

Business Plan 2016-17



Cherwell:
a district of
opportunity

Cherwell:
safe, green,
clean

Cherwell:
a thriving
community

Cherwell:
sound budgets
and customer
focused council

Cherwell: a great place to live

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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Foreword

Welcome to Cherwell District Council’s business plan for 2016/17. This plan is about our priorities for the district in the coming year. The council is here to serve the people of the District and therefore our plan aims to support those who live, work and visit this district which has a lot to offer. Our plan is based on an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our District and consultation with local businesses and residents to determine local requirements.

We will make sure the council operates efficiently, and work towards long term solutions to deal with the cuts we face. We have already been proactive working with our partner South Northamptonshire Council developing shared working and looking at new ways of delivering services for our communities. Financial savings have been made over the past years and we will continue to be as innovative as possible to ensure the council manages its day to day business even more effectively and transparently.

We recognise that a strong local economy is essential for a strong local community. We will continue to promote economic growth; helping local companies to expand, securing high quality and high value jobs, with increased opportunities for all, and supporting more affordable homes for local people. The above is supported by the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 which ensures that growth is targeted and investment made whilst still respecting the character and beauty of our rural areas.

This business plan, based around four key themes, also outlines our performance pledges for the year and we remain committed to working effectively with our partners to ensure high quality services are delivered in times of financial constraint.

We want Cherwell to be a District where people want to live and work and we think we are moving in the right direction.

If you would like any more information about the priorities of this council please get in touch using the details on the back of this document.



Councillor Barry Wood

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry Wood".

Leader of Cherwell District Council



Sue Smith

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Smith".

Joint Chief Executive, Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils



Cherwell: a great place to live

An overview of Cherwell

Named after the River Cherwell which flows through it, the District is located between London and Birmingham, at the most northern point of the South East region, where it meets the West Midlands and East Midlands. Cherwell borders Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire, Aylesbury Vale, South Northamptonshire and Stratford on Avon Districts. The M40 passes through Cherwell and there are good rail connections to both London and Birmingham.

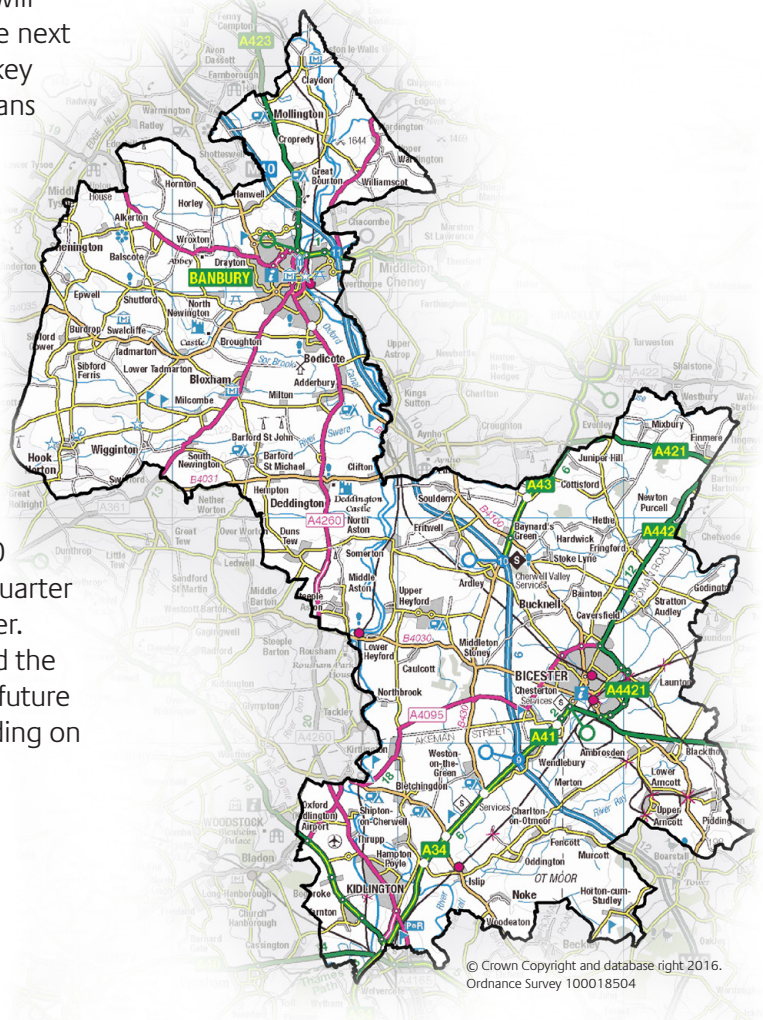
The District is growing with over half of the population living in the principal centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington; the remainder in more than 70 smaller settlements. Cherwell's population has increased significantly over the past 20 years and this trend is set to continue with the population predicted to reach 155,650 by 2021.

One of the council's main strategic challenges is to ensure that the District grows in a sustainable way; one that delivers a prosperous economy and thriving communities. The Eco Bicester development will see approximately 5,000 houses built over the next 20 years. Delivering the local plan will play a key role in this, as will implementing the Masterplans for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington to secure new housing, retail, development and leisure opportunities. The council is working with its partners to ensure that this growth is delivered while protecting and enhancing the character of our urban centres, villages and landscapes.

Another key challenge for the District will be responding to population changes. The population of Cherwell is continuing to age, with the number of residents aged 60 and above predicted to increase by over 7,000 between 2011 and 2021. By 2021, nearly a quarter of Cherwell's population will be aged 60 or over. This rate of increase will provide challenges and the council will have to continue to anticipate the future services required by our older population, building on

our strong track record of ensuring the needs of older residents are met. The council is focused on ensuring that our services are accessible to all people living in the District.

Another of the council's key challenges will be to ensure that communities across the District continue to thrive. As part of this commitment, the council will be working with partners to increase the affordable housing options across the District, whilst continuing to work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into employment.



Section 1: Our strategic approach to Business Planning: Performance, accountability and transparency

Five Year Business Strategy - Priorities for the 5 year strategy

The table below presents the council’s strategic priorities for its 5 year business strategy. This strategy sits alongside the council’s medium term financial strategy and is underpinned by the annual business

plan, budget and performance management framework that sets out the milestones, performance measures and budget that will drive the council’s delivery of services and major projects.

Cherwell: a district of opportunity	Cherwell: safe, green, clean	Cherwell: a thriving community	Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council
a1. Implement the Cherwell Local Plan as the framework for sustainable housing, new employment and infrastructure investment over the next 20 years.	b1. Provide high quality recycling and waste services, aimed at helping residents recycle as much as possible.	c1. Deliver affordable housing and work with private sector landlords to help improve affordable housing options.	d1. Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships to include other statutory bodies such as Police, Health, County Council, joint working and other service delivery models.
a2. Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester helping to provide new housing, jobs and leisure opportunities.	b2. Provide high quality street cleansing services, and tackle environmental crime (littering, fly tipping, graffiti) where it arises.	c2. Work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into paid employment.	d2. Continue to communicate effectively with local residents and businesses
a3. Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury helping to provide retail, employment and town centre development opportunities.	b3. Work with partners to help ensure the District remains a low crime area, reducing fear of crime, tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and focussing on safeguarding our residents and businesses.	c3. Provide high quality housing options advice and support to prevent homelessness. c4. Work to promote and support health and wellbeing across the district.	d3. Deliver the five year business strategy, medium term revenue plan and a capital programme that ensures the council is resourced to deliver its strategic priorities.
a4. Complete and implement the Masterplan for Kidlington, helping to develop a strong village centre afforded by its location.	b4. Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment.	c5. Provide high quality and accessible leisure opportunities. c6. Provide support to the voluntary and community sector.	d4. Deliver below inflation increases to the Cherwell District Council element of Council Tax.
a5. Promote inward investment and support business growth within the District.		c7. Protect our built heritage by supporting effective conservation, managing the impacts of growth and working to ensure development takes place in appropriate areas.	
		c8. Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services.	

The five year business strategy (table left) will be reviewed during 2016 and updated to reflect the needs and ambitions of the District for a further five years.

Our annual business plan outlines the key actions for the coming year, along with the associated performance measures/outcomes. This enables us to demonstrate that we align our resources to the delivery of the business plan in the most effective way possible, whilst also providing a clear direction of travel for the council, its employees and for everyone in our District and those who read this document.

Our business planning cycle is underpinned by budget reviews aimed at identifying opportunities for increased efficiency and performance. This process is led by locally elected members. Consultation with residents and businesses also contribute to the development of the plan including our annual customer satisfaction survey.



Improvement and Innovation

The council has robust plans to deliver improvement and increased efficiency given the challenging national economic circumstances currently being faced.

We have progressed a transformation programme that delivers both financial savings and prepares us to be a leading and thriving council. We continue to work with our suppliers to identify procurement savings, reduce our energy costs, increase the amount of services that can be accessed online and generally improve our business processes.

Managing our Performance

The overarching five year Business Strategy, medium term financial plan, annual business plan, service plans

and the appraisal targets of individual employees all demonstrate that the council has a clear and robust “golden thread” between resource availability and delivery of the council’s agreed priorities. This approach helps us to provide effective community leadership, and will demonstrate that we are adopting a more mature and commercially aware approach to running our council.

Performance management represents an essential part of our assurance and accountability process. It ensures that we are focused on the delivery of our strategic and operational objectives and provides an effective way of demonstrating our achievements to local residents whilst also being transparent about the issues or challenges that we are facing.

Reporting our Performance

We report our performance on a quarterly basis and it is reviewed by the Executive. Where performance issues and challenges are identified the Joint Management Team and lead elected members work together to deliver improvement.

Details about our performance and expenditure are available at www.cherwell.gov.uk

Managing our Resources

The council continues to face challenging financial times, and we are not alone. We can and must learn from the experience of others. We are actively exploring all opportunities to not only ensure our survival, but ultimately also manage our growth. It is an ambitious aspiration, but it is one that we have to face head on. And it is our commitment to you. We must ensure that as taxpayers, your money is spent wisely and that we deliver services that provide you with what you need, when you need it.

The revenue budget for 2016/17 can be found on our website www.cherwell.gov.uk. The council also has an ambitious Capital Programme and an aspiration to regenerate the two market towns of Banbury and Bicester whilst not forgetting to invest adequate financial capital resources across the rest of the District for the people who live and work here. We aim to do this by delivering high quality programmes which will significantly boost the economic prosperity of the area and create much needed jobs and investment.

Section 2: Council Priorities and Business Plan 2016/17

Our long term vision for the District is ambitious. Working with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors we are aiming to build a District with a diverse economy. We are working to secure opportunities for all, and to help grow vibrant,

thriving communities connected by a sense of pride, place and purpose. To help deliver this vision the council has four strategic priorities. These priorities shape the work we do, our services, plans and major projects. They are outlined below:

Cherwell: a district of opportunity	Supporting economic development, employment, conservation, regeneration and development of the District
Cherwell: safe, green, clean	Working to ensure the District has high standards of environmental cleanliness, great recycling and waste management, tackling crime and supporting energy efficiency
Cherwell: a thriving community	Providing affordable housing, leisure and sports facilities and activities, working with partners to improve access to health services , providing arts, cultural and community services
Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council	Ensuring the council is run as efficiently as possible, consulting with local people, helping vulnerable people to access our services, and the provision of council tax and housing benefits.

Our business plan for 2016/17 is based around these four strategic priorities, with each having a set of key objectives, actions and targets. These are outlined in more detail on the following pages.



Cherwell: a great place to live

Cherwell: a district of opportunity

Supporting economic development, employment, conservation, regeneration and development of the District

Implement the Cherwell Local Plan as the framework for sustainable housing, new employment and infrastructure investment over the next 20 years

- Banbury and Kidlington Masterplans adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents
- Prepare draft Local Plan Part 2 and commence partial review of Local Plan Part 1 to address the unmet need of Oxford

Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester helping to provide new housing, jobs and leisure opportunities.

- Northwest Bicester: continue to facilitate the planning applications for the site
- Northwest Bicester: delivery of the Eco – Bicester business centre
- Graven Hill: deliver the demonstration project on the Graven Hill site
- Graven Hill: set up a sales and marketing suite to promote the plots
- Engage with the community and stakeholders including the Bicester Town Council and Local Management Organisation to assist in the definition and delivery of the Garden Town – Bicester

Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury helping to provide retail, employment and town centre development opportunities.

- Prepare a scheme for the redevelopment of the Bolton Road site
- Secure a start on site by the developer subject to the detailed development agreement being completed, and maximise the council's income and returns from Castle Quay and Castle Quay 2
- Take steps to develop a Masterplan for the redevelopment of Canalside within Banbury Town Centre redevelopment
- Support The Mill as the primary town centre arts provision in its development activities

Promote inward investment and support business growth within the District.

- Support business growth, skills and employment in local companies and the visitor economy to strengthen the economy of the District.
- Continue to use the Cherwell Investment Partnership as a hub for inward investment and ensuring sufficient business sites and employment land are available to meet the needs of the District.
- Produce marketing material to promote commercial and industrial business sites to the area

Deliver high quality regulatory services that support the growth of the local economy.

- Develop a whole council approach to supporting businesses utilising Better Business principles and promote our compliance with the Regulator's Code
- Work proactively with developers and others including Oxfordshire County Council on both planning applications and pre-application enquiries to enable the speedy delivery of new commercial and residential projects

**Cherwell: safe, green,
clean**

Working to ensure the District has high standards of environmental cleanliness, great recycling and waste management, tackling crime and supporting energy efficiency

Provide high quality recycling and waste services, aimed at helping residents recycle as much as possible.

- Achieve 55% recycling rate
- Maintain levels of customer satisfaction with the recycling and waste services

Provide high quality street cleansing services, and tackle environmental crime (littering, fly tipping, graffiti) where it arises.

- Maintain customer satisfaction with street cleansing
- Undertake six neighbourhood blitzes with community involvement

Work with partners to help ensure the District remains a low crime area, reducing fear of crime, tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and focussing on safeguarding our residents and businesses.

- To develop an alternative CCTV operational system for our urban centres
- Continue to work with the local police and licence holders to ensure our town centres remain clean, safe and vibrant at all time

Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment.

- Deliver the council's Biodiversity Action Plan "Protecting and Enhancing Cherwell's Natural Environment"
- Implement a new carbon management plan from 2015-20 which increases the energy efficiency of the organisation and lowers the carbon footprint

Cherwell: a thriving community

Providing affordable housing, leisure and sports facilities and activities, working with partners to improve access to health services, providing arts, cultural and community services

Deliver affordable housing and work with private sector landlords to help improve affordable housing options.

- Deliver at least 190 units of affordable housing including a high proportion constructed using self build models. Planning for 133 affordable rented homes and 57 for shared ownership or other low cost home ownership scheme.
- Promote the establishment of an off-site construction factory in Bicester for the long term production of kit homes for affordable and self-build housing
- Encourage private sector landlords to improve their stock through targeted grant action and other housing advice
- Ensure the provision of extra care housing

Work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into paid employment.

- Commissioning of high quality financial and debt advice for vulnerable residents
- Effective implementation of continued welfare reform and administration of benefits.
- Continue to support skills development, apprenticeships and job clubs in order to keep local unemployment at historic low levels

Provide high quality housing options advice and support to prevent homelessness.

- Deliver the actions identified within the revised Homelessness prevention strategy adopted by the council.

Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the District.

- Support the work of the Community Partnership Network with financial, clinical and technological changes in the health and social care sector.
- Enable the development of volunteer transport schemes to support the health and wellbeing needs of vulnerable residents.
- Deliver and extend the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme to provide opportunities for some of the District's most disadvantaged people

Provide high quality and accessible leisure opportunities.

- Maintain a minimum usage level of visits to leisure facilities
- Complete Phase 2 pavilion works for South West Bicester Sports Village
- Increase access to leisure and recreation opportunities through development and outreach work
- Commence the improvement of Woodgreen Leisure Centre and a long term operating contract
- Deliver with the aid of external funding the redevelopment of The Hill in Banbury
- Establish new management arrangements for Stratfield Brake Sports Ground on behalf of Kidlington Parish Council

Provide support to the voluntary and community sector.

- Implement the agreed social and community infrastructure for housing developments across the District
- Support the District's voluntary sector and community groups
- Support the growth & development of neighbourhood community associations
- Increase and promote volunteering opportunities throughout the District
- Support the Local Strategic Partnership in addressing the key issues of the District

Protect our built heritage by supporting effective conservation, managing the impacts of growth and working to ensure development takes place in appropriate areas.

- Continue programme of Conservation Reviews
- Provide design guidance on major developments

Work to ensure rural areas are connected to local services.

- Work with BT/Broadband Delivery UK and Oxfordshire County Council to extend Superfast Broadband across rural parts of the District

Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

Ensuring the council is run as efficiently as possible, consulting with local people, helping vulnerable people to access our services, and the provision of council tax and housing benefits.

Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships (including other statutory bodies such as Police, Health, County Council), joint working and other service delivery models.

- Review key business processes to ensure they enhance performance, reduce cost and are designed around the customer
- Increase the number of services which can be accessed and paid for online
- Establish appropriate commercial arrangements that will enable the councils to trade, develop assets and generate income which will support the long term financial sustainability of the organisation and underpin sustainable economic growth within the District.
- Deliver the Information Communications Technology Strategy
- Maximise income coming into the authority to include:
 - New Homes Bonus
 - Business Rates
 - Council Tax
 - External Funding

Continue to communicate effectively with local residents and businesses

- Continue to increase our use of digital media to communicate with residents and local businesses
- Continue to develop our business focused communications

Deliver the five year business strategy, medium term revenue plan and a capital programme that ensures the council is resourced to achieve its strategic priorities

- Deliver an annual balanced budget and the Medium Term Revenue Plan
- Deliver the savings targets of £500,000 within the agreed timescales

Deliver below inflation increases to the Cherwell District Council element of Council Tax

- Cherwell District Council Council Tax element frozen for 2016-17


Section 3: Performance Pledges 2016/17

Every year from the key objectives and actions detailed across our strategic priorities several are highlighted as performance pledges. They are key activities that reflect local priorities and these pledges demonstrate our commitment to the delivery of important local services and new projects to help make Cherwell a great place to live.

For 2016/17 our pledges are:

Cherwell: a district of opportunity

- North West Bicester: continue to facilitate the **planning applications** for the site
- Graven Hill: **deliver the demonstration project** on the Graven Hill site
- Banbury and Kidlington Masterplans:** adopt as Supplementary Planning Documents.



Cherwell: safe, green, clean

- Undertake **six neighbourhood blitzes** with community involvement
- Work with the local police and licence holders to ensure our town centres remain **clean, safe and vibrant** at all times.



Cherwell: a thriving community

- Continue working with our partners to provide **support to the most vulnerable** individuals and families in the District, building on the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme
- Deliver at least 190 units of **affordable housing** including a high proportion constructed using self-build methods. Planning for 133 affordable rented homes and 57 for shared ownership or other low cost home ownership scheme
- Continue to support skills development, apprenticeships and job clubs in order to help **support local employment** and reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.



Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

- Reduce the cost** of providing our services through partnerships, joint working and other service delivery models.




Getting in touch

Throughout the year the council provides opportunities for local people to have their say. Whether this be through customer satisfaction surveys, budget consultation, consultation on new projects and services, talking to local business organisations or feedback via our link-points or web site we are keen to listen to what you like and what needs to be improved. Our consultations are published on our one-stop consultation portal which can be found at:

<http://consult.cherwell.gov.uk/portal/>

However, if you would like to feedback about any other matter you can do so using the contact details on this page.

Email: consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

To find and email your ward councillor:
<http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/mgFindCouncillor.aspx>

Call the Performance and Insight Team:
01295 221575

Customer Services: 01295 227001

Write:
The Performance and Insight Team
Bodicote House
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Banbury
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For general enquiries visit www.cherwell.gov.uk
or contact the customer service team
01295 227001.

Cherwell: a great place to live

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