

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 27 January 2026 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor David Rogers (Chair)

Councillor Gordon Blakeway

Councillor John Broad

Councillor Gemma Coton

Councillor Frank Ideh

Councillor Simon Lytton

Councillor Lynne Parsons

Councillor Dom Vaitkus

Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Dr Isabel Creed (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Phil Chapman

Councillor Harry Knight

Also Present:

Councillor David Hingley, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership

Officers:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Stephen Hinds, Executive Director Resources

David Spilsbury, Head of Digital Innovation

David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning

Charlene Greenaway, Transformation Consultant

Heidi Radcliffe Hill, Interim Head of Chief Executive's Office

Lucy Wainwright, Transformation Programme Manager

Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead

Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Nicola Riley, Interim Executive Director Neighbourhood Services

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

46 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

47 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 December 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

48 **Chair's Announcements**

There were no Chair's announcements.

49 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

50 **Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2025 - 2026**

The Committee considered a report from the Interim Head of the Chief Executive Office that detailed the council's performance position at the end of quarter 3 2025-2026.

In introducing the report, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership advised that the Council was performing well against its quarter 3 objectives, with 88% of measures on target or within tolerance.

Out of the 34 total measures, four reported red, 12 were amber and 18 were green. On the annual delivery plan there were 15 milestones to deliver in quarter 3, five of which had been achieved or were within the agreed tolerance, eight slightly behind target, and two were behind target.

Members were also advised that of the 12 targeted corporate key performance indicators, eight achieved their Q3 target or reported within the agreed tolerance, and three reported slightly behind target, and 1 was red.

**Resolved**

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Council's Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2025 - 2026 performance be noted.

51 **Executive Response to the Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations**

The Committee considered the Executive responses to four sets of recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following the presentation of the scrutiny reports to the Executive on 7 October 2025.

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership gave a brief introduction to the report.

Members were advised that as part of recommendation 1.2 regarding the progress and implementations of recommendations, actions would be logged in a tracking document that would be submitted to Committee as a progress check in approximately six months' time.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Executive Response to the Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations be noted.
- (2) That the progress/implementation of recommendations be monitored, with an update scheduled for the July 2026 meeting of the Committee.

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### **Cherwell Futures Programme**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Resources detailing updates on the Council's Cherwell Futures Programme, focused on governance improvements, standardisation, workforce development, and the agreement of priorities.

In introducing the report, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership gave a presentation detailing the progress of the Council's transformation through the Cherwell Futures Programme. The programme aimed to make financial savings from streamlined efficiencies whilst improving and protecting council services.

Members were advised that the programme was on track to achieve its medium-term financial target savings of 3-4 million pounds, through efficiency and structural savings.

In response to a question regarding whether there was oversight of the various project boards, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership explained that there was the Transformation and Change board as well as further oversight from Executive members.

In response to a question regarding whether the programme included any resources dedicated to ecological improvements, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership explained that the programme in its current form focussed on three main points; Customer Front Door, Planning Transformation and Environmental Services improvement, and that the forthcoming Climate Action Plan due to be published would detail further plans for ecology and greenhouse gas emissions for the District.

In response to a request from the Committee, officers agreed to produce a diagram to illustrate the makeup and relationship between the various project boards referenced in the presentation.

In response to a question regarding the impact of Local Government Reorganisation on staffing structures and potential redundancies, the Executive Director Resources explained that any impact would depend on a business case evaluation.

In response to a question regarding a possible delay in the introduction of new waste collection timetables ahead of Local Government Reorganisation to ensure that resources in the meantime were not in vain, the Executive Director, Resources explained that the Cherwell Futures Programme would not carry out abortive work and that any work commenced would be with the intention of positioning the District in the best possible place for leading processes during Local Government Reorganisation.

In response to a question regarding advanced technology integration and back up support for communication services such as internet and whether council data was securely stored, the Head of Digital and Innovation advised that the Council had back up for both internet and telephone lines, and that the Council operated on a cloud based service with cyber security at the forefront of operations. Members were also advised that the Councils IT services were subject to mandatory comprehensive security assessments known as the Public Services IT Health Check that ensured services were resilient and compliant against cyber security threats.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Cherwell Futures Programme update be noted.

## **53 Work Programme Update**

The Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead provided an update on the Committee's Work Programme 2025 – 2026.

Members were advised that the Temporary Accommodation update had been moved from the January meeting to March 2026, due to Officer availability.

Members were advised that officers were in discussion to ensure that the Performance of S106 delivery report was ready to be brought to the March committee.

Members were advised that the March meeting of the committee would include the draft Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report ahead of its submission to Full Council.

Members were also advised of the following additions to the 2026-27 work programme; Kidlington Illegal Landfill Lessons learnt, Monitoring of the implementation of the Working Group recommendations to Executive.

**Resolved**

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Work Programme 2025 – 2026 be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.22 pm

Chair:

Date: