. If communications is aware of positive news we will look to issue stories using press releases and social media to highlight our work.

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.02.02 Add additional pro-forma text on accessibility to the committee meetings pages of the council's website and agenda reports pack	Natasha Clark	Delivering to plan	The 'access to meetings' paragraph on all PDF agenda packs has been amended to advise those with special requirements to contact the named Committee officer in advance of the meeting. Further amendments to individual Committee pages will be made in due course.

EDI1.03 Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.03.01 Work with partners to promote an ethnically diverse representation at our voluntary sector forum	Nicola Riley	Slightly behind schedule	Invitations to the voluntary sector forum will be widened in an effort to hold a more representative event

EDI1.04 Promote equality, diversity & inclusion through our supply chain and strategic partnerships

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.04.01 Make sure EDI implications and clauses are included in all our procurement processes as stated in our contracts and evaluation process guidelines	Shiraz Sheikh	Delivering to plan	Procurement and Contract procedures take into account the Equality Act 2010

EDI1.05 Promote and encourage inclusive behaviour for future generations

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.05.01 Collaborate with partner organisations to involve young people in volunteering activities and engage with them to undertake active participation in their local communities	Nicola Riley	Slightly behind schedule	Initial discussions with some partners has highlighted the costs and challenges associated with young people undertaking volunteer activity. The next step is to explore how this can be best supported with input from schools.
EDI1.05.02 Raise awareness of the role of a councillor from an EDI perspective within political leaders	Shiraz Sheikh	Delivering to plan	We delivered EDI training less than a year ago and also plan to deliver a refresher.

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED11.05.03 Raise awareness of the role of councillors and routes to be becoming a councillor targeted at underrepresented group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Natasha Clark ■ Nicola Riley 	Slightly behind schedule	During Q1 training has been delivered to new members, however specific work to raise awareness across Members has been delayed due to general elections during this period.

ED11.06 Work with all partner organisations to understand diverse needs & create incl. communities

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED11.06.01 Implement the recommendations proposed by the strategic review of partnerships	Nicola Riley	Slightly behind schedule	The review recommended that EDi actions be incorporated into Terms of reference and service level agreements where CDC was the lead organisation.

Inclusive Services

EDI2.01 Ensure information, website and digital services are accessible to all incl. digitally excl

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI2.01.01 Agree, implement, and publicise the new translations and alternative formats policy	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	First draft completed waiting for review and senior management approval.
EDI2.01.02 Complete an Equalities Impact Assessment on the website (including the terms and conditions)	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	Corporate team is working on the EDI audit framework in parallel of commencing a review on the website accessibility (content and technical features).

EDI2.02 Take action to make our buildings accessible to all residents and staff

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI2.02.01 Conduct an access audit on Castle Quay and other major council buildings, unless up to date audits are already available	Mona Walsh	Delivering to plan	Activity scheduled to start later in 24/25
EDI2.02.02 Consider and if appropriate, implement the recommendations of the access audit	Mona Walsh	Delivering to plan	Activity scheduled to start later in 24/25

EDI2.03 Better understand those using services & their needs by collecting information & feedback

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI2.03.01 Implement the recommendations of the review of data from customer contact	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	Analysis of the review is on the way as part of EDI audit of services. Actions to be implemented will be established during Q2 and Q3.

ED12.04 Engage residents, those using services and community groups when planning services

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.04.01 When officer review is completed, bring the draft consultation and engagement framework to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion working group for consideration	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	Final draft of the consultation and engagement strategy is ready for senior management review. Officers are waiting for the working group to be established to add the item to the forward plan.
ED12.04.02 Review and update the accessibility section of the website and consider if its prominence can be raised	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	We regularly look at webpage content and we are reviewing this section https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/5/your-council/353/accessibility . It does come up as the top search item when you search "accessibility" which is positive. The link to this section appears on the bottom of all council webpages so is prominent to web visitors who want to know more or who need it. A screen reader should pick this up.

ED12.05 Plan and deliver services that promote inclusion

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.05.01 Complete an Equalities Impact Assessments on all services and contracts	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	As a first step an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy audit is being developed, due to be reviewed and approved by senior management during the summer, to provide framework for this project.

Inclusive Workplaces

EDI3.01 Improve diversity of our organisation at all levels to be representative of our communities

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.01.01 Introduce a yearly report to Personnel Committee, which splits the demographic information on the Council's workforce by grade and department	Claire Cox	Delivering to plan	Quarterly workforce statistics are provided to Personnel Committee on a quarterly basis, which includes annual comparisons at year end. The report provides EDI data on our workforce by grade. We do not break this down by department as some departments are small and we do not want to breach GDPR.

EDI3.02 Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI 3.02.01 Within the annual report referenced in EDI3.01, include a short update on networks & virtual social groups for employees interested in particular causes	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	This is on our radar for the 24/25 annual report, and we will liaise with the Performance and Insight team at the relevant point to help include an appropriate update.

EDI3.03 Provide a supportive environment so all staff can reach their potential

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.03.01 Deliver new communication plan which promotes development opportunities for the Council's workforce	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	We have a new communications coordinator who is assisting with in internal communications and supporting HR by highlighting development support. We are regularly raising training opportunities and flagging up the systems we have in place for staff to gain new skills such as Bookboon. We also use the Intranet via the events section or news carousel to highlight new items.
EDI 3.03.02 Conduct an access audit on Castle Quay and other major council buildings (internal)	Mona Walsh	Delivering to plan	Activity scheduled to start later in 24/25

EDI3.04 Identify and tackle discrimination in all its forms

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.04.01 Complete the review and approval by Personnel Committee of the remaining HR policies	Claire Cox	Delivering to plan	We are continuing with our refresh of all HR Policies, and where required, devising new ones. Our policies are now all on a 3-year rolling refresh programme.

EDI3.05 Provide managers with the skills to support employees with different needs

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.05.01 Integrate additional inclusion training for manager into the mandatory e-learning suite	Teresa Reed	Delivering to plan	All staff are required to complete EDI e-learning, we are exploring other options for managers on inclusion training.

EDI3.06 Train our staff to identify and avoid unconscious bias and deliver inclusive services.

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.06.01 Provide an update on the roll out of unconscious bias training & to what extent the Council has been able to gauge its effectiveness	Teresa Reed	Delivering to plan	We have rolled out management recruitment training which includes a section on unconscious bias. We are running these session in a regular basis to ensure all managers are trained. All staff are required to complete EDI e-learning, we are exploring other options for managers on inclusion training.

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This report is public	
New Cherwell District Council Allocations Scheme	
Committee	Overview and Scrutiny
Date of Committee	10 September 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Housing - Councillor Chris Pruden
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	13 June 2024
Report of	Assistant Director, Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

Purpose of report

To consider the draft Housing Allocations Scheme and make comments for consideration by Executive.

1. Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the new drafted Housing Allocations Scheme and recommend adoption by the Executive.
- 1.2 Recommend to Executive that they receive a summary of the consultation responses and give those consideration.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Allocations Scheme is the Policy that ensures the fair allocation of social housing properties within district and is used for the administration of the waiting list for social housing, which is part of our statutory duties.
- 2.2 The Council reviews its scheme regularly to ensure it remains compliant with legislation and is also still meeting the needs of applicants in the best way
- 2.3 A public and stakeholder consultation is currently taking place on the draft policy. This is due to close on 1 October 2024, ahead of the Executive meeting in December.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	There are no new financial implications outlined in the report as the existing arrangement is captured in the base revenue budget Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 22 May 2024			
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report or the new scheme. Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services, 28 May 2024			
Risk Management	As it is part of our statutory housing duties, to not review the policy to ensure it is compliant with legislation, is fair and inclusive and is meeting the needs of the District would present a risk. Therefore, a regular review of this policy is prudent as part of mitigating actions for this risk. This and any further risks will be managed through the Service Operational Risk and will be escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when deemed necessary. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 May 2024			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact	x			An Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment has been completed and was presented to the Executive.
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	x			The Allocations Scheme provides a framework of how social housing is allocated within Cherwell. It ensures the prioritisation of certain household circumstances based on what the legislation or on local demand factors. The work of the team and support provided ensures that vulnerable groups are able to access the services of the team.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	x			Many vulnerable groups assisted by the team and who are accessing the waiting list for housing will have protected characteristics. As part of any application, all protected characteristics that an applicant may have been captured as part of this process. This is primarily for monitoring purposes, but it does allow for adjustments to be made.
Climate & Environmental Impact		x		Policy does not relate to delivery of new homes or the quality of existing property
ICT & Digital Impact		x		Not applicable
Data Impact		x		Not applicable

Procurement & subsidy		x		Not applicable
Council Priorities	Housing that meets your needs			
Human Resources	Not applicable			
Property	Not applicable			
Consultation & Engagement	Public consultation is underway			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 As part of statutory duties, the Council manages the waiting list for social housing and also allocates social housing properties within Cherwell on behalf of Registered Providers of social housing that have housing stock within the district. The Council no longer has a significant stock holding of its own following a transfer of its housing stock to what is now Sanctuary Housing. The waiting list comprises of around 2000 households that have varying degrees of housing need. The prioritisation of this need is set out within the Allocations Scheme.
- 3.2 The Allocations Scheme provides the framework for assessment and prioritisation of housing applicants. The Allocations Scheme just covers allocation of social housing and does not cover temporary accommodation, supported accommodation, Extra Care or Shared Ownership schemes.
- 3.3 The prioritisation and administration of housing applications and applicants is outlined within legislation; however, Council's do have some flexibilities to be able to manage and administer their own schemes and prioritise certain applicant circumstances.
- 3.4 The Allocations Scheme was last reviewed in 2021. It is good practice to regularly review schemes to ensure they are compliant with legislation but also to respond to emerging trends and needs.
- 3.5 Following approval by the Executive on 9 July, the new scheme has commenced public and stakeholder consultation. Following conclusion of the consultation and consideration of comments, a final version will be presented for approval at the Executive.

4. Details

- 4.1 The report and its appendices detail the principal changes that the new draft Allocations Scheme makes to the existing scheme that is currently in operation. This includes a summary table of the main changes and the rationale for the change being made.

4.2 However, below is a brief summary of some of the main changes proposed

- An increase in priority for those who are homeless
- A creation of a banding for survivors of Domestic Abuse.
- A review of the income and savings thresholds, which dictate who may be eligible to join the register
- A change in the way overcrowded households are administered
- Additional preference given to those covered by the Armed Forces Covenant
- To accommodate the changes outlined within the report for the future administration of allocations for Oxford's Unmet Housing Need

4.3 The current consultation that is ongoing has included all the major stakeholders involved in housing and the allocation of property. This includes partners that work for Registered Providers of social housing and statutory agencies, such as health and social care. A summary of the consultation comments and actions taken as a result will accompany the final version of the Allocations Scheme presented at the Executive.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 Not applicable.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 It is important that the Council has up to date policies and procedures for its statutory and key service areas and it is important that they are legislatively and operationally sound. A periodic review of policies is therefore appropriate. Where appropriate, it is important that consultation is undertaken on new policy to ensure that the views of stakeholders are understood and taken account of.

Decision Information

Key Decision	Not applicable
Subject to Call in	Not applicable
If not, why not subject to call in	Not applicable
Ward(s) Affected	All wards

Document Information

Appendices	
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Appendix 1	New Allocations Scheme – draft for consultation
Appendix 2	New Allocations Scheme - summary of main changes
Appendix 3	Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Richard Smith – Head of Housing
Report Author contact details	richard.smith@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221640

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Housing Allocation Scheme

TBC 2025

DRAFT

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1. Introduction and Overview

1.1 Introduction

Cherwell District Council (CDC) transferred its housing stock, which is now owned by Sanctuary Housing Group, through a Large-Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT). Therefore, it is important to note that with the exception of a small number of units this Housing Allocation Scheme relates primarily to housing owned by Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing.

In Cherwell, the demand for social housing is greater than the number of homes available. This Housing Allocation Scheme describes how CDC prioritises housing applicants and ensures that those in greatest housing need, including as described by the legal definition of Reasonable Preference in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) (the Act), are given appropriate priority to access available social housing. Whilst CDC will nominate applicants to housing that is owned by RPs, in accordance with this Housing Allocation Scheme, RPs will also have due regard to their own lettings policies when letting their properties.

This Housing Allocation Scheme applies to:

- new applicants
- current applicants
- existing tenants of a RP who want to transfer either with their current landlord or to another RP

This Housing Allocation Scheme sets out in detail who is eligible and who will qualify to join the housing register as well as how this assessment is made. It also sets out how applicants can apply for and access housing and what service standards an applicant can expect from CDC.

The vast majority of the housing that CDC allocates under this Housing Allocation Scheme is through a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system (www.cherwell-homechoice.org.uk) which allows applicants to view available properties and express interest by making bids.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The key objectives of this Housing Allocation Scheme are to:

- provide housing applicants in Cherwell with a fair and transparent system by which they are prioritised for affordable housing
- help applicants most in housing need
- promote the development of sustainable, mixed communities and neighbourhoods of choice
- encourage residents to access employment, education and training
- make efficient use of CDC's resources and those of its partner RPs

CDC designed this Housing Allocation Scheme to meet all legal requirements and to support and contribute towards the objectives of its Housing Strategy. CDC's Housing Strategy, and the ways in which it provides advice and assistance to home seekers on a whole range of housing options, including access to the private rented sector and low cost homeownership, can be found on CDC's website at www.cherwell.gov.uk.

1.3 The legal context

Part VI of the Act requires local authorities to make all allocations and nominations in accordance with a Housing Allocation Scheme. A summary of the Housing Allocation Scheme must be published and made available free of charge to any person who asks for a copy. A summary of this Housing Allocation Scheme is available at CDC's offices and on CDC's website. This document is the full version of the Housing Allocation Scheme and is available for inspection at CDC's main office.

The Act requires local authorities to give Reasonable Preference in their Housing Allocation Scheme to people with specific needs. This includes homeless people, those who need to move on welfare or medical grounds, people living in unsatisfactory housing and those who would face hardship unless they moved to a particular locality within the local authority's area.

The Act also requires local authorities to state within their Housing Allocation Scheme what its position is on offering applicants a choice of housing or offering them the opportunity to express preference about the housing to be allocated to them.

This Housing Allocation Scheme complies with the requirements of the Act and takes into account the various codes of guidance issued by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government including:

- Providing social housing for local people (December 2013)
- Right to Move and social housing allocations (March 2015)
- Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse (January 2022)
- Improving access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces (June 2020)
- Allocation of Accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England (October 2023)

The Housing Allocation Scheme is drafted to ensure that it is compatible with CDC's equality duties, under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The 9 protected characteristics are age, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, and gender reassignment.

Further, this Housing Allocation Scheme has taken into account all other relevant legislation and case law, CDC's Homelessness Strategy and Tenancy Strategy and CDC's duties under the Care Act 2014.

In summary this Housing Allocation Scheme has considered:

- CDC's statutory obligations and discretion as to who is eligible for housing allocation
- CDC's statutory obligation to provide Reasonable Preference to certain categories of applicants set out by law
- CDC's statutory obligations and discretions to grant 'additional preference' and/or to determine priority between applicants with Reasonable Preference
- the general and specific statutory discretions CDC can exercise when allocating housing in support of its Housing Strategy
- the local flexibility offered through the Localism Act (2011)

This Housing Allocation Scheme, or the manner in which CDC allocates housing under this Housing Allocation Scheme, may be amended and updated from time to time to take account of any new or updated procedures, guidance, regulations and legislation. CDC will always act in accordance with the most up to date guidance, regulations and legislation which are relevant to this Housing Allocation Scheme and will endeavour to reflect those changes in formal written updates as soon as possible.

1.4 Advice and assistance

CDC acknowledges that this Housing Allocation Scheme requires the active participation of housing applicants and to reflect this, CDC aims to provide advice and assistance to ensure that no person is disadvantaged by the way the scheme operates.

This full version of the Housing Allocation Scheme outlines:

- the procedures for applying to the Housing Allocation Scheme and for bidding for available homes
- how applicants are prioritised under this Housing Allocation Scheme
- how successful applicants will be selected by CDC
- rules on how homes will be advertised including bidding cycles and restrictive labelling
- review procedures

Applicants will also be provided with information regarding their own application which will include:

- what band is applied to their application under this Housing Allocation Scheme
- what size properties they are eligible for
- what information and documentation they need to provide for CDC to verify their circumstances and when this information will need to be provided
- the reasons for a disqualification and the period of time the applicant will be disqualified for.

In partnership with RPs, CDC endeavours for all property advertisements to provide relevant property information so that applicants can make informed choices. The CBL scheme promotes informed choices and expects to guide applicants to bid only for properties they would like to secure. Advertisements are expected to include as a minimum:

- location
- property type, size and floor level
- nature of tenancy on offer
- type of heating
- whether the property has a garden
- whether parking is available
- the amount of rent and any other charges that are payable
- at least one photo of the property
- the Energy Performance Certificate rating
- The landlord (RP)

Applicants who have any difficulty reading or understanding this Housing Allocation Scheme will be offered the following services, where required:

- an interpretation service if their first language is not English
- signing if speech or hearing is impaired
- provision of documents in large print if an applicant is visually impaired

Appendix 1

- a face to face or telephone appointment to explain the content of this document and information about where independent advice can be obtained about this Housing Allocation Scheme

As there are likely to be many more applicants than properties available, CDC will also provide information about other housing options. This will include:

- advice on RPs allocations outside of this Housing Allocation Scheme
- advice on renting in the private sector
- advice on available low-cost home ownership options
- advice on welfare benefits, employment, education and training
- Enhanced Housing Options Service – self-help tool via the website at www.cherwell-homechoice.org.uk

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2. Allocations and how to apply

2.1 How to make an application

To apply to join the housing register applicants must complete a housing register application form. This can be completed online at www.Cherwell-HomeChoice.org.uk.

Assisted completion of an application form over the phone is available for those who do not have internet access or those who require additional help to complete the online form.

CDC aims to assess applications and notify applicants of the outcome of their housing register application within 15 working days of the application being submitted. If further information or documentation is required, CDC aims to notify applicants of the outcome within 15 working days of all required information or documentation being submitted.

If the required supporting information or documentation is not provided by the applicants, the application cannot be made active. If the information is not received within 15 working days of the application being submitted the application will be closed.

More information about how to apply for social housing in Cherwell is available on CDC's website.

An applicant who requires assistance should call CDC's Customer Service Team on 01295 227004 or email housingregister@cherwell-dc.gov.uk.

2.2 Bidding for available properties

Once applicants are accepted onto the housing register, they can start bidding for properties. CDC advertises all properties through its nomination agreements with partner RPs through its Choice Based Letting (CBL) scheme. The eligibility of applicant's bids received will be checked against the labelling used in the advertisement. Any ineligible bids will be skipped. Where multiple bids are received for the same property, the allocation of that property will be based on the Band applied to the application and waiting time. See section 7.3 for more information on how applications are prioritised.

2.3 What are 'Allocations' under this scheme?

An 'allocation' of accommodation under this Housing Allocation Scheme is the nomination by CDC of a person to be an Assured or an Assured Shorthold tenant of a RP's housing accommodation. Often the tenancy offered by the RP will be a 'Starter Tenant' meaning that the RP will grant an Assured Shorthold Tenancy for a set 'probationary' period (usually 12 months). Provided that the tenant successfully completes the 'probationary' period the RP will grant an Assured Tenancy.

2.4 Exempt Allocations – Accommodation provided for lettings that is not covered by this scheme

The following are not 'allocations' under this scheme:

- a) an introductory / starter tenancy becoming a secure / assured tenancy
- b) provision of non-secure temporary accommodation in discharge of any homelessness duty or power

3. Choice and constraints

3.1 Policy on expressing choice of rehousing area

The choice of housing that CDC can offer is limited by the housing available and the responsibilities it has to some groups in housing need, such as those found to be statutorily homeless.

Most applicants will be able to bid using Choice Based Lettings (CBL) to apply for properties they have been assessed as eligible for across Cherwell. There are some circumstances in which this will not apply which are outlined in section 9.1 (auto-bidding).

CDC requests that applicants state those areas where they believe they cannot live due to fear or actual violence, harassment or domestic abuse at the point they make an application to the housing register. When considering if offers of housing are reasonable, CDC must be satisfied that such actions would likely to be carried out in those areas. Consideration must also be given as to how an allocation in Cherwell would provide a place of safety for those at risk.

3.2 Statutory Homeless Applicants

All statutory homeless households owed the homeless relief duty as defined in Section 189B of the Act will be placed on automatic bidding at the point a relief duty is accepted.

To discharge a statutory homeless duty the local authority will make 1 final offer of housing. To be deemed a final offer the accommodation must be reasonable and suitable for the needs of the household. This may be social housing, private rented or supported accommodation. An application to the Housing Register will be suspended until the suitability and reasonableness of the final offer is confirmed. Refusal of a reasonable and suitable final offer will result in the housing register application being closed and the applicant being disqualified from re-joining the housing register for a period of 6 months.

Whilst we consider each applicant's personal circumstances; given the good transport links and access to employment, education, health and support services throughout our district it is likely an offer anywhere within Cherwell will be considered suitable as a final offer.

As above, applicants must state if there are areas where they believe they cannot live due to fear or actual violence, harassment or domestic abuse at the point they make an application to the housing register. When considering if offers of housing are reasonable and suitable, CDC must be satisfied that such actions would likely to be carried out. Consideration must also be given as to how an allocation in Cherwell would provide a place of safety for those at risk.

3.3 Move-on from Supported Accommodation

CDC has protocols in place with providers of supported accommodation to assist clients who are ready to move-on to independent living. A Band 2 will be applied to the applications of households who are approved for move-on from supported accommodation which acknowledges that such accommodation is a scarce resource and should be made available as soon as possible for the next household who requires support.

Auto-bidding will be applied to applications of those approved for Move-on.

The council will make 1 final offer of housing to facilitate an approved move-on. To be deemed a final offer the accommodation must be reasonable and suitable for the needs of the household. This may be social housing, private rented or further supported accommodation. An application to the Housing Register will be suspended until the suitability and reasonableness of the final offer is confirmed. Refusal of a reasonable and suitable final offer of housing will result in the housing register application being closed and the applicant being disqualified from re-joining the housing register for a period of 6 months.

Whilst we will consider each applicant's personal circumstances; given the good transport links and access to employment, education, health and support services throughout our district it is likely an offer anywhere within Cherwell will be considered suitable as a final offer.

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4. Eligibility and qualification criteria

This section provides detail on how CDC determines whether any applicant is eligible and qualifies to join the housing register.

4.1 Who can apply to the Housing Register

Anyone can apply to join the housing register. On receipt of an application to join the housing register, CDC will consider:

- whether the applicant/s are eligible for an allocation of social housing
- whether the applicant/s meet the qualification criteria (outlined in section X)

4.2 Young person under 18 years

In order to qualify to join the housing register, any applicant or joint applicant aged 16 or 17 years old must meet one or more of the following conditions as being:

- accepted as homeless under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996
- over the age of 16 where a referral for assistance has been made by Social Services authorities under Section 27 of the Children Act 1989
- a young person who is deemed a relevant or eligible child under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 as amended.

In each case, CDC will undertake a joint assessment with Social Services of the applicant's housing, care and support needs to ensure that adequate support is available.

In order to secure accommodation any person under 18 years of age must provide details of a suitable guarantor who will sign the applicant's tenancy agreement. Applicants under the age of 18 who are eligible can only be considered for supported accommodation provided by CDC's RP partners unless accepted as statutory homeless or in exceptional circumstances.

4.3 Care leavers

Any person over the age of 18 who is a care leaver, having been looked after by Oxfordshire Children's Services under Section 20 of the Care Act 2014, and has been accommodated anywhere within the county of Oxfordshire, or outside the district, will be treated as if they have a local connection to Cherwell District and therefore qualify to apply for housing accommodation under this Housing Allocation Scheme. Care leavers who have been placed in the district by another local authority for a considerable period will also be given consideration.

4.4 Councillors, employees and their close relatives

This Housing Allocation Scheme is designed to ensure that CDC (and any relevant organisation) is transparent and equitable when letting homes to staff, its Councillors or any of their relatives. This Housing Allocation Scheme is open to any eligible applicant who meets the qualification criteria. Council staff, Councillors and their relatives are treated as any other applicant and will not gain any advantage or any preferential treatment in the course of their application, nor shall they be disadvantaged. For further information see Appendix 2.

4.5 Members of the Armed Forces

Certain members of the Armed Forces community are exempt from any residency requirements, which prevents local authorities from applying a local connection test to disqualify such applicants from their housing registers and this is reflected in our local connection criteria. We retain discretion to deal with individual cases where there are exceptional circumstances and are aware that such circumstances may arise in relation to the wider Armed Forces community. We recognise that the requirement for Service personnel to move from base-to-base can impact on other family members, including for example adult children who also may no longer be able to remain in the family home.

Local authorities are required to frame their Housing Allocation Scheme to give additional preference to certain members of the Armed Forces community, where they fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories and have urgent housing needs. These are:

- a) Former members of the Regular Armed Forces
- b) Serving members of the Regular Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- c) Serving or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- d) Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

To give this additional preference, CDC will seek to allocate a suitable home through a direct match for members of the Armed Forces community as outlined above in cases where a Band 1 (urgent housing need) has been applied to their application.

4.6 Who can and cannot be included on a housing register application

The persons who can be included on a housing application must be members of the applicant's immediate family who normally live with the applicant. Any other person will only be included on an application if CDC is satisfied that it is reasonable for that person to live with the applicant. This will exclude lodgers or anyone subletting from the applicant. Anyone over 16 years included on an application as part of a household will also be included in the full assessment of the applicant and any joint applicant's income, savings, capital and assets.

For the purposes of this Housing Allocation Scheme a child is defined as someone who is either under the age of 16 or who is still dependant on the applicant e.g. due to continuing education.

4.7 Who cannot be accepted onto the Housing Register

CDC will refuse an application to join the housing register in the following circumstances:

4.8 Those who are not eligible

Persons from abroad

A person may not be allocated accommodation under Part VI of the Act 1996 if he or she is a person from abroad who is ineligible for an allocation under s.160ZA.

There are two categories for the purposes of s.160ZA:

- i. a person subject to immigration control - such a person is not eligible for an allocation of accommodation unless he or she comes within a class prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State (s.160ZA (2)), and
- ii. a person from abroad other than a person subject to immigration control - regulations may provide for other descriptions of persons from abroad who, although not subject to immigration control, are to be treated as ineligible for an allocation of accommodation (s.160ZA (4)).

The regulations setting out which classes of persons from abroad are eligible or ineligible for an allocation are the Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006 No.1294) ('the Eligibility Regulations').

Persons who can produce evidence of an in-time appeal of their leave to remain will be treated as though they continue to have leave to remain.

4.9 Those who are disqualified

4.9.1 Unacceptable behaviour

CDC will disqualify an applicant from the housing register if the applicant, or any member of their household, has behaved in an unacceptable way as described in this Housing Allocation Scheme and at the time of their application to the housing register, they are still considered by CDC to be unsuitable to be a tenant by reason of that behaviour.

CDC considers that unacceptable behaviour includes the following circumstances:

Fraud or deception

Applicants will not qualify to join the housing register in cases where they have:

- Obtained a tenancy by deception, including by making false, misleading or omissive statement(s).
- Paid money or money's worth to obtain a social tenancy including by exchanging properties with another social tenant.
- Made false, misleading or omissive statement(s) in connection with a housing register application, homelessness application or benefit claim or award.

Convictions, anti-social behaviour and breaches of tenancy

Applicants will not qualify to join the housing register in cases where they have:

- Been evicted from private or social rented housing for any form of anti-social behaviour or illegal subletting, or where there has been formal action taken by the landlord in relation to the applicant, the applicant's household or his/her visitors for causing a nuisance, annoyance or otherwise anti-social behaviour to others including, but not limited to neighbours, visitors, the landlord or a person employed in connection with the exercise of the landlord's management functions.
- Used their property for an immoral or illegal purpose.
- Been convicted of a criminal offence that makes the tenant unsuitable to be a tenant, including in relation to domestic violence.
- Been subject to an injunction or order in relation to their anti-social behaviour inside or outside of the home.
- Assaulted, threatened or abused the landlord, a person employed in connection with the exercise of the landlord's management functions, CDC or one of the CDC's partner agencies including, but not limited to, providers of housing and housing related support services.
- Been responsible for the deterioration of a property, its fixtures, fittings or furniture provided for use under the tenancy and the deterioration was due to neglectful or deliberate acts by applicant, the applicant's household or his/her visitors.

Rent arrears and other housing related debts

Applicants will not be disqualified from the housing register for having housing related debt including but not limited to rent arrears, service charges, chargeable repairs (including Cherwell Bond Scheme or temporary accommodation debt) or associated court costs and fees.

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However, applicants must ensure that a repayment plan is in place to reduce any housing related debt as this must be cleared or substantially reduced before an offer of accommodation can be made by a provider of social housing.

Applicants will not be nominated to an RP for a potential offer of accommodation unless outstanding housing related debt is cleared in full, or the applicant can evidence that substantial efforts have been made to address their housing related debt.

Substantial efforts would typically include a sustained repayment pattern over a period of at least 12 months and with any housing related debts outstanding being no more than the equivalent of 8 weeks' rent.

CDC will be sympathetic toward former service personnel or former partners of service personnel who have accrued mesne profit debt. Occupants of Service Families Accommodation who remain in residence following the expiry of a notice to vacate and have become irregular occupants can be charged mesne profit charges for trespass. This may occur after service personnel leave the Armed Forces, or estranged partners remain in occupation after a relationship breakdown. CDC understands that housing costs support for mesne profit charges is not available within Universal Credit, nor is Housing Benefit available to those living in a Crown Property. As a result, occupants may accrue mesne profit debt. Occupants may provide a copy of their notice to vacate or Certificate of cessation of Entitlement to Service Families Accommodation as evidence that they are no longer able to occupy their home.

4.9.2 Duration of disqualification

Other than in exceptional circumstances, the maximum period of disqualification will be 5 years from the date of the last incident of, or conviction for, unacceptable behaviour as defined by this Housing Allocation Scheme. The minimum period of disqualification will be 12 months.

CDC will use the following matrix as a guide for officers to determine the appropriate period of disqualification for unacceptable behaviour:

	Low culpability	Medium culpability	High culpability
Low harm	12 months	24 months	36 months
Medium harm	24 months	36 months	48 months
High harm	36 months	48 months	60 months

The following examples may be used by officers to determine the levels of culpability and harm in applying the above matrix, however, the list is not exhaustive and other matters can be taken into account at the officers' discretion. Any reference to an applicant also includes the joint applicant and any member of his or her household:

Example of factors indicating higher culpability:

- Applicant has a previous history or pattern of unacceptable behaviour or convictions
- Failure to respond to warnings in relation to unacceptable behaviour
- Applicant knowingly and purposefully provided false, misleading or omissive information
- Abuse of power or position of trust
- Gratuitous violence or wilful damage or vandalism caused

- Use of weapons, or involvement in gangs

Examples of factors indicating lower culpability:

- First or only one incident of unacceptable behaviour
- Applicant has carelessly but inadvertently provided inaccurate information
- Actions were as a result of a negative environment, or circumstances and evidence demonstrate that this has now positively changed.

Examples of factors indicating a higher degree of harm:

- Multiple or vulnerable people were directly affected or targeted including minority groups or those with protected characteristics.
- A person has been physically, psychological or emotionally harmed or threatened by the applicant or his/her actions
- Sustained behaviour or incident
- The offence or incident was directed at public sector workers or workers acting in connection with the landlord's management functions.
- High value of damage to property

Examples of factors indicating lower degree of harm

- No act of violence or lasting psychological harm on another person
- A high degree of provocation was directed at the applicant
- Mental illness or disability affected the decisions made
- The direct role taken in carrying out the action/s was minimal
- Full cooperation and remorse following the incidents
- Accidental or low value of damage to property

If further unacceptable behaviour occurs during the period where the applicants are disqualified, further periods of disqualification from the housing register may be applied in relation to that behaviour.

After the relevant period of disqualification from the housing register has elapsed, the applicants must re-apply to the housing register for an up-to-date assessment of their eligibility, qualification and housing circumstances to be completed.

If the applicant has a change in their circumstances during a period of disqualification from the housing register, they may submit a new application for this to be assessed and considered. Any further application will be assessed in accordance with this Housing Allocation Scheme.

4.9.3 No local / district connection to Cherwell

Applicants without a local connection to Cherwell will not qualify to join CDC's housing register. In order to be considered to have a local connection to Cherwell applicants will need to either:

1. have resided in Cherwell for a period of at least 6 out of the last 12 months continuously prior to an application to join the housing register
2. have previously resided in Cherwell for 3 out of the past 5 years
3. have a contract of employment to work within Cherwell for a minimum of 16 hours per week excluding short-term, marginal, temporary and voluntary work. Employees on 'zero hour' contracts must demonstrate a consistent previous record of, or clear expectation to work for a minimum of 16 hours per week.

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4. have a contract of employment as a Category 1, 2, 3 or 4 key worker (as defined by section 7.4 of this scheme) to work in Oxfordshire for a minimum of 16 hours per week excluding short-term, marginal, temporary and voluntary work. Employees on 'zero hour' contracts must demonstrate a consistent previous record of, or clear expectation to work for a minimum of 16 hours per week.
5. have immediate family members, who currently live in Cherwell and have lived in Cherwell for at least the last 5 years, where there has been frequent contact and there is a clear commitment to, and / or dependency on, those family members immediately prior to the date of application.
6. be a household with a Right to Move
7. be leaving the care of Oxfordshire Children's Services;
8. be a household who CDC has a duty or agreement to secure accommodation for through a national Government resettlement scheme
9. be living in a refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation in the district having escaped domestic abuse in another local authority area.
10. be part of an agreed reciprocal arrangement with another local authority. Or
11. have a special reason for needing to live in the area

Exceptions to the above local connection requirements are:

- Those who are currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces or who were serving in the Regular Forces at any time in the 5 years preceding their application to join the housing register.
- Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- Serving or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- Divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Service personnel who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following a breakdown in their relationship with their Service spouse or partner.
- Existing social housing tenants, who need to move into CDC's district, either from another local authority area in England, or from one location to another within Cherwell, for work related reasons to avoid hardship (Right to Move Applicants).

Immediate family members are defined by CDC as parents, children, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren (in each case including step relatives and fostered or adopted children), where there is evidence of frequent contact, commitment to, and/or dependency on, those family members.

In order to establish a local connection to Cherwell through a period of residence as above this must be a settled address of the applicant's own choice. As such a period of residence will not contribute towards establishing a local connection for the purpose of this Housing Allocation Scheme when the applicants reside in Cherwell because they are:

- in prison
- resident in a bail hostel or other such accommodation
- detained under the Mental Health Act
- receiving hospital treatment
- in occupation of a mobile home, caravan or motor caravan which is not placed on a registered residential site

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- in occupation of a holiday letting, this includes a permanent building, hotel or bed and breakfast accommodation for the purposes of a holiday
- placed in temporary or private sector accommodation by another housing authority
- placed in supported accommodation by another local authority
- a rough sleeper who moved to Cherwell from another district and who retained a local connection to another authority at the time of moving.

Applicants should note that the above list is illustrative only and not exhaustive. CDC retains discretion to determine whether any individual applicant can establish a local/district connection or not based on each applicant's individual circumstances.

Some homes in Cherwell will be built with the purpose of meeting the unmet housing needs of Oxford. As such CDC will seek to allocate these homes on the first letting to those who have a local connection to Oxford. For this purpose, the local connection criteria outlined in this section is applicable to those with Oxford connections as well as Cherwell connections and where the word Cherwell is detailed in this section this can be read to also include Oxford. Applicants with a connection to Oxford will receive additional preference for the first letting of those homes built to meet Oxford's unmet housing needs. Those with a local connection above which is not connected to Oxford will receive additional preference over those who do not for all other homes.

4.9.4 Homeowners

Regardless of the level of equity held, applicants or members of their household who already own their own home (including freehold, leasehold, under a mortgage, shared ownership or having marital rights to any of these) will not, subject to the exceptions below, qualify to join the housing register.

- Owner occupiers aged 55 and over who cannot stay in their own home as it does not meet their medical or mobility needs, require sheltered or extra-care housing and do not have sufficient financial resources to meet their housing needs in the private sector or elsewhere and could not resolve this by selling their owned home. These applicants will qualify for sheltered or extra care accommodation only.
- Owner occupiers who can demonstrate that their specific circumstances mean that they need to apply for social housing as detailed in a medical and/or social/welfare need assessment which stipulates the nature of the accommodation that is required which can be provided by social housing but cannot be obtained by the applicant in the private sector and this could not be resolved by the applicant selling his/her owned home.
- Owner occupiers who are experiencing financial hardship and are unable to financially sustain their accommodation and have been assessed by the Housing Options or Housing Allocations Team who have confirmed this to be the case based on the evidence supplied.

CDC will also take into consideration any previous disposal of assets which will include disposals for nil (for example, transfer of ownership) or below market rate value. Previous homeowners who have transferred or disposed of their home, as above, will not qualify to join the housing register.

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Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of their income, savings and assets if an affordability assessment is required. If applicants fail to provide sufficient evidence, then their application cannot be assessed and will not progress further.

If an assessment has to be made, for example on medical grounds, consideration will be given to the following:

- whether the applicant can sell their current home
- the expected equity after the proposed sale of the property
- the applicant's current financial circumstances and commitments
- whether the applicant could obtain a mortgage
- the supply and affordability of private rented or other forms of accommodation suitable for the applicant's specific needs
- whether the applicant's housing need can be met in the private sector, taking into consideration the cost of housing in Cherwell

Homeowners who qualify to join the housing register because of exceptional circumstances must make best endeavours to ensure that the owned property is sold within 12 months of accepting an offer of social housing.

4.9.5 Sufficient financial resources

Applicants with financial assets (including capital, savings, stocks, bonds, shares and unit trusts but not including disability related welfare benefits) that when combined with their gross annual household income exceeds £60,000 will not qualify to join the housing register. For applicants who require 3-bedroom homes or larger the cap on financial assets and gross annual household income is £80,000.

This calculation will take into account the gross annual household income and financial assets of the main applicant, joint applicant and their spouse, civil partner and/or partner where they are to reside in the accommodation together as well as any other adult household members who are not in full-time education. A combination of income and financial assets in excess of £60,000, or £80,000 for households who require 3-bedrooms or larger is sufficient to enable applicants to secure accommodation in the private sector.

This assessment does not apply to existing social housing tenants in Cherwell who are seeking to down-size.

Special consideration and exception may be given to applicants who require larger or more specialist accommodation in cases where it can be evidenced that the typical accommodation required cannot be obtained in the private sector based on the level of income and financial assets they have.

Any lump sum received by a member of the Armed Forces as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service will be disregarded for the purpose of this assessment.

Where appropriate CDC will take into account any previous disposals of financial assets which will include disposals for nil (for example, transfer of ownership) or below market rate value.

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Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of their income and financial assets and if this is not provided an application cannot be assessed and will not progress further.

The £80,000 financial assets and gross household income cap as detailed above for applicants who require 3-bedrooms, or more is in line with the gross household income cap for grant funded affordable home ownership as set out in Home England's Capital Funding Guide (as of 29 February 2024). As such the £80,000 cap in this Housing Allocation Scheme may be increased or decreased to remain in line with any updates to this guidance.

4.9.6 Refusal of offers from the Housing Register

Applications will be disqualified from the housing register for six months in cases where an offer of accommodation which the council considers to be suitable has been refused in the following circumstances:

- All households accepted by CDC under the Homeless Relief Duty or Main Duty who have refused one suitable offer of accommodation and to whom the homelessness duty has been discharged by CDC under Part VII of the Act 1996.
- Applicants awarded a Move-on Priority from supported accommodation who have refused one suitable offer of accommodation.
- All other applicants who have refused three suitable offers of accommodation

In these cases, applicants will be advised of their right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation offered.

4.9.7 How serious offenders are dealt with under this scheme

At the time an application is made, an applicant must declare if they or anyone who will be residing with them has a conviction of a criminal offence or anti-social behaviour order. These will be taken into consideration when assessing if an applicant qualifies to join the housing register.

CDC will take advice and guidance from other agencies, including the police and probation services, to assess the risk to the community of any applicant who has been convicted of an offence and who may present a risk to potential neighbours and/or communities.

CDC's housing department must cooperate with the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in Oxfordshire. Applicants subject to MAPPA arrangements can apply for properties in the normal way. If successful, the Responsible Authority will decide if the property is a suitable allocation for the individual.

Applicants have the right to request a review of any decision made by CDC regardless of whether they are subject to MAPPA. For more information on reviews see section 11.

5. The Banding Scheme

CDC determines the relative priority that is applied to each application to the housing register. CDC is required to give Reasonable Preference in this Housing Allocation Scheme to certain categories of applicant. These Reasonable Preference categories cover:

- People who are homeless as defined by Part VII of the Act
- People who are owed a duty by CDC under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Act.
- People occupying insanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability) (for further information see Appendix 4 and 5)
- People who need to move to a particular locality within Cherwell to avoid hardship to themselves or others

5.1 The Structure of the Banding Scheme

The banding scheme consists of four bands as summarised in this section.

- Band 1 – **Urgent** need to move
- Band 2 – **Significant** need to move
- Band 3 – **Moderate** need to move
- Band 4 – **Low** need to move

5.1.1 Band 1 Categories – Urgent need to move

Hospital discharge

Those who are in hospital or a drug or alcohol rehabilitation centre and cannot be discharged because they need a secure base to continue their recovery and are homeless. Or, have a home but cannot be discharged because it is unsuitable for their recovery or medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations due to cost, structural difficulties or the property cannot be adapted within a reasonable amount of time. Therefore, the applicant cannot be discharged until suitable housing is secured.

Urgent Health or disability

See health and disability table Appendix 4.

Urgent Social, Welfare and Hardship

See social, welfare and hardship table Appendix 5.

High Risk Domestic abuse

High risk victims of domestic abuse, subject to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) when this is part of an agreed safety plan with CDC.

Urgently overcrowded lacking 2 or more bedrooms

The household is lacking 2 or more bedrooms in order to have a separate bedroom for each:

Married or cohabiting couple

Adult aged 16 years or older

Pair of children aged 0-15 years of the same gender

Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender

Under-occupation of social tenancies in Cherwell

RP tenants who under-occupy social housing and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms than their current home, in cases where the larger property will be re-allocated to Cherwell residents who are eligible to join CDC's housing register.

Ex Armed Forces personnel who have sustained serious injury, medical condition or disability during service

Existing or former member of the armed forces or reserve forces who needs to move to suitably adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, illness, medical condition or disability which he or she, or a member of their household, has sustained which is wholly or partly attributed to their service. This category only applies where the applicant's current accommodation does not have the adaptations or facilities required in relation to the medical condition and cannot reasonably be adapted to meet the required needs.

Private sector properties subject to Prohibition Order, Demolition Order or Overcrowded Notice

Prohibition or Demolition Order served, preventing the applicant (who is a legitimate tenant or owner of the dwelling and would otherwise have rights to occupy) from occupying the whole dwelling or let room. Or Overcrowding Notice served, requiring the applicant(s) to cease occupation of their sleeping accommodation.

Safeguarding Children / Vulnerable Adults

Serious threat to the well-being of a child or vulnerable adult and their accommodation is a contributory factor to the risk. These are cases where a move is required to mitigate the risk to the child or vulnerable adult as confirmed by a Senior Manager in Children's Services / Adult Service or equivalent subject to a Child / Adult Protection Conference and agreed by the Housing Options or Allocations Manager.

Elderly social housing tenants in Cherwell who wish to move to sheltered accommodation

Elderly applicants who will be releasing general needs social housing.

Release of adapted social housing

Where a tenant does not require the adaptations in their current social housing property and will therefore be releasing an adapted property by moving and there is a suitable applicant on the housing register for the adapted property which will be released through a move. Band 1 may be applied if the applicant still requires adaptations provided the adaptations required are different from those in their current home.

Approved move-on from Care

Band 1 will be applied in accordance with protocols between CDC's Housing service and Oxfordshire County Council's Children's service department. The applicant must be a former relevant child as defined by the Children's Leaving Care Act 2002 and be a young person at risk.

Approved adopter or foster carer lacking adequate bedrooms

Approved or current long-term foster carer or adopter lacking one or more bedrooms in order to commence or continue with the arrangement. Long-term fostering is a fostering arrangement for a period of 3 years or more. Adopters or long-term foster carers must provide supporting documentation from social care that confirms they have been approved to adopt/foster and alternative accommodation is required or that they will be approved to adopt/foster once satisfactory accommodation is obtained. Short-term foster arrangements and 'kinship' arrangements will be considered on a case-by-case basis if a letter of support is provided by the Service Manager of Fostering Services outlining an urgent need for alternative accommodation.

Statutory Homeless Households

All accepted statutory homeless households as defined by Part VII of the Act who are owed a Relief or Main Housing Duty under section 189b or 193(2).

5.1.2 Band 2 Categories – Significant need to move

Homeless households found not to be in priority need

A verified homeless applicant that has approached CDC for assistance under homelessness relief duties or the relief duty has expired, and CDC is satisfied that the applicant is homeless, not in priority need and not homeless intentionally (section 192 of the Act).

People at risk of homelessness

Those owed a Prevention Duty under section 192 of the Act, as at risk of homelessness within 56 days as determined by the council's Housing Options Team. This will be reviewed as part of on-going case work at least every 28 days.

Significant Health or Disability

See health and disability matrix Appendix 4.

Significant Social, Welfare and Hardship

See social, welfare and hardship matrix Appendix 5.

Domestic abuse

Victims or survivors of domestic abuse who are at significant risk of experiencing further domestic abuse in their current home and it is therefore unreasonable for them to continue to occupy the accommodation. Applicants who do not wish to make a homeless application or move to temporary or refuge accommodation will be referred for safety planning. A move to another area of Cherwell must be agreed with CDC in accordance with a safety plan to acceptably reduce the level of risk.

Significant overcrowding

The household is lacking 1 bedroom in order to have a separate bedroom for each:

Married or cohabiting couple

Adult aged 18 years or older

Pair of children aged 0-17 years of the same gender

Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender

Armed Forces with discharge date

Those who are due to be discharged or have already been discharged from the regular armed forces who will cease to be entitled to MoD accommodation following their discharge OR

Those who were serving in the regular armed forces at any time in the 5 years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing and have been unable to secure suitable settled accommodation OR

Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

A Band 2 under this category can be applied 12 months prior to the official discharge date – documentary evidence will be required.

Unsatisfactory Housing

A suitably qualified officer of CDC (typically an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) or Environmental Health Technical Officer (EHTO)) has either:

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- Assessed the property using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and identified one or more Category 1 or Category 2 hazards and has confirmed that the occupant(s) cannot be reasonably expected to remain in the property whilst the required works are carried out or the works cannot be carried out within a reasonable timescale. Or
- Identified breaches of Management Regulations in a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) and has confirmed that the occupant(s) cannot be reasonably expected to remain in the property whilst the required works are carried out or the works cannot be carried out within a reasonable timescale.

Households with a Right to Move

An existing social housing tenant who needs to move to Cherwell to avoid hardship and a move to Cherwell would resolve the hardship because the tenant works or has been offered work in Cherwell and has a genuine intention and expectation to take up the work. Work of a short-term, marginal, ancillary or voluntary nature is excluded for this purpose, but apprenticeships are included.

Approved Move-On from Supported Housing

An applicant who is considered ready to move to independent accommodation on the recommendation of the allocated support worker and in agreement with CDC's Housing Options Team. Information will need to be provided by the support worker to demonstrate that the applicant has acquired the necessary skills to live independently and have this approved by the Housing Options Team. Ongoing support needs must also be assessed and, where appropriate, a support plan must be in place. Auto-bidding will be applied to applications approved for Move-on

5.1.3 Band 3 Categories– Moderate need to move

Moderate overcrowding

The applicant's household is overcrowded as per the bedroom standard in Appendix 3 and lacking 1 bedroom, because one of a pair of children of the same gender have reached the age of 16 years, but both children are still under 18 years.

Tied Accommodation

Applicants living in tied accommodation relating to their employment, and who have received formal notice of termination of their employment and tenancy through no fault of their own. This category will only apply where there is clear documentary evidence that the employer is terminating the employment and the use of the accommodation within 12 months.

Agricultural workers

CDC will apply Band 3 to displaced agricultural workers in accordance with the requirements of the Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976. In reaching a decision on whether an applicant is to be prioritised for housing on these grounds, CDC will need to be satisfied that:

- the dwelling from which the agricultural worker is being displaced is needed to accommodate another agricultural worker and the farmer cannot provide suitable alternative accommodation for the displaced worker
- the displaced worker needs re-housing in the interests of efficient agriculture
- the farm is sold, and the property will no longer be available

Intentionally homeless

Applicants who qualify to be on the Housing Register but have been deemed to have made themselves intentionally homeless as defined by the Act. If an applicant is still on the housing register 12 months after the decision that they are intentionally homeless, their application will be reviewed and re-assessed with the appropriate Band then applied to reflect their current housing circumstances.

Moderate Health or Disability

See health and disability matrix Appendix 4.

Moderate Social, Welfare and Hardship

See social, welfare and hardship matrix Appendix 5.

5.1.4 Band 4 Summary – Low need to move

Applicants who are eligible and qualify to join the housing register but do not meet the criteria for any further priority to be applied under the terms of this Housing Allocation Scheme.

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6. Types and sizes of properties that applicants will be considered for

When deciding the size and type of property that applicants will be eligible for, CDC will normally allocate accommodation in accordance with bedroom standard outlined in Appendix 3. There are, however, circumstances in which CDC may deviate from this and these circumstances are detailed in this section.

6.1 Social and welfare

Applicants with a need to move on social and welfare grounds will be required to provide supporting information and be assessed in line with the social and welfare table in Appendix 5. Applicants who are considered to have a need to move based on requirements for specific adaptations, property sizes or types due to assessed social or welfare issues will only be considered for properties that will meet those requirements and therefore resolve the need to move.

6.2 Medical assessment and adapted homes

Applicants who have a medical need will be asked to complete an online medical form, which will be assessed by CDC. For further details see Appendix 4. Applicants who are considered to have a need to move based on requirements for specific adaptations, property sizes or types due to assessed medical reasons will only be considered for properties that will meet those requirements and therefore resolve the need to move.

6.3 Pregnant applicants

CDC will take an expected child into account in determining the minimum/maximum bedroom need of an applicant, subject to evidence of the pregnancy at 25 weeks. A decision on a housing register application based on the sex of a child (such as a decision involving band or bed need) will not be made until the child is born and the sex of the child is therefore confirmed.

6.4 Extra room allowed for non-resident, overnight carers

Applicants with a disability or a long-term health condition who have a non-resident, overnight carer may be allocated an extra bedroom.

To qualify for an extra bedroom, they will need to show:

- they reasonably require overnight care and that this care is provided, and
- supporting evidence that shows the need for an overnight carer, this could be in the form of a support plan that has been formulated by adult social care that evidence that overnight care is required, and
- one or more persons regularly stay overnight to provide care there is a need for an extra bedroom that is used by a carer or carers for overnight stays as part of caring for the applicant or the applicant's partner, and
- that they receive Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance which highlight the need for care tasks during the night or show why they do not apply/ have chosen not to claim.

If an applicant does not receive Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance they must provide CDC with sufficient evidence, as requested on a case-by-case basis, to show that overnight care is required.

Note: Although applicants can choose to apply for a property larger than their needs so they can accommodate carers, carers may not always be taken into account for housing benefit or universal credit payments for extra bedrooms unless the carer is actually in residence at the property.

6.5 Children / access to children

For the purpose of this Housing Allocation Scheme, a child is defined as someone who is under the age of 18. See Section 3.2 for information regarding applications from 16–17-year-olds.

Where parents do not live together the children will be treated as living with the parent who provides their main or principal home. This is for CDC to determine. CDC will not allocate a bedroom in more than one home for each child/children unless there are exceptional circumstances. In cases where parents have shared care arrangements in place, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account any formal arrangement, court order and/or social service involvement. The recipient of child benefit and/or universal credit child element, or other child related welfare benefits will be a relevant consideration when CDC determines the main or principal home of each child for the purpose of housing allocation.

6.6 Fostering and adoption

Families undertaking long term fostering may be able to include foster children as part of their application to ensure that they are eligible for the appropriate sized property. Long term fostering is fostering for a period in excess of three years (not necessarily involving the same child or children). It is essential that written confirmation of the fostering arrangement is obtained from Social Services. Consideration will be given to this in assessing the application. Short term fostering will normally be discounted but will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Families who are in the process of adopting a child may be able to include adopted children as part of their application to ensure that they are eligible for the appropriate sized property. In order to have an adopted child included in the household, applicants will be required to have applied to an appropriate adoption agency and be able to provide proof and supporting documentation that the applicant has been approved as a prospective adopter or is in the final stages of obtaining approval.

Note: Although applicants can choose to apply for property larger than their needs so they can foster, foster children may not always be taken into account for housing benefit or universal credit payments for extra bedrooms unless the foster child is actually in residence at the property.

7. Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme

7.1 Statement on choice

Applicants to the housing register are able to play an active role in choosing which available properties they want to be considered for by being in control of placing 'bids' through the CBL website cherwell-homechoice.org.uk.

The Housing Allocation Scheme:

- allows a range of applicants to be considered for accommodation
- gives applicants a choice of locations within Cherwell
- allows applicants to consider a range of property types
- applies auto bidding (see section 9.1 for further details) and time limited priority to certain applicants for further details see section 9.

7.2 Overview

CDC's CBL scheme process is as follows:

- a. available properties are advertised weekly (over a six-day period)
- b. applicants apply for properties that meet their housing needs
- c. applicants can apply for up to three properties in any advertising cycle
- d. when the advertising cycle is complete shortlists are created from those who have applied and sorted into priority order (as defined in the Housing Allocation Scheme – see section 7.3 and 7.5)
- e. the applicant (normally the one at the top of the list) is selected to be nominated by CDC to the landlord for a provisional offer to be made
- f. the landlord accepts or rejects the nomination
- g. the landlord offers the property to the successful applicant
- h. the applicant accepts or rejects the offer
- i. the results of shortlisting are published on CDC's website

If the landlord rejects the nomination or the applicant rejects the offer,

- a. the property will either be offered to the next eligible applicant on the shortlist in which case the process outlined above will be followed until either:
 1. the landlord accepts a nomination, and an eligible applicant accepts an offer in which case a tenancy will be entered into; or
 2. there are no further eligible applicants on the shortlist; then
- b. the property will be advertised in the next lettings cycle. Landlords are only required to advertise a property on 2 cycles and if the property remains not let after 2 cycles can let the property through other means.

Properties may be re-advertised if shortlists become out of date before a nominee has been accepted by the landlord. This is because the shortlist will need to be refreshed as multiple applicants within the shortlist will have had changes in their circumstances (such as a change to the Band applied to their application) and new applicants will have joined the housing register. This will only happen when shortlists are over 6 weeks old.

7.3 Priority order

Once the advertising period has closed the system will automatically create a shortlist of applicants for each property into priority order (as determined in accordance with this allocations scheme – see below in this section 7.3 for more information). The successful applicant for each property will normally be the one who is eligible for the size and type of property being offered and who is in the highest band. Where there is more than one applicant in that band, priority will be decided by the date the band was effective.

Shortlists can also be ordered with additional priority given to the following:

1. Specific applicant types (Transfers, Homeless, Approved Move-On)
2. Those with a parish or village connection
3. Medical needs for ground floor accommodation
4. Medical need for level access showers (Mobility 1) or Wheelchair accessible accommodation (Mobility 2)
5. Keyworkers
6. Right to Move applicants
7. District Connections to Cherwell or Oxford
8. Size of household
9. Those in employment, education or training

7.4 Date order

There are two dates used to determine the order of priority when deciding which applicant to nominate for a property. These are:

the Registration date – the date the application is received by CDC

the Effective date - the date that the information, or where necessary all supporting documentation is received by the council to enable CDC to determine the application and a band 1, 2, 3 or 4 is applied. (This will be the same as your registration date if your application goes straight into bands 1, 2, 3 or 4)

This will help ensure that if applicants with the same Band bid on the same property, the applicant with the longest waiting time will receive an offer of accommodation first.

Where two applicants with the same effective date in the same band apply for the same property the applicant with the earliest registration date will be given priority for an offer of accommodation. If both applicants also have the same registration date, then a Senior Housing Officer will determine which applicant is given priority on a case-by-case basis.

7.5 Moving between Bands

If applicants move down from a higher Band (e.g. 1 or 2) to a lower Band (e.g. 2 or 3), the effective date that the earlier higher Band was applied will be retained as the effective date of the new, lower Band.

If applicants move from a lower Band to a higher Band, then the effective date of the higher Band will be the date on which the higher Band is applied or, if sooner, the date on which the information was provided that resulted in a higher Band being applied.

Regardless of any previous changes in Band, the effective date of a Band 4 will be the date on which the most recent application was submitted.

7.6 Direct match

It may be necessary to nominate a particular applicant directly to a particular property to make best use of housing stock and to resolve cases involving significant or uncommon housing needs.

Direct matches will typically account for less than 5% of all lettings each year and must be authorised by a Senior Housing Officer or more senior officer. Indicative examples of when a direct match may be carried out include:

- A low demand property that has been advertised on one letting cycle and has not been successfully let but would resolve the housing need of an applicant who is homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- A property that is immediately ready to let and would meet the needs of an applicant who is homeless or at risk of homelessness and is able to move immediately.
- A disabled adapted property that would meet the specific, uncommon disabled housing needs of an applicant, such as a family with a disabled household member that requires a ground floor room with a level access shower.
- A property that has been adapted with disabled facilities to meet the needs of a specific applicant or his/her household.
- A 1 or 2-bedroom property that would meet the needs of an under-occupier of 3+ bedroom social housing within the district where the move would allow the larger property to be re-allocated through the housing register.
- A property that is let through the Housing First scheme, or similar schemes introduced from time-to-time, in order to accommodate applicants within specific cohorts such as specific refugees or those with a history of rough sleeping.

Note: Allocation of Extra-Care Housing is subject to separate allocations arrangements (see Appendix 6) and whilst direct matches of applicants are carried out these will not be advertised as having been let on the choice-based lettings website.

7.7 Nominations

Subject to the exceptions set out in section 7.5 of the Housing Allocation Scheme CDC would normally nominate the applicant at the top of the shortlist, providing they meet the criteria specified in the advert, still qualify and are eligible to be on CDC's housing register.

If an applicant is next on the shortlist for more than one property they will be contacted and asked to express a preference for the property they would like to be considered for. Nominated applicant's details will be made available to the RP of the property. Applicants will be unable to place further bids once they have been nominated until an offer is rejected or accepted.

Applicants should note that the RP which owns the property that they are nominated to will consider their own policy and eligibility criteria when making the decision as to whether an offer of the accommodation can be made.

7.8 Quota arrangements

CDC groups applications into the following three primary categories:

- a. General Needs
- b. Transfers
- c. Statutorily Homeless

CDC uses these categories to determine how to apply quotas for allocations of affordable housing.

The three categories can be broken down into:

Transfer applicant

A transfer applicant is a secure tenant or an assured tenant of CDC or CDC's RP partners who lives in Cherwell and whose application has been accepted onto CDC's housing register.

Statutorily Homeless applicant

This will include those who have been accepted for the Homeless Relief Duty, Main Housing Duty or those without a priority need once the 56-day Relief Duty has expired, if verified to be homeless and who did not become homeless intentionally.

General needs applicant

General register applicants are all other applicants who have been accepted onto CDC's housing register.

When advertising available housing, preference can be given to different categories of applicant including, for example:

- a. transfer applicants
- b. homeless applicants
- c. applicants in particular Bands
- d. applicants in employment, education or training

As a guide, CDC uses the following quotas when advertising available housing:

General needs (including 3% to key workers and 1% to social tenants needing to move for work)	40%
Transfers	30%
Statutorily Homeless	30%

CDC is keen to encourage applicants to seek employment, education or training and to achieve this, adopts a guide quota of 30% of all advertisements each year to give preference to applicants in employment, education or training.

Property adverts will clearly identify when preference is being allocated in this way.

7.9 Key workers

For the purpose of this Housing Allocation Scheme a key worker is defined as: An employee in a role that provides a vital local service that is essential to the wellbeing of society and for which there is a demonstrable shortage of local labour. This includes the following categories of key workers:

Category No.	Type	Examples of the roles that are likely to be considered key workers under this Housing Allocation Scheme (this is a non-exhaustive list. Examples are illustrative only and may change over time)
Category 1	National Health Service	All clinical staff.
Category 2	Support workers in health roles	Care assistants, healthcare support workers, maternity support workers, nursing assistants, occupational therapy assistants, physiotherapy assistants, assistant practitioners, radiography assistants, speech and language therapy assistants, senior care assistants.
Category 3	Adult social care roles	Day care assistants, day care officers, domiciliary care workers, activities workers, home care workers, nursing assistants in nursing homes or hospices, personal assistants, reablement assistants, residential care workers, senior home care workers, support workers.
Category 4	Local authority and Government agency workers	Including social workers, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, rehabilitation officers, planning officers, environmental health officers, Connexions personal advisors, clinical staff.
Category 5	Fire and rescue staff	Uniformed fire and rescue staff below principal level.
Category 6	Teachers and nursery nurses	Qualified teachers in any Local Education Authority school or sixth form college, or any state-funded Academy or Free School; qualified nursery nurses in any Oxfordshire County Council nursery or pre-school.

Category 7	Universities and colleges	Lecturers at further education colleges; lecturers, academic research staff and laboratory technicians at Oxford Brookes University or any college or faculty within the University of Oxford.
Category 8	Police and probation officers	Police officers and community support officers; probation service officers and other operational staff who work directly with offenders; prison officers including operational support.
Category 9	Ministry of Defence staff:	Servicemen and servicewomen in the Navy, Army or Air Force; clinical staff.

A person in a role that is not included on the above list may apply to be given key worker status under this Housing Allocation Scheme. Such applications must be made in writing and will be considered by the Housing Options and Allocations Manager or Senior Officer, taking into account the definition stated and evidence provided from the person's employer.

7.10 Additional priority or preference

In some cases, greater priority in shortlists will be given to applicants who meet certain criteria. This may be to make best use of housing stock (for example, larger homes, ground floor or adapted homes), meet these needs of specific groups (for example key workers or homeless households) or meet the needs of local communities (for example those in rural locations or areas experiencing anti-social behaviour).

The following preference categories may be applied to property adverts which will result in those applicants within each category receiving additional priority in the shortlist for those properties:

- a) transfer applicants
- b) homeless applicants
- c) applicants approved for move-on from supported accommodation
- d) applicants with a medical need for ground floor accommodation
- e) larger households
- f) Applicants with a need for a level access shower or similar (Mobility 1)
- g) Applicants with a need for wheelchair accessible accommodation or similar (Mobility 2)
- h) applicants in employment, education and training
- i) social tenants with a Right to Move
- j) key workers
- k) applicants in need of sheltered accommodation
- l) applicants with a local connection to Cherwell
- m) applicants with a local connection to Oxford City
- n) applicants with a local connection to specific village locations
- o) Applicants within specified age ranges

7.11 Local Lettings and Sensitive Lettings Plans

CDC may from time to time agree a Local Lettings or Sensitive Lettings Plan for specific properties, areas or developments to reflect local circumstances. Any Local Letting Plan will have regard to housing management considerations such as the social mix of

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tenants, density, age range, community stability and specific housing management issues being experienced in the local area.

Where a property is advertised in accordance with a Local Lettings or Sensitive Lettings Plan, the letting will be made to the applicant with the highest band (and oldest effective date where more than one application is within the same band) and who meets the eligibility criteria of the Local Lettings or Sensitive Lettings Plan.

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8. Applicants with an urgent or significant housing need

Applicants who are considered to have an urgent or significant housing need will be monitored for a three-month period from the date Band 1 or 2 is applied to their application. During this time applicants are reasonably expected to place bids for suitable properties which are advertised.

After three months, if the applicant has not received an offer of accommodation CDC will review the application. In conducting the review CDC will take into consideration the following factors:

- a) Has the applicant placed any bids for advertised properties?
- b) Have there been any properties advertised that would have met the applicant's needs?
If so, CDC will consider the reasons why they chose not to bid or investigate why they were unsuccessful.
- c) Does the applicant have a specific need for property that has not been available in the time period?
- d) Have they received appropriate support and help in accessing the Choice Based Letting scheme?
- e) Do the person's circumstances remain the same or has the need for alternative housing reduced?

Having considered the above factors, CDC may re-assess the Band applied to the application or extend the priority for a further three months. The Band applied to an application can be reviewed and changed at any time if the applicant's circumstances change.

8.1 Automatic bidding for homeless and move-on applicants

When an application is placed on automatic bidding, the applicant is still able to place three bids on available properties of their choice. However, if there are suitable properties available and the applicant has not used their three bids, CDC's computer system will place up to three bids per letting cycle on properties the applicant is eligible for on the applicant's behalf. Properties that the computer system bids on may be outside of the areas of choice that an applicant wishes to live in. There may be areas that are excluded by agreement that are unsuitable for an applicant and a nomination to properties in those areas will not be made.

Auto bidding will be applied to all applicants who are accepted by CDC under the Homeless Relief Duty or Main Duty who from the date the homelessness duty is accepted and to those applicants who are approved for Move-on from supported accommodation.

Vulnerable applicants who do not have an advocate to bid on their behalf can also request that automatic bidding is applied to their application to ensure that bids are placed.

9 Rural housing

9.1 Rural lettings schemes

To help sustain rural communities, on the initial letting of properties on new affordable housing developments in rural areas which are not rural exception sites, a target of 50% of all lettings will be advertised with additional priority given to applicants who have a connection with the village in-line with the terms of the Section 106 agreement or Section 10.3 below and have been accepted onto CDC's housing register. If there are no eligible applicants with a connection to the village, priority may then be given to applicants from surrounding villages if this is stipulated in the Section 106 agreement for the housing development.

On the re-letting of existing affordable housing properties in rural areas a target of one in three properties will be advertised with additional priority given to applicants who have a village connection in line with the Section 106 agreement or Section 10.3 below and accepted onto CDC's housing register. If there are no eligible applicants with a connection to the village, priority may then be given to applicants from surrounding villages if this is stipulated in the Section 106 agreement for the housing development. If there are no eligible applicants in those surrounding villages, the property will be available to all other eligible applicants as normal.

Should there be no local connection parameters detailed within a S106 the default assessment of local connection will be that as expressed within this Housing Allocation Scheme detailed below in section 10.3.

9.2 Rural exception sites

Rural exception sites are developments which are outside the village boundary, which would not normally be given planning permission, but CDC has determined to grant planning permission as an exception because of a specific need for affordable housing, for local people who cannot afford market priced housing in that area. The housing is granted planning permission on the basis that it must remain affordable in perpetuity.

When affordable housing is built on rural exception sites, or planning obligations are attached to other affordable housing developments, there may be restrictions on the occupancy of these homes. These restrictions are intended to help ensure that applicants with a village connection and who are in housing need as defined in the Housing Allocation Scheme have first priority for nomination to any social or affordable rented properties.

This means that applicants must not only meet the eligibility / qualification criteria for joining the housing register but also the requirements detailed in the S106 agreement or nominations agreement for each individual site.

Should there be no local connection parameters detailed within the S106 or nominations agreement then the default assessment of local connection will be that expressed within the allocations scheme as detailed in section 10.3 below.

9.3 Village or parish connection for rural lettings

To establish a qualifying village or parish connections the applicant (or joint applicant) must meet at least one of the following criteria:

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- have lived in the village for the last five years
- be employed in the village for a minimum of sixteen hours per week and the employment is not of a short-term nature
- have ten years previous residence in the village if not currently residing there
- be over 55 or with a disability requiring support on health grounds from close relatives currently living in the village
- have close relatives (as defined at section 3.6.2.3) living in the village for a period of at least the last five years.

Where applicants have a strong connection with a village, CDC will ask them to detail this on their application. This will enable the connection to be verified and for the applicant to be given additional priority where applicable, for any social housing in areas where they hold such a connection. If an applicant is successful, they will be required to provide proof of their connection before they can be approved for the nomination.

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10. Refusal of offers, reviews and complaints

10.1 Refusal of offers

In circumstances where an applicant has successfully bid but has refused three suitable offers of accommodation their application will be closed, and they will be disqualified from re-applying to join the housing register for 6 months from the date of the third refusal.

If an applicant successfully bids for a property but the RP is unable to contact the applicant using the telephone and email contact details recorded on the application within 2 working days of the first attempted contact, this will be considered as a refusal of an offer. The applicant who is uncontactable will be skipped and the next eligible applicant on the shortlist will be nominated.

The exception to this rule is for homeless household where CDC has accepted a Homeless Relief Duty or Main Duty or those approved for Move-on from supported accommodation, who are eligible for one offer of accommodation only and refusal of their offer will result in the discharge of the council's homelessness duty or removal on the Move-on priority. Homeless applicants will have a right of review under sections 202 and 204 of the Act. Those with a Move-on priority also have a right to have the decision reviewed.

10.2 Reviews procedure

A request for review must be made in writing within 21 days of the applicant being notified of CDC's decision. CDC will determine the review within 8 weeks of the request or such longer period as may be agreed with the applicant.

The review must be considered on the basis of policy, law and known fact at the date of review. When conducting the review, CDC will consider any representations, written or otherwise, made by the applicant or on the applicant's behalf.

If further information is required, the review period within which the decision should be made may be extended by agreement with the applicant. Reviews will be carried out by a senior member of staff at CDC or delegated to an appropriate organisation or officer who was not involved in the original decision.

If the applicant is still dissatisfied, a report can be prepared for consideration by the Strategic Housing Team Leader.

In the event of an applicant remaining aggrieved, the next step to be considered is a complaint via CDC's Corporate Complaints Procedure or to Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Applicants may have a right to challenge CDC's decisions via the courts and should seek independent legal advice in the event that they are aggrieved with any decision made by CDC.

10.3 Review of suitability / discharge of duty for homeless applicants

Whether or not a Homeless applicant accepts an offer of accommodation to discharge a homeless duty, they have the right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation they have been offered, under section 202 and section 204 of the Act.

10.4 Annual review of applications

In order to keep the housing, register up to date all applications are subject to an annual review. The review is intended to ensure the applicant still wishes to be considered for accommodation and that the most up to date information about their housing circumstances is held. Applicants who fail to respond to either the review or reminder letter within 28 days will have their application closed.

10.5 Complaints

An applicant who is not satisfied with the service that they receive may register a complaint with CDC's complaint procedure by telephone, e-mail or in person. All complaints will be acknowledged and investigated in accordance with CDC's complaints procedure.

If you have a complaint, please use one of the following methods to contact CDC:

- Complete the compliment/comment/complaint form available from the website
- Visit one of CDC's offices
- Write to Complaints, Customer Service Centre, Cherwell District Council
- e-mail complaints@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

11 Fraud and deliberately worsening circumstances

11.1 Misleading or fraudulent Information

Under Section 171 of the Act, it is a criminal offence for an applicant to knowingly or recklessly give false information or knowingly withhold information which a local authority has reasonably required her/him to provide. Where there is suspicion or an allegation that an applicant, or any person acting on behalf of an applicant, has either provided false information or has withheld information, the application will be suspended whilst an investigation into that application is conducted.

If the outcome of any investigation is that the applicant, or any person acting on behalf of an applicant, did not provide false information or there was no withholding of information or such was not found to be withheld knowingly, then the application suspension will be lifted and reinstated to its previous position within the Housing Allocation Scheme meaning that the applicant should not be disadvantaged as a result of the investigation.

If CDC discovers an applicant directly, or through a person acting on his or her behalf, has given false information or deliberately withheld required information CDC will consider legal action. If CDC takes legal action and an applicant is found to be guilty of an offence under this section, the applicant will be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (£5,000). CDC will disqualify the applicant from the housing register for a period of up to five years.

In addition to the potential for legal action and disqualification from the housing register ground 5 in Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by Section 146 of the Act) enables a landlord to seek possession of a tenancy which it has granted as a result of a false statement by the tenant or a person acting at the tenant's instigation.

11.2 Deliberately worsening housing circumstances

In cases where an applicant or members of their household acted in good faith by moving from more suitable housing circumstance to less suitable housing circumstances this will not affect the Band applied to the application.

In cases where a deliberate act or omission is identified that was carried out with the intention to receive greater priority for alternative housing, the change to less suitable circumstances will be disregarded by CDC. The Band applied to the application will instead be determined by the applicant's previous housing circumstances, before the deliberate act or omission was carried out.

12. Allocations outside of the Housing Allocation Scheme and non-general needs housing

12.1 Sheltered and extra care housing

Only applicants that meet the minimum age criteria can be considered by CDC for nomination to sheltered accommodation. Applicants will also need to meet any additional eligibility criteria specified by the landlord. For further details see Appendix 6.

12.2 Supported Accommodation

Supported housing will be available only for applicants who are eligible for that particular type of accommodation and the related support. For example, some supported housing is provided exclusively for people with learning difficulties, or for young people leaving care. Where accommodation is available only for applicants who satisfy such special criteria, this will be clearly labelled on advertisements placed on the CBL website (HomeChoice).

12.3 Oxford City Council's unmet housing needs

Some social housing in the Cherwell has been built, or will be built in future, on specific sites to meet Oxford City's unmet housing needs. When these properties are allocated, priority will be given to housing applicants who have a local connection to Oxford. Cherwell housing register applicants who wish to also be prioritised for these properties must have a local connection to Oxford.

13. Confidentiality, data protection and information sharing

Any information provided as part of the application process is handled sensitively and subject to appropriate confidentiality in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

CDC shall comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Legislation and any equivalent or associated legislation in relation to the storing, processing and sharing of Personal Data in connection with this Housing Allocation Scheme and will not knowingly do anything or permit anything to be done which might lead to a breach of the Data Protection Legislation.

Applicants have the right to request a copy of any personal information held by CDC. This is known as a Subject Access Request.

13.1 Sharing personal information

Personal information obtained from or about an applicant that applies to the housing register will only be used in ways that the applicant reasonably expects to process their application. All applicants must read and agree to Cherwell District Council's Privacy Notice in order to submit an application to join the housing register.

Applicants are made aware at point of application to the housing register that by submitting a housing register application their data will be stored, processed and shared as expected in order for CDC to provide the services requested, to assess their eligibility, qualification and priority for housing in accordance with this Housing Allocation Scheme.

The details provided by the applicant in relation to each housing register application and documents provided, either directly or via other professionals, will primarily be used in the following ways:

- to assess the application for social housing and determine the level of housing need in accordance with this scheme
- shared with other statutory and voluntary agencies including other housing providers, health trusts, support providers, police, probation, social services and other local authorities as appropriate in order to assess the housing register application
- shared with Private RPs of social housing (e.g. Housing Associations) prior to an offer of social housing being made
- shared with private rental landlord(s), past or present as necessary to request tenancy references in relation to the applicant/s or members of his/her household.
- Shared with other CDC departments.
- For statistical recording and reporting including to government departments such as the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing.

14. Monitoring and evaluation

To help ensure that the Housing Allocation Scheme meets its aims and objectives it will be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis. Any major amendments to the allocations scheme in response to evaluation will only be made following consultation with all relevant stakeholders in accordance with s.168 (3) of the Act.

14.1 Publication of results

The results of shortlisting are published on the choice-based lettings website (HomeChoice). The information provided can be used to help applicants decide which properties to apply for, by giving them a better idea how popular a particular property or area is and how long they would normally have to wait. The results which are published will not contain any personal details relating to the applicant. The results of the shortlist which are published are not in any order and will not reveal which applicant was successful.

Applicants who have expressed an interest in the particular property but are unsuccessful may request more personalised feedback on why they were unsuccessful.

14.2 Equality and diversity

CDC is committed to promoting and facilitating equality of access to social and affordable housing regardless of a person or household's age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership status; pregnancy and maternity; race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. CDC can provide performance data to help evidence how we meet these requirements. Where concerns arise on individual cases, the monitoring will include a review of the data or issue of concern, and an action plan agreed where necessary. Any concerns should be raised with Head of Housing Services, stating the grounds for their concern.

14.3 What discretion is built into the scheme?

From time to time a situation may arise that is not predicted by this Housing Allocation Scheme, but the needs or circumstances are exceptional or significant.

Where a case is considered exceptional or significant by the Strategic Housing Team Leader or Head of Housing Services and a higher or lower priority should therefore be justifiably applied rather than the band which the Housing Allocation Scheme would typically indicate should be applied, CDC retains discretion to apply a different level of priority.

The Strategic Housing Team Leader or Head of Housing Services may also withdraw adverts/properties from being advertised in justifiable circumstances not predicted by this Housing Allocation Scheme, including where a letting/advertisement cycle has already ended. Such cases are expected to be exceptional and therefore few in number.

Appendix 1: Definition of Terms

Affordable housing	Housing that you rent, or part rent / buy from a council or registered provider
Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection process by which a person becomes a secure or introductory tenant of housing accommodation held by a housing authority <i>or</i> • The nomination process by which a person becomes an assured or assured shorthold tenant of housing accommodation held by a registered provider.
Children	Are defined as dependents, in a household, under the age of 18 or who are still dependant on the applicant e.g. due to continuing education
Choice Based Lettings	The advert-based system that CDC uses so that applicants on the housing register can apply for properties. Applicants are assessed, properties are advertised, and applicants apply for them
Disabled adapted properties	Disabled adapted properties are properties that have been specially built or adapted for people with disabilities
Effective date	Date used to prioritise applications in a band based on the date that CDC assess which band an applicant should be placed in
General needs properties	General needs properties are suitable for applicants who do not have a need for sheltered accommodation or specially built or adapted properties. They include bedsitters and house, flats and maisonettes of any size
General register applicant	Applicants who have been accepted onto our housing register as being eligible to apply for social housing
Homeless applicant	Applicants found to be homeless, in a priority need group and where a duty to offer housing has been accepted under sections 193 or 195 of Part VII of the Act
Housing Register	The housing register is the waiting list administered by the council to identify applicants who it will nominate for housing from its partner RPs.
Joint Applicants	<p>Joint applicants may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • married couples • partners living together • others who wish to set up home together
Approved Move-on	Applicants who have been assessed by a support worker as ready to move-on from supported accommodation where the council have an agreed move-on protocol
Nomination agreement	A legal agreement between CDC and the RP which states how applicants will be nominated for vacancies by CDC, the number of vacancies that must be offered to CDC for nomination and any special priorities such as village or local connection

Appendix 1

Registration date	The date the applicant's Housing application was submitted
Registered Provider (RP)	The official name for housing associations, housing co-operatives and housing companies that are registered with Homes England
Right to Move Applicant	Social housing tenants who have a reasonable preference because of a need to move to Cherwell to avoid hardship, and need to move because the tenant works in the district, or they need to move to take up an offer of work
Section 106 Agreement	An agreement between CDC and a property developer governing the development of residential housing within the district
Secure tenancy	Tenancies granted by local authorities whenever granted and tenancies granted by registered providers before 15 January 1989
Sheltered housing	Sheltered housing is housing with visiting or residential staff
Social housing	Affordable housing that you rent, or part rent / buy from a council or RP
Tied accommodation	Accommodation provided for and subject to employment
Transfer applicant	A transfer applicant is a secure tenant or an assured tenant of one of our partner RPs who lives in Cherwell and whose application has been accepted onto CDC's housing register

Appendix 2: Councillors, board members, employees and their close relatives

Staff, board members, councillors and their relatives are treated as any other applicant and will not gain any advantage or any preferential treatment during the application process, nor shall they be disadvantaged.

The following procedure will be undertaken to ensure that any nomination will be subject to a high level of scrutiny:

- The staff member who is applying to the housing register must have no direct input into any decisions regarding their application. This includes not inputting or assessing any information in relation to their application onto the housing allocations system or changing or amending any details at any time.
- Staff members must also have no involvement in the inputting of the application or awarding of priority for any of their relatives
- Applications should be clearly marked on the housing allocation system that the application is that of a staff member, board member, councillor or any of their relatives
- When such an applicant has bid for a property and is next in line to be nominated to an available property, the details of the nomination must be scrutinised and signed off by CDC's Strategic Housing Team Leader or Housing Services Manager.

If an offer of a property is to be made to an officer at Assistant Director level or above, then the offer must be agreed by the Assistant Director of Wellbeing.

Appendix 3: Bedroom and Space Standard

1.0 Bedroom Standard

For the purpose of allocating accommodation in accordance with this Housing Allocation Scheme, the council will allocate a separate bedroom to each:

Married or cohabiting couple
Any other single adult aged 16 years or older
Pair of children aged 0-15 of the same gender
Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender
Overnight carer – see section 5.4

The table below gives examples of the bedroom entitlement for adults and children:

Household size	Number of bedrooms to be allocated (if any eligibility criteria is met)
Single person under 35	Studio or 1 bedroom
Single person over 35	Studio or 1 bedroom
Adult Couple	1 bedroom
2 applicants not couple	2 bedrooms
Household with 1 child	2 bedrooms
Household with 2 children	2 or 3 bedrooms depending on age/sex of children
Household with 3 children	3 bedrooms

A former adult couple formerly considered to require one bedroom will not be considered to require two bedrooms, or therefore be considered overcrowded if the relationship has ended and two separate bedrooms are not available.

Applicants with a need for an additional bedroom due to the medical needs of the household will be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking into account the supporting documents provided. For children who are unable to share bedrooms due to medical needs applicants are encouraged to provide information to help assessing officers conclude this assessment, including:

- Evidence of a medical diagnosis
- Evidence that the child is in receipt of DLA or PIP
- Supporting statements from specialist medical professionals which detail the need for the separate bedroom

An offer of a larger property than the bedroom standard in these cases will be subject to an affordability assessment before an offer can be made. Applicants should also ensure that the property will be affordable for themselves.

Please note: households in receipt of benefits to pay their rent will only receive payment for property up to a maximum of 4 bedrooms.

2.0 Space standard

The space standard below is used as a guide to determine if bedroom sizes are inadequate:

Room's floor space in square metres	Number of people able to occupy
4.6 - 6.4	0.5
6.5 - 8.3	1
8.4 - 10.1	1.5
10.2	2

Anyone aged 10 or over counts as 1 person

Children aged 1 to 9 counts as 0.5

Children under 1 year count as 0

Discretion for low demand properties and under-occupiers

CDC may on occasion relax bedroom standard restrictions for low demand properties including those which have not been successfully let on an initial letting cycle or to help encourage and facilitate under-occupiers of social housing to downsize. This may include allowing under-occupation of properties and where properties are advertised may include giving priority to certain categories of applicant such as applicants who are already under-occupying social housing who are moving to downsize. For example, a single applicant moving from a 3-bed to a 2-bed property. Applicants nominated to a property will need to pass an affordability assessment carried out by the RP, as normal, prior to receiving an offer of a tenancy.

Definition of Household types

Single person under 55	One person household with no resident children A woman who is less than 25 weeks pregnant
Couple	Married, Cohabiting, Civil Partnership & same sex couples without resident children or with a woman who is less than 25 weeks pregnant
Family	Single parent or couple (as defined above) with minimum of one dependent child, who lives with parent(s) as the main or principal home. A woman who is 25 weeks or more pregnant
Insecure Households	Separate households sharing accommodation with no formal rights to occupy
Older Persons	One person household and couples over 55 years
Other	Any other household group including friends, sibling and families with non-dependent children

Appendix 4: Health and disability assessments

Applicants should complete CDC’s medical form in order to allow for a thorough assessment of medical needs. The below table will be used by CDC as a guide to determine the level of priority that should be applied to an application based on medical needs and gives illustrative rather than exhaustive guidance. In line with the guidance in the table, CDC will consider the severity and impact of the housing situation on the medical condition rather than only the severity of the medical condition itself.

Any supporting information that is provided alongside the application and medical form, including information from medical professionals, will also be considered and given appropriate importance when considering which band may apply in accordance with the table below.

	Band 3	Band 2	Band 1
Mental Health	Prescribed medication alongside short-term, time-limited secondary care intervention. For example, Talking Space. Or referred to, or previous intervention received from a secondary care service with medication ongoing. In all cases housing must be the cause or significant aggravating factor in the mental health issue.	Anti-depressant or anti-psychotic medication with sustained secondary care input. The care that is provided is vital to maintain community living and the housing situation is a significant factor in the illness and mental health is likely to deteriorate if housing need is not addressed. Secondary care input to be considered when no medication prescribed due to other factors e.g. pregnancy, conflict with other medication. Alternatively a mental health specialist planned treatment programme where housing is a significant factor in the plan and some support is needed to prevent admission into a psychiatric unit, or immediate deterioration in their health where housing issues are directly related to illness and relationships within the household are seriously affected by mental health issues.	Immediate discharge from a psychiatric hospital following treatment where housing is a significant factor in the treatment plan or cannot be discharged to previous accommodation due to high risk. High support needs required to prevent re-admission.

Mobility	Home slightly unsuitable to meet their needs with low risk of harm e.g. some difficulty accessing essential facilities such as the toilet, bathroom, bedroom. Adaptations would be feasible.	Home is increasingly unsuitable to meet their needs with moderate risk of harm e.g. increased difficulties accessing essential facilities e.g. toilet, bathroom, bedroom – or are unable to access essential facilities. Care or severely modified living is required, and housing is a significant factor in maintaining community living. Adaptations are not an option or have been refused by the landlord.	Home not suitable following discharge from hospital in relation to a permanent medical condition where no adaptations are possible, and applicant is at risk of serious harm. Or unsuitability of home is preventing discharge.
Children – Physical disability	Children who have difficulty accessing essential facilities e.g. bathroom, toilet bedroom or a child’s disability restricts use of the house by other family members e.g. increased bathroom usage. Health and safety not affected. Adaptations would be feasible.	A child who has increasing difficulty or already cannot access essential facilities e.g. toilet, bathroom, bedroom without assistance and health and safety is affected. The Occupational Therapy Service or Physiotherapist has made recommendations that adaptations are required but are not possible or practicable.	Home not suitable following discharge from hospital in relation to a permanent medical condition where no adaptations are possible, and child is at risk of serious harm. Or unsuitability of home is preventing discharge.
Children / Vulnerable Adult – Behavioural	Behavioural problems which affect the household and are made worse by the housing situation. Health care professional, health visitor and/or family support worker involvement to provide some individual care to child/vulnerable adult and/or parents/carers/family.	Behavioural problems which affect the household and are made worse by the housing situation – and which could potentially cause moderate harm to self and household. Involvement from community paediatrician, consultant, social services, education or health services.	Children / vulnerable adult with behavioural problems have caused, or is continuing to cause, serious harm to the child or the household. Ongoing multi-agency involvement from community paediatrician, psychologist, social services, education or health services.

<p>Independence (relates to giving or receiving care)</p>	<p>Independence is affected by inability to access essential facilities. Need occasional informal care / support from family or home carer.</p>	<p>Independence is affected by inability to access essential facilities without a high level of care / support from family or home carer.</p> <p>Qualifies for County Council care provision, but the County Council are unable to provide the care due to the applicant's accommodation.</p>	<p>A high level of formal medical care / support is needed and cannot be sustained in the medium term due to current accommodation.</p>
<p>Carer</p>	<p>Currently living arrangements for carer have a negative impact on quality of life and would be improved by a move to more suitable accommodation.</p>	<p>Carer's health deteriorating due to currently living arrangements/ housing making it difficult to continue with care arrangements. Supported by medical evidence.</p>	<p>Carer's health is deteriorating due to currently living arrangements/ housing and there is an imminent breakdown of care arrangements. Supported by medical evidence.</p>
<p>Sensory environmental</p>	<p>There are some concerns that the accommodation is affecting sensory medical issues. Adaptations would be feasible.</p>	<p>There are serious and sustained concerns with sensory medical issues that can be mitigated by moving home. Adaptions may be possible but not practicable. Health services are involved and support a move.</p>	<p>There is an urgent need to prevent serious harm from occurring, due to sensory medical issues. Adaptions are not possible. Health services are involved and support a move.</p>

Appendix 5: Social, Welfare and Hardship assessments

The below table will be used by CDC as a guide to determine the level of priority that should be applied to an application based on social, welfare or hardship issues and gives illustrative rather than exhaustive guidance.

Band 1	
Emergency cases due to fire, flood or other disaster	
Exceptional need not covered elsewhere in the scheme as directed by Head of Housing or Assistant Director	
Family member of social tenant in the district with at least 12 months verified prior residence with the family member and no right of succession to the property (or to the property size) following the death of the tenant in cases where a move would prevent homelessness or exceptional hardship.	
Emergency cases due to fire, flood or other disaster	
Band 2	
There is a significant need to move in order to give or receive essential care, support or access specialised medical treatment.	
Significant need to move not covered elsewhere in the scheme.	
The applicant or a member of their household has a physical or learning disability which is significantly impacted by their current housing	
Key workers who need to move to take up or continue with an existing permanent position within Oxfordshire.	
page 115	Need for sheltered housing only
	The existing home moderately limits the care and support that can be provided to the applicant or someone in their household.
Band 3	
Accommodation is required with appropriate care and support and the applicant could not be expected to find their own accommodation, such as young adults with learning difficulties who wish to live independently in the community	
The environment around the home has moderate detrimental effect on the quality of life of the household	
Inadequate room sizes: The household has an adequate number of bedrooms as per the bedroom standard, but the bedroom sizes are inadequate by at least 1 person, as per the space standard taking into account all bedroom sizes the applicant's household has access to. See appendix 3	
Split households with insufficient bedrooms: The property has a sufficient number of bedrooms to accommodate all occupiers as per the bedroom standard, but two or more households are sharing, and the applicant's household is left short of a bedroom due to genuine and justifiable bedroom allocation. This may also include an adult couple with access to only one bedroom where the relationship has ended.	
Financial hardship: Current accommodation is financially unsustainable, and a long-term resolution is unlikely. More affordable accommodation is a key factor in resolving the financial situation.	
Need to move to take up employment, education or training within the district.	
No Fixed Abode. Cases where the applicant has no principal, settled address but is not deemed to be homeless.	
Accommodation is required with appropriate care and support and the applicant could not be expected to find their own accommodation, such as young adults with learning difficulties who wish to live independently in the community	

Appendix 6: How sheltered and extra care housing is allocated

1. Sheltered housing

Applicants with evidenced support needs who meet the minimum age criteria can be considered for sheltered accommodation. They will also need to meet the eligibility criteria specified by the landlord which may on occasion state that no support needs are required. Applicants also need to be eligible and qualify for social housing as per this Housing Allocation Scheme.

Some sheltered housing in Cherwell is allocated directly by RPs of social housing who will maintain their own waiting list for each sheltered housing scheme. Applicants who are seeking sheltered housing are therefore encouraged to register with social housing providers that have sheltered schemes in the district. CDC's website (www.cherwell.gov.uk) contains information about the sheltered schemes in the district including contact details.

It is sometimes a condition of sheltered housing schemes that tenants agree to take the Care Line or Warden Services. Separate charges are made for these services on top of the rent.

2. Extra Care Housing

Extra care housing provides older people who have care needs with their own home and tenancy within a support and care environment. This helps ensure that appropriate personal and housing support are available as required. CDC has nomination rights to some extra-care schemes in Cherwell. A tenant may move into a scheme with no or low needs but can access further care as and when the need arises as they get older or frailer. Extra care housing can remove the need for residential care for older people in some cases.

People who have assessed care needs will have them provided for by either a Personal Care Support Team, who are based on site 24 hours a day, and will be able to give care to tenants when this is required, or a support team of their choice.

The allocations panel will have to take a number of things into consideration when allocating a property. These factors include, but are not limited to, the nominations agreement for each scheme, individual circumstances, available care hours, existing needs and numbers of tenants with dementia in the Extra Care Scheme.

All applicants will be registered and assessed for housing in line with CDC's Housing Allocation Scheme and must be eligible to access social housing.

To be eligible for Extra Care Schemes applicants must:

- Be over 55 years of age or meet the eligibility criteria specified by the landlord
- Be eligible for social housing as per this Housing Allocation Scheme
- Be assessed by the Extra Care Scheme Manager for support that is provided.
- Be deemed suitable for the Extra Care Scheme, without support needs that are unable to be met or would be detrimental to the scheme itself or other tenants
- Be prepared to agree to the Extra Care Scheme tenancy agreement

- Be made aware of the costs of moving into the Extra Care Scheme before a letting is carried out. This is especially in regard to care costs where these will not be covered by Housing Benefit.

Residents in the Extra Care Scheme will be offered the opportunity to have their care provided by the contracted care provider.

It should be noted that for couples where one partner is below 55 years of age the couple may be granted a tenancy, but it will be a sole tenancy only in the name of the person who is over 55 and therefore meets the criteria above. The younger partner would not be granted succession to the tenancy unless the partner meets the criteria detailed above, at the point at which an application for succession is made.

3. Extra Care Housing Allocations Panel

The Extra Care Housing Allocations Panel (the Panel) will require an up-to-date social care assessment in an agreed format outlining the prospective tenant's housing and social care needs and a medical/social history to enable the Panel to arrive at an informed decision as regards whether their needs can be met within the scheme.

The Allocations Panel comprises:

- a. A Scheme Manager
- b. A CDC Housing Officer
- c. A representative of Adult Social Care

When considering a referral for an applicant with care needs the panel will take into account as a minimum:

- a. the housing and support need of the applicant
- b. care hours required and the balance of needs within the Extra Care Scheme
- c. which property size is most appropriate for the applicant, taking into account the size of property in which the applicant has expressed as a preference
- d. whether the applicant has a local connection to the area
- e. the nominations agreement that applies to the extra-care scheme

An allocation to an extra-care scheme will only be made via this Panel and will be completed via a direct match as opposed to being advertised on the CBL website (www.cherwell-homechoice.org.uk). This panel will convene, either in person or using any form of information communication technology whenever a vacancy arises.

A potential tenant must also undertake a pre-offer interview with the Extra Care Scheme Manager and be shown the facilities at the Extra Care Scheme to ensure that all parties are comfortable with the responsibilities and expectations of a tenancy within an Extra Care Scheme. This also gives the prospective tenants an opportunity to find out more about the Extra Care Scheme and to make an informed decision about moving. On completion of a successful Extra Care Scheme visit a tenancy is offered and paperwork completed by the Extra Care Scheme Manager.

If this visit raises issues as to the suitability of a tenancy, every step will be taken to resolve the situation in discussion with all parties. A further assessment or Panel discussion may be convened, or further housing related support may be necessary.

If identified issues cannot be resolved (or resolved within an agreed timescale with the provider), the tenancy will be offered to the next suitable person identified by the Panel or Rehousing Officer – again subject to a successful home or Extra Care Scheme visit.

The Extra Care Scheme Manager will inform all applicants refused an offer of a tenancy and will give reasons for the decision. An appeals process can be invoked where any party wishes to dispute the decision reached by the Panel.

4. Property type and size

All applicants are eligible for a one- or two-bedroom property and are invited to express their preference. However, the final decision on the size of property allocated to the applicant will be made by the Panel, taking into account the applicant's preference, affordability and the government's guidance on bedroom allowance.

CDC Housing Allocation Scheme review 2024

Summary of proposed key revisions

Various revisions and updates to the Housing Allocation Scheme are proposed which add further detail to existing policies, clarify processes or remove duplication.

Below are the key revisions proposed which represent a change to policy:

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Section and summary of change	Proposed wording	Rationale
<p>Section 3.5</p> <p>New Section “Armed Forces”</p> <p>Allow a direct allocation of housing to certain members of the Armed Forces who have urgent housing needs.</p>	<p>The proposed key wording in this section is as follows:</p> <p><i>“To give this additional preference, CDC will seek to allocate a suitable home through a direct match for members of the Armed Forces community as outlined above in cases where a Band 1 (urgent housing need) has been applied to their application.”</i></p>	<p>This revision helps ensure compliance with Section 166A (3) Housing Act 1996 which requires local authorities to give additional preference to certain members of the Armed Forces community, where they fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories and have urgent housing needs. The proposed wording ensures that all those members of the Armed Forces community with Urgent Housing Needs (Band 1) will be given this additional preference through CDC allocating housing through a direct match.</p>
<p>Section 3.6.2.3 Qualification Criteria Local Connection criteria: Special reasons</p> <p>Specifically include within the local connection criteria those applicants living in domestic abuse refuges or being accommodated through</p>	<p>The following additions to the local connection criteria are proposed:</p> <p><i>“8. be a household who CDC has a duty or agreement to secure accommodation for through a national Government resettlement scheme.</i></p> <p><i>9. be living in a refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation in the district having escaped domestic abuse in another local authority area.”</i></p>	<p>Currently cases which meet these categories will typically qualify to join the housing register as they are considered to meet the existing criteria of “have a special reason for needing to live in the area”.</p> <p>Separately outlining these categories will provide consistency and clarity to those applicants that they will qualify to join the CDC housing register, rather than needing to be considered as a special case.</p>

<p>national resettlement schemes.</p>		
<p>Section 3.6.2.3 Qualification Criteria Local connection criteria: Oxford City residents</p> <p>Extend the local connection criteria to include applicants with a connection to Oxford City so that housing due to be built in Cherwell to meet Oxford’s needs can be allocated to them.</p>	<p>The following additional wording is proposed:</p> <p><i>“Some homes in Cherwell will be built with the purpose of meeting the unmet housing needs of Oxford. As such CDC will seek to allocate these homes on the first letting to those who have a local connection to Oxford. For this purpose, the local connection criteria outlined in this section is applicable to those with Oxford connections as well as Cherwell connections and where the word Cherwell is detailed in this section this can be read to also include Oxford. Applicants with a connection to Oxford will receive additional preference for the first letting of those homes built to meet Oxford’s unmet housing needs. Those with a local connection above which is not connected to Oxford will receive additional preference over those who do not for all other homes.”</i></p>	<p>Some housing which is due to be built in Cherwell is being built for the purpose of meeting Oxford City’s unmet housing needs. CDC will allocate these homes in accordance with this housing allocation scheme. Those with a connection to Oxford City will be prioritised for an allocation of these homes. As such, those with a connection to Oxford City (whether or not they have a connection to Cherwell) will need to be able to join the CDC housing register. Those with a connection to Cherwell (whether or not they have a connection to Oxford) will receive priority for other homes allocated within Cherwell so will not be disadvantaged by Oxford City residents joining the CDC housing register.</p>
<p>Section 3.6.2.5 Qualification criteria: Financial resources</p> <p>Increase the household assets/income cap from £60,000 to £80,000 for those applicants who require 3+ bedroom homes.</p>	<p>Additional wording in section 3.6.2.5 as follows:</p> <p><i>“For applicants who require 3-bedroom homes or larger the cap on financial assets and gross annual household income is £80,000.</i></p> <p><i>The £80,000 financial assets and gross household income cap as detailed above for applicants who require 3-bedrooms, or more is in line with the gross household income cap for</i></p>	<p>Currently applicants are disqualified from joining the housing register if they have financial assets that when combined with their annual gross annual household income exceeds £60,000. This applies to all applicants irrespective of the size of the accommodation they require and has not increased for a number of years despite inflationary pressures. £60,000 is still sufficient to secure 1 or 2-bedroom private accommodation in Cherwell however can be</p>

	<p><i>grant funded affordable home ownership as set out in Home England’s Capital Funding Guide (as of 29 February 2024). As such the £80,000 cap in this Housing Allocation Scheme may be increased or decreased to remain in line with any updates to this guidance.”</i></p>	<p>insufficient to secure larger family homes in some locations.</p> <p>An £80,000 cap is therefore proposed for those requiring 3+ bedrooms which is also consistent with the qualification criteria set by Homes England for other forms of low-cost home ownership (such as shared ownership or First Homes).</p>
<p>Section 4.1.1 Band 1 Categories: Statutory Homeless Households</p> <p>Increase the priority for Statutory Homeless Households from Band 2 to Band 1.</p>	<p>The proposal is to move the below category from Band 2 to Band 1:</p> <p>“Statutory Homeless Households <i>All accepted statutory homeless households as defined by Part VII of the Act who are owed a Relief or Main Housing Duty under section 189b or 193(2).”</i></p>	<p>Moving statutory homeless households up from Band 2 to Band 1 acknowledges that these household have more urgent housing needs than those in the other Band 2 categories such as those who are at risk of homelessness but not yet homeless. Applicants in this category are likely to be occupying emergency or temporary accommodation and so need to be able to move-on to secure settled accommodation as soon as possible.</p>
<p>Overcrowding Sections:</p> <p>4.1.1 Band 1 Categories Urgent overcrowding</p> <p>And</p> <p>4.1.2 Band 2 Categories Significant overcrowding</p> <p>And</p> <p>4.1.3 Band 3 Categories Moderate overcrowding</p>	<p>The 3 new categories proposed for overcrowded households are:</p> <p>“Band 1: Urgently overcrowded lacking 2 or more bedrooms <i>The household is lacking 2 or more bedrooms in order to have a separate bedroom for each: Married or cohabiting couple Adult aged 16 years or older Pair of children aged 0-15 years of the same gender Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender</i></p>	<p>Overcrowding is the most common reason for applicants to apply to join the housing register. The current scheme groups the majority of overcrowded households into Band 2 which results in the same waiting times for overcrowded households. Waiting times for larger family homes (3 and 4-bedroom homes) have become particularly long. However, some households are more significantly overcrowded than others.</p> <p>The proposed separation of overcrowding categories gives greater priority (Band 1) to applicants who are lacking 2 bedrooms or more to allow for a separate bedroom for each:</p>

<p>Separate overcrowded households into 3 categories with differing levels of priority</p>	<p>Band 2: Significant overcrowding <i>The household is lacking 1 bedroom in order to have a separate bedroom for each:</i> <i>Married or cohabiting couple</i> <i>Adult aged 18 years or older</i> <i>Pair of children aged 0-17 years of the same gender</i> <i>Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender</i></p> <p>Band 3: Moderate overcrowding <i>The applicant's household is overcrowded as per the bedroom standard in Appendix 3 because one of a pair of children of the same gender have reached the age of 16 years, but both are still under 18 years."</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Married or cohabiting couple 2. Child who has reached the age of 16. 3. Pair of children aged 0-15 years of the same gender 4. Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender <p>A Band 2 or 3 will apply if applicants are lacking 1 bedroom as above.</p> <p>A Band 3 will only apply in cases where applicants are lacking 1 bedroom because they do not have two separate bedrooms for two children of the same gender where one child has reached the age of 16 but is not yet 18 years old.</p>
<p>Section 4.1.2 Band 2 Categories: Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Introduce a new category to increase the options and choice for survivors of domestic abuse who may wish to remain in their homes.</p>	<p>Proposed addition of new Band 2 category:</p> <p>“Domestic abuse <i>Victims or survivors of domestic abuse who are at significant risk of experiencing further domestic abuse in their current home and it is therefore unreasonable for them to continue to occupy the accommodation. Applicants who do not wish to make a homeless application or move to temporary or refuge accommodation will be referred for safety planning. A move to another area of Cherwell must be agreed with CDC in accordance with a safety plan to acceptably reduce the level of risk.”</i></p>	<p>Applicants who are at risk of domestic abuse may wish to make a homeless application with any local authority (including CDC), but this is not always an appropriate or suitable solution for them. For example, not all survivors of domestic abuse will want or need to be accommodated in a refuge or temporary accommodation away from their current home. Some will also want to retain a greater level of control and choice regarding their temporary and/or future home than that which can be offered when applicants are homeless. The proposed introduction of this new category means that those applicants who want or need to, may remain in their current home, with appropriate safeguards in place, until they secure more appropriate housing through the housing register. Those applicants who are high</p>

		<p>risk and subject to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) may be eligible for Band 1 as normal or may wish/need to make a homeless application to be temporarily accommodated away from their current home.</p>
<p>Appendix 3: Bedroom and Space Standard: Discretion for low demand properties</p> <p>Extend the discretion to relax bedroom standard restriction to encourage under-occupiers of social housing to downsize.</p>	<p>A revision to this section is proposed to include provisions for under-occupiers of social housing so that the section now reads:</p> <p>“3. Discretion for low demand properties and under-occupiers</p> <p><i>CDC may on occasion relax bedroom standard restrictions for low demand properties including those which have not been successfully let on an initial letting cycle or to help encourage and facilitate under-occupiers of social housing to downsize. This may include allowing under-occupation of properties and where properties are advertised may include giving priority to certain categories of applicant such as applicants who are already under-occupying social housing who are moving to downsize. For example, a single applicant moving from a 3- bed to a 2- bed property. Applicants nominated to a property will need to pass an affordability assessment carried out by the RP, as normal, prior to receiving an offer of a tenancy.”</i></p>	<p>Larger homes are in short supply which means that waiting times to secure 3 and 4-bedroom homes are particularly long. The intention of this proposed revision is to help ensure that under-occupiers are encouraged and assisted to downsize to smaller accommodation so that their larger home can be re-allocated to an applicant who needs it. Where appropriate, a home could be allocated to an under-occupier of social housing that is outside of the bedroom standard. For example, a tenant who would usually be eligible to apply for only 1-bedroom homes could be assisted to secure a 2-bedroom home if this means that the applicant could then return a 3 or 4-bedroom home to be re-allocated.</p>

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**Cherwell District Council
Equality and Climate Impact Assessment**

Cherwell District Council Housing Allocations Scheme

Appendix 3

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Wellbeing and Housing – Housing Services
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Cherwell District Council Housing Allocation Scheme (2025)
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Revised policy to cover existing service function
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>The Housing Allocation Scheme sets out how Cherwell District Council will process and prioritise applications for social housing. It sets out the criteria for determining whether a household is eligible for social housing and what level of priority the household will be given based on housing need.</p> <p>The allocation of social rented housing is the responsibility of the District Council as the housing authority.</p> <p>Revisions are proposed to the Housing Allocation Scheme to take account of statutory guidance, best practice and evolving local housing needs in the District. It is best practice to keep the scheme under regular review and respond to local housing needs and pressures.</p> <p>The proposed revisions have both direct and indirect impacts on groups within the community, but the proposals do not bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage these groups or individuals.</p> <p>The proposed revisions will have several positive impacts on those individuals or groups who are directly affected as set out in this impact assessment. However, due to the finite number of homes available to be allocated, each individual or group that may have an increased chance of securing housing through the housing register will have a knock-on effect for others.</p>

Completed By	Paul France
Authorised By	Richard Smith
Date of Assessment	May 2024

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>CDC’s Housing Allocation Scheme was last amended in December 2021 with the changes being approved by the Executive. It is important to review the Scheme regularly to help ensure that it aligns with current housing needs in the District and to respond to changing patterns of need.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 contained provisions to ensure the appropriate prioritisation of applicants fleeing abuse and to ensure they have secure accommodation. As such, we have proposed revisions to our Housing Allocation Scheme to help make our response to domestic abuse clear, streamlined and promote better choice and outcomes for those who have experienced abuse or are at risk of harm.</p> <p>We have also reviewed and reaffirmed our commitment to assist members of the armed forces and propose to make clear how we will give additional preference for housing to this group as required by Housing Act 1996. A new section to outline our approach is proposed.</p> <p>In terms of responding to changing needs, the housing service has seen an increase in homeless presentations and households occupying temporary accommodation since the last review. The number of homes available to let through the housing register have not been as high in recent years and as such we propose increasing the level of priority given to those households who are homeless and in Priority Need to help ensure those households can secure settled housing as early as possible.</p> <p>The longest waiting times to secure housing since the scheme was last reviewed is for larger homes and the main reason for applicants applying to join our housing register is a need for larger accommodation. Those who are overcrowded in their current home make up the largest portion of applicants on the housing register. To help ensure</p>
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	<p>that those who are more severely overcrowded secure a suitable home more quickly, we propose to split the large number of overcrowded households; giving those who are lacking two bedrooms a greater level of priority over those who are lacking only one bedroom. We also propose to introduce measures to help encourage under-occupiers to downsize and free up larger homes for households who need them.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>A summary table outlining the proposed changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme and the rationale for those changes is contained in Appendix 1.</p>
<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>A 4-week public consultation to gather feedback on the proposed revised Housing Allocation Scheme will be carried out. Housing organisations including registered providers of social housing will also be consulted on the proposals. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.</p> <p>Consultation responses will be considered and further revisions to the Housing Allocation Scheme may be made in accordance with the response received.</p> <p>As of 1 April 2024 there were 1,944 household on the Cherwell District Council housing register and 1,127 of these had an identified housing need in accordance with the Housing Allocation Scheme. Just under half of all households in housing need were affected by some level of overcrowding.</p>

<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.</p> <p>Option 1: Not bring forward a new Allocations Scheme. This is rejected as it is important that the Council has Policies that are up to date with legislation and can respond to current challenges.</p>
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Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposal to allow under-occupiers of social housing to downsize to a property which would be larger than they would normally be eligible for (e.g. a single person household downsizing to a 2-bedroom home) is likely to impact older households. This is because under-occupiers of social housing are often older households.		Strategic Housing Team Leader	Annual monitoring
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme reflects an applicant's vulnerabilities and disabilities in its banding system and prioritises according to their impact on housing need. Suitable accommodation offers according to their individual needs.		Strategic Housing Team Leader	Annual monitoring

Appendix 3

Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The risk of domestic abuse is known to increase for those who are pregnant or have recently given birth. As such, this group will be positively affected by the changes proposed to improve outcomes for those who are at risk or who have experienced domestic abuse.	N/A	Strategic Housing Team Leader	Annual monitoring

Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The data on ethnicity of those on the housing register appears to show that the proportion of white applicants is lower than the proportion of the Cherwell and Oxfordshire population. The proportion of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British also appears to be higher. This is when compared to Census data.</p> <p>Any changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme may therefore affect those in ethnic minority groups, both positively and negatively, more so than a change affecting the whole of the population of Cherwell.</p>	Annual monitoring and comparisons of housing register ethnicity data to monitor potential impacts.	Strategic Housing Team Leader	Annual monitoring
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<p>Sex</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>As stated in the previous section, the proposed revisions to our Housing Allocation Scheme will help make our response to domestic abuse clear, streamlined and promote better choice and outcomes for those who have experienced abuse or are at risk of harm. Women are far more likely to experience domestic abuse than men and as such are more likely to be positively affected by these proposals.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Strategic Housing Team Leader</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research by the Albert Kennedy Trust found that LGBT young people are more likely to find themselves homeless than their non-LGBT peers, comprising up to 24% of the youth homeless population. There should therefore be some positive impacts on the LGBT community by the increased priority given to homeless households.</p>		<p>Strategic Housing Team Leader</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>

Appendix 3

Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The future housing development sites in Cherwell allocated to meet Oxford City's unmet housing needs are located in the more rural southern area of the Cherwell District. The proposed changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme allows CDC greater control over the allocation of housing on those sites to applicants who qualify to join the CDC housing register. This gives CDC greater control and influence over the future letting of these homes.	N/A	Strategic Housing Team Leader	N/A
Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposal is to make clear how CDC gives additional preference for housing to those armed forces or ex-armed forces members who have urgent housing needs, as required by s.166A(3)	None	Strategic Housing Team Leader	Annual Monitoring

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				Housing Act 1996. As such, those Armed Forces members will be positively affected.			
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		None	N/A	N/A
Areas of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposals include giving greater priority to those who are more severely overcrowded in their current home than others. This is likely to affect areas of deprivation more where overcrowding is more likely to occur. The proposals are also intended to better facilitate under-occupiers of social housing to downsize. Some of the larger social housing homes where under-occupation is likely to occur are within areas of deprivation such as the Brighter Futures area where there are some higher concentrations of social housing.	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Other Council Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed wording changes will positively affect social housing providers as they are designed to help enable those tenants who are more severely overcrowded to move to a more suitable home more quickly. The provisions to facilitate under-occupiers to downsize will also positively affect social housing providers.	Annual monitoring	Strategic Housing Team Leader	N/A
Social Value ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overall the proposed changes to the housing allocation scheme will have a positive impact as the allocation scheme should be more easily understood by residents and	Annual monitoring of the housing allocation scheme and number successfully securing housing, or not, following an application. Housing Options and	CDC Housing Options and Allocations Team	Annual Monitoring

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				<p>seeks to prioritise those applicants who need or warrant social housing most, such as homeless households. However, with each individual or group given additional priority or eligibility to join the housing register there will be another that is negatively affected as a result due to the finite number of homes available.</p>	<p>Allocations Teams will continue to promote alternative housing options such as private rented and low-cost home ownership and deliver initiative and incentives such as those currently delivered through the Cherwell Bond Scheme.</p>		

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts

OCC and CDC aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. How will your proposal affect our ability to reduce carbon emissions related to

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Energy use in our buildings or highways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

We are also committed to enable Cherwell to become carbon neutral by 2030 and Oxfordshire by 2050. How will your proposal affect our ability to:

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Enable carbon emissions reduction at district/county level?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	Annual
Person Responsible for Review	Strategic Housing Team Leader
Authorised By	Head of Housing

This report is public	
Cost of Living 23/24 review and 24/25 activities	
Committee	Overview and Scrutiny
Date of Committee	10 September 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, Councillor Rob Pattenden
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	21 August 2024
Report of	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the additional activity described in the 2023/24 Cost of Living action plan and to note proposed future approaches and activity.

1. Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To request the Executive to note the review of the 2023/24 cost of living plan and proposed range of activities planned for 2024/25

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides a review (Appendix 1) of the activities Cherwell District Council facilitated and delivered as part of the Cost-of-Living plan for 2023/24 to support residents experiencing difficulties due to rising cost of living.
- 2.2 Attached to the report are PowerPoint slides (Appendix 2) for the Executive to note the proposed range of activities planned for 2024/25

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	The 2023/24 Cost of Living programme was delivered within the proposed budget and within Appendix 1 the review details the cost allocation for each project. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 28 August 2024
Legal	There are no legal implications arising as the programme is within the council's remit to deliver and all grant aid will be subject to a robust process with appropriate monitoring and this report is just

	for information. Alison Coles Legal Services Operations Manager, 28 August 2024		
Risk Management	Risks related to the Cost of Living programme are managed through the service operational risk register. The Review and appendix 1 highlights there were no areas of non-delivery against funding, which could be one of the main risks. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 August 2024		
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative
			Commentary
Equality Impact			The 2023/24 Cost of Living plan was delivered in line with our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework, seeking to ensure that all residents who are experiencing difficulties because of cost-of-living pressures will be enabled to take action to minimise that impact.
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X	
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X	
Climate & Environmental Impact			N/A
ICT & Digital Impact			N/A N/A
Data Impact			N/A
Procurement & subsidy			N/A
Council Priorities	Healthy, resilient and engaged communities The Cost of Living plan 2023/24 supported our most vulnerable residents while working with partners to address the causes of health inequality and deprivation.		
Human Resources	N/A		
Property	N/A		

Consultation & Engagement	Will engage with local community to continue to review impact of the cost of living programme and adapt services for the future
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Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Following Covid and the subsequent Cost of Living crisis Cherwell District Council has provided additional support to low-income households, initially in 22/23 with additional payments or food vouchers to those in receipt of housing benefit and last winter 23/24 ran a programme of support and grant schemes to offer support to grass roots community groups and individuals.
- 3.2 Appended to this report is Appendix 1 that demonstrates the range of activities undertaken and where possible the impact that they had on residents who accessed them in 2023/24.
- 3.3 A succession of Household Support Grants have been available to Cherwell DC to support this work, with HSF 5 being the last of those. The government has not made any additional funding available from central government for this purpose.

4. Details

- 4.1 To review the 2023/24 Cost of Living programme and impact that this has had on residents.
- 4.2 To discuss proposed 2024/25 cost of living activity plan (attached slides Appendix 2) for autumn / winter 24/25. Consultation across different services at Cherwell has been undertaken to provide the activity plan to ensure that this encompasses a range of activities that suit the needs of the local community.
- 4.3 The 2023/24 Cost of Living plan was hugely successful and provided additional support for local communities and residents delivered by Cherwell DC and facilitated through voluntary / community organisations.
- 4.4 Appendix 1 details what the different activities and projects delivered were along with the impact that these projects had, key delivery partners and cost allocation of projects.

An example of some of these projects are listed below and detailed in Appendix 1

- Electric Blanket Testing and Safety: Conducted electric blanket testing across Kidlington, Bicester, and Banbury, where 298 people attended, leading to the safe disposal of faulty blankets, with failure rates ranging from 28% to 34%.

- Food Insecurity Support: Distributed £3,000 in food grants to 25 community groups, supporting an estimated 4,234 households. Additionally, expanded the winter warmers program, providing meals and warm spaces to 135 households.
- Fuel Poverty Relief: Relaunched the Cherwell Warm Welcome Network, increasing warm spaces from 48 across the district and supported 58 households with discounted oil prices through the Oil Co-op scheme.
- Household Support Grants: Awarded up to £5,000 grants for energy-efficient equipment, benefiting 720 households, including families with children and pensioners. The Sunrise Multicultural Centre wrote in their evaluation report that *'This grant was amazing! and made a big difference to the people who received the larger electrical items.*
- Money Maximisation and Debt Advice: Provided debt and money advice to 327 households (1,299 individuals) through collaborations with Citizens Advice, Trading Standards, and internal council teams.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

This report reviews the progress and impact delivered as part of the Cost of Living programme 2023 / 24 therefore there are no options to consider.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 To note the Cost-of-Living 2023/24 Programme and note proposed future approaches and activity for 2024/25
- 6.3 Going forward the Wellbeing service wants to continue to work in partnership across the district with statutory and voluntary sector organisations, both strategically and on a hyperlocal basis, to ensure that Cherwell residents can access support through additional targeted interventions and secure help when needed.
- 6.4 The council recognises that the response to the cost of living crisis is changing and will need to continue to be flexible and adapt to best meet the changing needs of residents and the proposed activities will seek to continue to address this.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A

If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All wards but with a greater impact in areas with higher levels of deprivation

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Appendix 1 Cost of Living Review 2023/24
Appendix 2	Appendix 2 Cost of Living Plan Power point Slides 2024/25 to go through
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley
Report Author contact details	Nicola.Riley@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Cost of Living Action Plan – Review 2023/24

Throughout the winter of 2023/24, there were a variety of initiatives that were run by the wellbeing team throughout the winter of 2023/24 in response to the Cost of Living Crisis.

These have been categorised into six areas, with each areas providing vital support for residents.

Activity	Date initiated	Key Delivery Partners	Activity	Outcome	Cost Allocation
Advice and Support, Health and Wellbeing:					
International Older Peoples Day stalls in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and promoting the community pop up at Castle Quay:	October 2023	Age UK Oxfordshire, Trading Standards, Citizen Advice	Communication with older people at day stalls in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington This included electric blanket testing.	Electric Blanket Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kidlington - 120 attended, 74 blankets tested (28% failure rate) - Bicester –70 attend, tested 81 blankets (32% failure rate) - Banbury - 108 attended, tested 80 blankets (with a 34% failure rate) 298 people attended these meetings. When the electric blanket fails, and as it is unsafe they are disposed of.	£2,000
Advice and Support:					
Who can help?' booklet – refresh and promotion	November 2023	All Voluntary Sector Partners and statutory provision	Leaflets refreshed and distributed across the district and within CDC services.	Distributed to community partners, parish councils and warm welcome spaces. Engaged and worked internally with housing, customer services etc that engage with vulnerable services.	Officer Time.

Food Insecurity:

<p>Food Grants for Community Food Provision</p>	<p>October 2023</p>	<p>Community food Network Partners</p>	<p>Food Grant community scheme awarded up to £3,000 in grants to community groups for community projects relating to food.</p> <p>These grant schemes can cover support to cover cooking sessions, cooking equipment, cookery or edible garden project as well as foodbank support.</p>	<p>25 groups have benefitted from this grant scheme, which concluded in March 2024, at the end of the financial year throughout Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.</p> <p>It is estimated that 4234 Households were supported through a variety of projects, with many ongoing, increasing the potential reach.</p> <p>Feedback:</p> <p>The RVS Community Cornhill Centre have been able to continue the funding of the Friday club which provides subsidised, nutritious meals whilst reducing isolation and strengthening community bonds.</p> <p>In the grant evaluation form, the Cornhill Centre noted that ‘The Cornhill Centre wishes to express its gratitude to Cherwell District Council for awarding us this grant. Your support has been instrumental in sustaining a service that goes far beyond a meal; it fosters connection, combats isolation, and nurtures well-being among our members’.</p>	<p>£66,000</p>
<p>Activate and Eat Club Half term provision.</p>	<p>Half terms (summer, October, February and Easter)</p>	<p>Schools in Cherwell</p>	<p>Activate and eat half term sessions were held over half terms throughout Cherwell</p>	<p>There were 1,838 attendances at these sessions which were held in the summer, October and Easter half term.</p> <p>In the easter half term, over the 2 week period, there were 234 attendees at these sessions over the period.</p>	<p>£13,654.50 - HSF4 allocation</p>

Additional support to distribute surplus festive food.	December 2023 and January 2024	Cherwell Community food network,	Additional support and festive lunches held over the festive period.	5 Christmas lunch events across Cherwell District in partnership with community partners to support. Information was distributed to the Cherwell Food Network on Christmas food provision/surplus food distribution.	No budget
Food Insecurity and Health and Wellbeing:					
Healthy Eating recipe swap	March-March 2024	Cherwell Community food network	Recipes shared through partners and internally at CDC.	Work completed with Sunrise Multicultural Project and Sunshine children centre creating diverse recipes. Groups also encouraged to think about reducing food waste by submitting recipes to be shared as part of food waste action week. New recipe book planned using community food grant funding for launch July 2024	Officer Time but no budget
Expanded winter warmers programmes (provides a warm meal to residents to eat in a warm space and another to take away)	November 2023	The Hill, Cherwell Collective, BYCE	Expansion to the winter warmers was launched in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.	Banbury – winter warmers program expanded to deliver and make hot soups (using surplus food) for residents within a 3.5-mile radius of Banbury Cross. Working with The Hill and the Royal Voluntary Service. The senior lunch is also run by the Hill and offers a social space and food for elderly residents. Bicester – Bicester open doors lunch was included, and residents were supported by volunteer’s driver’s scheme if they wished to attend. Kidlington – Cherwell collective lunch scheme and transport provision.	£12,000 – HSF4 Allocation

				Throughout this program approximately 135 households have been supported.	
Food Insecurity and Maximizing Income:					
Food Vouchers	October 2023 – March 2024	Food Banks, Community Fridges and key partners e.g. Sunrise MCP	Food Vouchers given to residents through community partners.	Two rounds of applications (before and after Christmas). After Christmas vouchers increased from £50 to £75. Increase number of groups who can distribute vouchers across Cherwell. 742 vouchers distributed through community partners.	£32,075 total spent on food vouchers from October 2023 - March 2024
Fuel Poverty					
Relaunch the Cherwell Warm Welcome Network, encouraging more partners	October 2023	Various community partners	Warm Welcome network relaunched in October 2023, and aimed at including more partners	48 warm spaces were held this year – and increase on 30 the year before. Gaps were filled on the previous years, with more rural areas signing up – 18 villages had signed up, and engagement with new groups had continued. A Warm Welcome pack containing information was circulated at these groups. These included who can help booklets. Positive feedback from groups involved. Feedback: The Banbury Community Fridge was also provided with funding to support the construction of consultation and warm space room which provides a supportive environment for residents of Banbury.	£250

				It provided warm welcome space for residents to provide a warm space.	
Expand Fuel support programme. Extra Warmth	November 2023	Citizens Advice	Project launched in November 2023 and helped support residents across CDC and in particular our rural areas and BF wards.	58 Households are members of the scheme in the Cherwell District	£13,770.00 - HSF4 Allocation
Reduced membership fees for Oil Co-op for rural residents with oil heating	November 2023	Community First Oxfordshire	Project launched and full subsidies available. Scheme offers a discount for oil prices and individuals as part of it know in advance of paying for it. Offers the best price for residents and saves individuals from having to shop around for the best price.	58 Households Supported throughout the district.	£7,000.00 - HSF4 Allocation

Household Support Equipment Grant	December 2023 and January 2024	Food banks, Community centres	Grant scheme has been set up for community groups to apply for up to £5000. Equipment (air fryers, slow cookers, LED lightbulbs energy efficient equipment) will then be handed out to residents.	<p>There have been 6 groups that have received support from this for up to £5000 across Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington</p> <p>It is estimated that 720 Households supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 300 with children - 100 with pensioners - 320 others <p>Feedback:</p> <p>The Sunrise Multicultural Centre wrote in their evaluation report that 'This grant was amazing! and made a big difference to the people who received the larger electrical items. It's also something they were not expecting as we usually are not able to support in this way, and I feel like it really gave people a boost when we have them to them.'</p>	£23,524.45 -HSF4
Draught Busters Pilot Scheme	December 2023 and January 2024	Heat Upper Heyford	Scheme which provided equipment for residents to draught-proof their homes. The equipment provided included draught excluders. It reviewed homes to see where they can reduce heat loss.	The scheme started with a pilot in Upper Heyford, however due to warm weather it was held over until the 2024/25.	£3,000 - Household Support 5

Health and Wellbeing, Food Insecurity and Food Poverty

Cookery skills and shared cooking programme	January to March 2024	Good Food Oxfordshire Cook together, eat together Cherwell Collective	Creation of a share cooking programme that was created through holding shared cooking sessions at community partners.	There are a variety of sessions that have been held at local community partners including, Cook together, eat together sessions. GFO have a shared map of cookery spaces and activities – this is shared with residents at events and in partner venues.	Officer Time and Resources
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Money Maximisation

Debt and money advice;	December 2023 and January 2024	Trading Standards, Citizens Advice, CDC (Cherwell District Council) Revenues and Benefits team,	Supporting residents with the debt and money advice. Linking with partners on scam awareness and Loan sharks, domestic abuse.	Who can help leaflets and Support Service Leaflets updated distributed across the district, online and in GPs. Money advice support offered through in person events and online. Internal teams at the council aware of necessary routes and signpost residents– these include waste, revenue and benefits and housing. Energy Matters – Citizens Advice 327 Household’s supported (1299 Individuals)	Officer Time and Resources
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Health and Wellbeing

Period Poverty Grant Scheme	April 2024	Cherwell District Council, Community Partners	Grant offered for up to £150 to help community groups/warm welcome spaces/food support surfaces to purchase period products for residents of Cherwell to support period poverty.	<p>Delivery of period products to support residents in need.</p> <p>Good News Stories: Thanks for sending this across. This will be hugely beneficial in supporting some of the girls at the Primary School. I know the Head Teacher has been buying sanitary products and I have taken donations up to the School as well. Thank you to everyone at Cherwell who work so hard to support those in need. – Hooky Neighbours Pantry</p> <p>We'd like to provide these in our parish centre, which is used by a range of vulnerable groups. Thank you for taking this initiative! – Banbury St Mary</p>	£12,000
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Cost of living support

Nicola Riley – Wellbeing

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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Cost of living support 24/25

Proposed projects with funding secured

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- Electric Blanket replacements at older people's events
- Household support equipment grants
- Fuel support program
- Draught busters
- Period poverty grant
- Update of the warm welcome network and who can help booklet
- Food vouchers
- Seven recipes in seven days

Total £81,550 (Household Support Fund 5 & CDC Core)

Cost of living Support 24/25

Potential projects funding not yet secured

- Food vouchers – Opportunity to top up the funding pot to last through the winter (£23,000 to match last years amount)
- Food grants - Opportunity to reopen the grant for this year (£30,000)
- Activate and Eat half term and Easter provision with the youth activators (£2040)
- Expand My Healthy Way to residents eligible through Link cards (£6750)
- Enabling funding to use LIFT (low income family tracker) (£15,000)
- Marketing campaigns for cost of living support (£3210)
- Total £80,000
- Possible funding streams could include a potential household support 6 fund or writing grant applications.

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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25

(Updated: 2 September 2024)

Tuesday 15 October 2024		
Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030 (consultation)	Policy Development (pre-decision scrutiny). To consider and comment on the draft Strategy prior to submission to Executive for adoption.	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing & Richard Smith, Head of Housing Portfolio Holder - Councillor Chris Pruden, Housing
Working Groups update	Standing item. Progress update relating to established working groups.	Working Group Members, Democratic and Elections Team
Work Programme 2024-25 Update	Standing item. Review of work programme, update on topics suggested for consideration, update on items previously considered	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair, Democratic and Elections Team
Tuesday 26 November 2024		
Report on Safeguarding and the annual return.	Performance Monitoring Whilst there is no requirement to submit an annual return to the Safeguarding Boards, it is important to have an overview of the work we're doing at this time in training staff, members and the reflect on the number and nature of referrals	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing & Susan Asbury, Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead Portfolio Holder - Councillor Rob Pattenden, Wellbeing & Housing Services
Performance Monitoring – Quarter Two (July to September 2024)	Performance Monitoring To consider the Quarter 2 performance report, with a focus on amber / red indicators, and provide comments to the Executive.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

		Portfolio Holder - Councillor Chris Brant, Corporate Services
New Developments in Castle Quay (Exempt item)	Holding the Executive to account To consider an exempt update (Item suggested by Chair and Vice-Chair and endorsed by Committee at 18 July meeting.)	Corporate Director Resources and Transformation & Mona Walsh, Assistant Director Property Portfolio Holder – Councillor Lesley McLean, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property and Regeneration
Sale of Bodicote House (Exempt item)	Holding the Executive to account To consider an exempt update (Item suggested by Chair and Vice-Chair and endorsed by Committee at 18 July meeting.)	Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation & Mona Walsh, Assistant Director Property Portfolio Holder – Councillor Lesley McLean, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property and Regeneration
Working Groups update	Standing item. Progress update relating to established working groups.	Working Group Members, Democratic and Elections Team
Work Programme 2024-25 Update	Standing item. Review of work programme, update on topics suggested for consideration, update on items previously considered	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair, Democratic and Elections Team
28 January 2025		
Wellbeing Strategy Impact Assessment	Policy Development and Monitoring To consider the work undertaken so far on shaping how the impact of the new wellbeing strategy will be measured	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing & Tom Gubbins, Wellbeing Manager Portfolio Holder – Councillor Rob Pattenden, Healthy Communities



Transformation Programme	Holding the Executive to account. To consider an update on the transformation programme (Item suggested by Chair and Vice-Chair and endorsed by Committee at 18 July meeting.)	Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation & Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus Portfolio Holder – Councillor David Hingley, Leader & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership
Performance Monitoring – Quarter Three (July to September 2024)	Performance Monitoring To consider the Quarter 3 performance report, with a focus on amber / red indicators, and provide comments to the Executive.	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder - Councillor Chris Brant, Corporate Services
Working Groups update	Standing item. Progress update relating to established working groups.	Working Group Members, Democratic and Elections Team
Work Programme 2024-25 Update	Standing item. Review of work programme, update on topics suggested for consideration, update on items previously considered	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair, Democratic and Elections Team
11 March 2025		
Resettlement and Migration Annual Report	Performance Monitoring To reflect on the resettlement work during the year highlighting successes and challenges	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Portfolio Holder - Councillor Chris Pruden, Housing & Resettlement
Draft Performance Monitoring – Outcomes Framework 2025/26	Performance Monitoring. To consider and make comments / recommendations to Executive on the draft Performance Outcomes Framework for 2025-2026 prior to Executive adoption of the framework	Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus & Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader Portfolio Holder - Councillor Chris Brant, Corporate Services

Working Groups update	Standing item. Progress update relating to established working groups.	Working Group Members, Democratic and Elections Team
Work Programme 2024-25 Update	Standing item. Review of work programme, update on topics suggested for consideration, update on items previously considered	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair, Democratic and Elections Team
Items to be allocated		
Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation	Policy Development (pre-decision scrutiny). Two Overview and Committee member sit on the Member Advisory Group and will provide updates to the Committee. To consider the Local Plan Regulation 19 document and agree comments to be forwarded to Executive for their consideration	David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jean Conway, Planning and Development Management
Planning Application Appeals	Performance monitoring Item suggested by Chair and Vice-Chair and endorsed by Committee at 18 July meeting. Scrutiny to play a critical friend role in relation to planning appeals (report in the performance monitoring report and to Planning Committee) having particular regard to planning application refusals overturned at appeal (Planning Committee and delegated decisions), the reasons for cost implications and lessons learned.	David Peckford Assistant Director Planning and Development & Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jean Conway, Planning and Development Management
Infrastructure Funding and Delivery and S106 Contributions	Performance monitoring Item suggested by Chair and Vice-Chair and endorsed by Committee at 18 July meeting. To review the policies and processes relating to the use of developer contributions and how income is collected, spent and reported.	David Peckford Assistant Director Planning and Development & Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management

		Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jean Conway, Planning and Development Management
Council Owned Companies (Graven Hill and Crown House)	Holding the Executive to account / External Scrutiny Item suggested by Chair and Vice-Chair and endorsed by Committee at 18 July meeting. The Shareholder Representative to update the Committee and answer questions relating to companies owned by the Council and the performance of those companies	Stephen Hinds, Shareholder Representative Portfolio Holder – Councillor David Hingley, Leader & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership
Attendance by the Chief Constable for the Thames Valley	External Scrutiny To fulfil the Council's requirement regarding crime and disorder scrutiny to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions no less than once in every twelve-month period. All Members will be invited to attend the meeting.	Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities Portfolio Holder – Councillor Rob Parkinson, Safer Communities

Remaining meeting Dates 2024/25 (All Tuesday, 6.30pm unless indicated)

15 October 2024, 26 November 2024, 28 January 2025, 11 March 2025

Work Programme Items:

Members are reminded of the five roles of scrutiny when considering items for the work programme:

- Performance Monitoring; Policy Development; Policy Review; Holding the Executive to Account; External Scrutiny

The [Executive Forward Plan](#) is published on the Cherwell District Council website

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