



Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing Paper

Subject: Scrutiny Working Groups update

Climate Action Scrutiny Working Group

Membership:

Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Isabel Creed
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Grace Conway-Murray

Executive Member:

Councillor Tom Becket – as Portfolio Holder for Greener Communities

Service Lead Officers:

Jo Miskin - Climate Action Manager, Environmental Services
Hitesh Mahawar - Climate Change Programme Manager

Scrutiny Support Officers:

Michael Carr - Interim Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Martyn Surfleet - Democratic and Elections Officer.

Update

The Climate Action Scrutiny Working Group met on 25 October 2024 and elected Councillor Grace Conway-Murray as its Chairman and Councillor John Broad as its Vice-Chairman for 2024-2025.

The Scrutiny Working Group agreed a draft Terms of Reference for 2024 – 2025 (included as Appendix 1 to this report), which included to objectives and scope for the scrutiny inquiry, as follows:

Aim

To review the development and implementation of the Council's Climate Action Strategies and consider:

- i). how Cherwell District Council is reducing its own carbon emissions and
- ii). how the Council can support the reduction of carbon emissions throughout the District.



Objectives

1. Examine the work of Cherwell District Council (the Environmental Services, Climate Team and other departments) in pursuit of the corporate net zero targets.
2. Monitor progress on reducing Cherwell District Council greenhouse gas emissions.
3. Monitor progress of reducing the district's greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Provide guidance on the strategic direction of CDC's climate action.

The Group received an update from Councillor Tom Becket – Executive Portfolio Holder for Greener Communities, Hitesh Mahawar - Climate Change Programme Manager, Jo Miskin - Climate Action Manager, on the Climate Action Plan detailing the progress of the implementation of the plan to date.

The Food Insecurity Scrutiny Working Group

Membership:

Councillor Rebecca Biegel - Chair
Councillor Phil Chapman – Vice Chair
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke.

Executive Member:

Councillor Rob Pattenden –Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities
Councillor Ian Middleton – Member Champion for Food

Service Lead Officers:

Nicola Riley - Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing Services
Edward Frape - Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer
Libby Knox - Food and Wellbeing Officer

Scrutiny Support Officers:

Michael Carr - Interim Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Martyn Surfleet - Democratic and Elections Officer.

Update

The Food Insecurity Scrutiny Working Group met on 14 November 2024, with participation from Councillor Ian Middleton – Executive Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Nicola Riley - Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing Services, Libby Knox - Food and Wellbeing Officer, Edward Frape - Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer.



Libby Knox updated members on the progress of the Food Action Plan to date, covering initiatives such as the 'Grimsbury Play Day' and 'Playfull Trip' aimed at providing support and engagement during half-term. As well as other schemes such as 'Winter Warmers' and that provided hot soup delivered to vulnerable residents and educational material for families dining out.

Edward Frape updated members on the status of the household support fund, confirming that a further sum of £22,500 had been secured from the HSF6 fund to provide support for food grant initiatives across Cherwell. A further sum of £28,000 has been set aside for community food grants to support initiatives inline with CFAP priorities across the district.

Members were requested to review and agree the food grant sum limit that would be available for organisations to apply for and to agree the next grant period, and it was recommended that the grant limit should allow for applications of up to £2,000 and that the scheme should operate over two payment tranches to allow organisations flexibility in their applications as well as provide more reach for the scheme.

Members were updated on the 'Warm Welcome' initiative, attention was drawn to the online interactive map detailing the 48 registered spaces across the district participating in the scheme an increase of 7 venues since the previous year.

Site visits and guest speakers for future meetings were considered, including site visits to Banbury Larder and Bicester foodbank and guest speakers Taraji Ogunnubi and Fiaz Ahmed – (Banbury Larder) and Gregg Brown ("Adopt a school"), to be arranged.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scrutiny Working Group

Membership:

Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Dr Chuckwudi Okeke

(This Scrutiny Working Group is made up of members of the Personnel Committee and members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Executive Member:

Councillor Chris Brant – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Service Lead Officers:

Claire Cox – Assistant Director Human Resources
Nicola Riley - Assistant Director Housing and Wellbeing



Scrutiny Support Officers:

Michael Carr - Interim Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Martyn Surfleet - Democratic and Elections Officer.

Update

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scrutiny Working Group met on 18 November 2024 when it elected its Chairman and Vice Chairman and agreed its draft Terms of Reference and objectives (set out at Appendix 2).

The Group received a Briefing Paper to set out an introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and progress for this, as well as the Cherwell Council Including Everyone Framework, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans and Recommended Actions from the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Audit 2024

The Group also considered witnesses and key evidence to be considered at future meetings.

**Completed by: Michael Carr, Interim Principal Officer – Scrutiny & Democratic Lead
Date: 18 November 2024**

Presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 26 November 2024