



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 throughout the 2022-2024 municipal years and reviewed key aspects of the implementation of the Council's Climate Action strategies, including the Climate Action Framework and the Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2024.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that this Scrutiny Working Group continue its work through the 2024-2025 municipal year. The first meeting of the working group has been scheduled for 25 October.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scrutiny Working Group

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

Membership:

Councillor Barry Wood (OSC & Pers)
Councillor Lynne Parsons (OSC & Pers)
Councillor Frank Ideh (OSC)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Pers)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel (Pers)
Councillor Dr Chuckwudi Okeke

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 throughout the 2023-2024 municipal year and reviewed key aspects of the implementation of the Council's Including Everyone Framework which outlines the Council's approach to equalities, diversity and inclusion strategies, including the Including Everyone Framework which outlines the approach to equalities, diversity and inclusion and the associated Framework Action Plans.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that this Scrutiny Working Group continue its work through the 2024-2025 municipal year. Work is in progress to arrange the first meeting of the working group.



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 throughout the 2022-2024 municipal years and reviewed key aspects of food insecurity in Cherwell, including the development of the Council's Food Action Plan, and implementation of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy, as well as other interrelated issues.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that this Scrutiny Working Group continue its work through the 2024-2025 municipal year.

The Working Group held its first meeting on 2 October. At the meeting Working Group members appointed their Chair and Vice-Chair and agreed their Terms of Reference. These are included in the Food Insecurity Scrutiny Working Group Scoping Document attached at Appendix 1.

Wellbeing and Housing Services officers provided an update on Cherwell District Council's Annual Food Action Plan and a summary of progress to date. It was reported that there was ongoing distribution of Food vouchers until the pot of funding is used up. The organisations that can distribute the food vouchers has been expanded beyond just the foodbank referral venues (additions include: Sunrise MCP, Sunshine and planning to start Homestart Bicester/Banbury). Vouchers were previously £50 then went to £75, but following feedback



from partners they are now bespoke to size of family/need e.g. from £20 (individual) to £100 (family of 5).

An update was provided on the *Community Food Grant*. It was reported that 24 groups benefited from the community food grant. A total of £58,000 was awarded to a range of groups from across Cherwell, including environmental groups, local larders, community centres, and schools.

An update was provided on the *Household Support Fund – Food* and the Household Support Fund grant expenditure, along with some details of the projects being supported for energy efficient equipment to support the cost of living and equipment grant linked to food/ food providers.

The next Working Group meeting is scheduled for 14 November.

Completed by: Michael Carr, Interim Principal Officer – Scrutiny & Democratic Lead
Date: 4 October 2024

Presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 15 October 2024