

This report is public.	
A Future for Banbury update including the Banbury Area Priority Plan	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	10 June 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Regeneration and Property, Councillor Lesley McLean
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	27 May 2025
Report of	Corporate Director Communities, Ian Boll

Purpose of report

This report provides an update on the work in progress in relation to the Banbury area following the publication of the Banbury 2050 report; and includes the emerging Banbury Area Priority Plan (APP) as part of the developing Area Oversight Framework.

The Banbury APP is a compilation of the Banbury 2050 vision engagement findings and recommendations, whilst also including the priority plans currently under development at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), with the aim to share one APP for the area.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To note the update.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Banbury Area Priority Plan (APP) sets out the key projects either underway in Banbury or currently planned within the Banbury area which will be a jointly owned document between CDC and OCC, to capture all workstreams in the area. The APP forms part of the suite of documents which make up the Banbury Area Framework. It is a working document and will continue to be updated as the Banbury programme progresses to establish the vision for the town.
- 2.2 Since the last Executive report in March, the Banbury Area Lead has been working closely with OCC to scope a masterplan for Banbury and are working together to develop the new Banbury APP. The first Banbury Area Oversight Group was held on 21st May, with some key priorities identified, together with some short term projects to be implemented this year.
- 2.3 The vision engagement findings report has been published on the Council's website, with a press release publicising the report.

- 2.4 OCC has secured £300k of funding in its capital programme to deliver a Banbury masterplan in 2025/26. The next step will be to procure and appoint consultants based on a brief and project scope for the whole town of Banbury. The Banbury Area Lead at CDC will be working very closely with the OCC team delivering this masterplan and further developing the vision from the Banbury 2050 work.
- 2.5 Other funding has been secured by OCC for active travel projects focussing on design feasibility work for two active travel corridors. This includes £200k from the Active Travel Fund (ATF) tranche 5 which is being used to fund proposals for an eastern active travel corridor from the town centre to Overthorpe. A western active travel corridor is also being funded by ATF Tranche 5. Funding for an options appraisal for Hennef Way has also been allocated by OCC. This funding is in addition to infrastructure projects such as the Tramway Road access improvements (£5.5m funded from the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal) to Banbury railway station and the Cherwell Street Bus Service improvement plan (£2.9m).
- 2.6 Other funded projects include:
Market Place - installation of new seating and planting
Banbury Wayfinding project – to be scoped.
- 2.8 OCC placemaking officers and project managers are working with the CDC Banbury Area Lead to develop the Banbury Area Priority Plan for discussion at the AOG on 21st May. The plan includes the priorities for the next 12 months and onwards. It has been grouped into themes reflecting the vision values in the Banbury 2050 vision engagement findings report.
- 2.9 The Plan contains the actions that are either progressing or planned, together with the delivery lead and partners, the timescale and priority level, as well as the activity status (whether it has started or not). It includes work to address the Banbury specific health and wellbeing issues, to address deprivation through increasing educational attainment and supporting economically inactive residents.
- 2.10 Other tasks included in the APP which will form the Area Framework suite of documents include:
Establishing a developer forum – to be held within the next 6 months
Establishing an economic development forum – to be held within the next 4 months
Establishing a community forum – to be held within the next 6 months
- 2.11 The APP has been compiled from projects being delivered by CDC, OCC and external partners, and is a working document that may change/be updated on a weekly or monthly basis depending on progress of projects. The aim is to capture the many workstreams and projects that are underway or in the pipeline across Banbury to coordinate resources and align the emerging vision for Banbury.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	The Banbury Area Priority Plan will be delivered within existing resources at CDC, in conjunction with OCC. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 2 June 2025

Legal	There are no legal issues associated with the Banbury Area Priority Plan. Shiraz Sheikh Assistant Director of Law and Governance and Democratic Services, 2 June 2025			
Risk Management	There are no major risks associated with the Banbury Area Priority Plan. Any risks identified will be captured in operational / project risk registers. Shona Ware, Assistant Director for Customer Services, 2 June 2025			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact				Not applicable
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				Not applicable
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?				Not applicable
Climate & Environmental Impact				Not applicable
ICT & Digital Impact				Not applicable
Data Impact				Not applicable
Procurement & subsidy				Not applicable
Council Priorities	All			
Human Resources	Not applicable			
Property	Not applicable			
Consultation & Engagement	Not applicable			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 A Future for Banbury is a sustainable vision for Banbury comprising projects, plans and proposals currently underway or in development. The Council continues to engage with stakeholders and partners in Banbury through the Area Oversight Group and other channels. There has been significant interest in the Future of Banbury to date.
- 3.2 The Banbury 2050 vision engagement provides large amounts of survey data and workshop reports. The first Banbury Area Oversight Group was held on 21st May 2025 & the Banbury APP and priorities were discussed to establish the area-based approach in Banbury. A copy of the Banbury APP is contained in Appendix 1 (as of May 2025).

4. Details

- 4.1 The Banbury Area Priority Plan has been prepared in collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council and other delivery partners. It is a list of the priority projects in Banbury including those in progress and proposals that are emerging. The Banbury APP captures the work to progress a vision for the town and it will be used to coordinate and collaborate with partners to deliver change. It categorises the priority level and current status of individual priorities.
- 4.2 It focusses on delivering a vision for the town via a masterplan and community engagement. Infrastructure delivery is critical to ensure a sustainable future for Banbury.
- 4.3 The various actions are shown in no particular order and measured in terms of priority and status. Officers have worked with partners to identify the immediate actions and agree a plan, with a focus on developing an area-based approach and delivery of existing infrastructure projects such as the improvements to Tramway Road and Cherwell Street.
- 4.4 The Tramway Road scheme has started and due to complete later in 2025. When complete it will improve access to the railway station. The Cherwell Street scheme is progressing to detailed design following consultation in March. It will improve the capacity and efficiency of the junction with Bridge Street and address some of the issues in connecting the railway station to the town centre.
- 4.4 OCC, working with CDC, is progressing a project to prepare a Banbury masterplan. This will provide a framework for development and guide the future growth and development of Banbury over a long-term period, typically 10 to 15 years, in line with the vision and objectives. Its purpose will be to provide a clear framework for decision making, steering investment priorities, setting parameters for development and design and regeneration projects.

- 4.5 A range of thematic areas should be addressed including land use distribution, housing and economic growth parameters, strategic connections, green and blue infrastructure, open space networks, infrastructure needs and development opportunities. The plan should outline regeneration focus areas and a suite of high-impact priority projects. It is likely that the Banbury masterplan will include a Banbury Delivery Plan which will be framed into clear, short, medium and long term actions to catalyse delivery. These actions will feed into the APP to ensure the "one plan" approach for OCC and CDC.
- 4.6 The Banbury Masterplan will hopefully enable and attract development and investment and will be supported by a Banbury Investment Plan to communicate and develop a clear understanding of the Banbury brand and promote Banbury's unique identity. The area lead for Banbury will work with a variety of partners to identify funding sources where possible. It is acknowledged that individual projects in Banbury will go through the approved route within CDC to secure funding in the future, if opportunities arise.
- 4.7 Community engagement will be an important part of shaping a participative and collaborative process. It will unite stakeholders through a shared sense of direction and ambition. This is intrinsic in the Area Framework approach at CDC.
- 4.8 The outcomes and feedback from a Masterplan workshop held on 20th March are being reviewed. This will provide the reflections and responses gathered during the workshop as well as the consultant's recommendations to inform a headline scope of work. The next stage will be to procure the masterplan consultants. The first step will be the procurement and appointment of consultants (estimated June 2025) building on the momentum from the work to date. OCC and CDC will be working very closely in partnership, to deliver this work together.
- 4.9 OCC is funding the masterplan with a budget of £300k which has been secured, and the masterplan is expected to be completed in approximately 12 months following engagement with stakeholders and partners.
- 4.10 Market Place project - has been identified as a priority action area. CDC have worked up a concept design to install seating and planting in the Market Place with £200k secured from the County Council's budget.
- 4.11 Western (Ruscote Avenue) active travel corridor - funding has been secured from the Government's Active Travel Capability Fund and Section 106 interest (£125k) and a scope of work is being prepared ahead of mobilisation, baseline and feasibility study. The objective for this project is to deliver a scheme that encourages increased use of the route between the Bloxham Road and Ruscote connecting residential, employment and education areas.
- 4.12 Eastern (Town centre to Overthorpe) active travel corridor - The walking and cycling provision in the area to the east of the town centre was recognised as in need of improvement in the Banbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This project aims to address the need for improved cycling and walking (wheeling) infrastructure between the town centre, employment areas and areas to the east of Banbury. OCC has secured £200k of Active Travel Fund grant to support it with developing and constructing walking and cycling facilities in Banbury. A project team has been established and is working up a feasibility study.

- 4.13 Banbury Wayfinding Project - A Wayfinding project has been identified following previous engagement and is being scoped. £200k of funding from the Government's Active Travel Fund (Tranche 5) has been secured by OCC to support this project.
- 4.14 Banbury Railway Station refurbishment programme - Chiltern Railways is carrying out a series of work to clean, repaint and repair the railway station facilities at Banbury. This includes a refurbishment of the station platforms and passenger areas (the Café is now under new ownership and has reopened following a facelift). Chiltern Railways is working closely with partners to develop a wider Banbury station masterplan.
- 4.15 The Chiltern Railways Community Investment fund is supporting local projects and has developed a strong relationship with the Banbury Business Improvement District. This has led to the "People of Banbury" project which celebrates Banbury's residents through portraits featuring local people displayed on the overbridge at Banbury station. The project aims to highlight the unique personalities and contributions of individuals who make Banbury special.
- 4.16 The Banbury Quays Consortium is developing a proposal for a wall mural alongside the canal in the Castle Quay area working in partnership with stakeholders. Proposals to install steps between the Station Approach Road and the canal are progressing with OCC. The Banbury Business Improvement District is busy delivering its annual programme of events including a Banbury Winter Market. Officers continue to work closely with Banbury Town Council.
- 4.17 The Banbury Area Priority Plan aims to capture the work in progress or proposed projects across the area. It is the start of an ongoing process of bringing together various workstreams, initiatives and programmes in one place for review and agreement by the Banbury Area Oversight Group. Throughout the process, the community, businesses, partners and stakeholders will work together to deliver coordinated and comprehensive change in Banbury. The commitment to working with the community and partners will be delivered through continued engagement and strengthened partnerships.

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 is submitted for information only.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The Banbury Area Priority Plan contains the projects currently identified from a variety of community engagement events and project action plans. The aim is for CDC and OCC to have one Banbury APP and to work jointly to enable and deliver projects. The APP is an important tool for enabling the delivery of projects within

Banbury and it will be reviewed and monitored by the Banbury Area Oversight Group as part of the CDC Area Framework approach.

6.2 The recommendation is to note the report as presented for information.

Decision Information

Key Decision	No
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	Banbury Hardwick, Ruscote, Banbury Cross and Neithrop, Grimsbury and Hightown, Calthorpe and Easington

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Banbury Area Priority Plan
Background Papers	None
Report Author	Andrew Bowe, Area Lead for Banbury Julia Harrington, Head of Regeneration & Growth
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Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Report of Corporate Director Communities