

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 3 June 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Lynne Parsons (Chair)
Councillor Phil Chapman (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Zoe McLernon
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Harry Knight

Also Present:

Councillor David Hingley, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership
Councillor Jean Conway, Portfolio Holder Planning and Development Management

Officers:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Christina Cherry, Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager
Aaron Hetherington, Principal Officer - Electoral Services Lead
Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management

It was proposed by Councillor Chapman and seconded by Councillor Broad that Councillor Parsons be elected Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2025/2026.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Lynne Parsons be elected Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.

The Monitoring Officer opened the meeting and dealt with agenda item 1, Upon being appointed, Councillor Parsons then took the chair.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2025/2026

It was proposed by Councillor Creed and seconded by Councillor Okeke that Councillor Chapman be elected Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Phil Chapman be elected Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 March 2025 were agreed as correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

6 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

7 Housing Delivery Action Plan

The Assistant Director - Planning and Development submitted a report which presented a draft Housing Delivery Action Plan (HDAP).

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management and Assistant Director - Planning and Development advised that the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2024 had been submitted to the February 2025 meeting of the Executive. The AMR had assessed the council's five-year housing land supply position and concluded the council could only demonstrate a 2.3-year supply, which was a shortfall of 5017 homes per annum. The position was exacerbated by the amalgamation of Oxfor's unmet housing needs.

The Executive resolved that a HDAP be prepared in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management. The HDAP sought to address the housing shortfall and highlighted the need for additional resources and investment in software.

In response to a question regarding the focus on the council's housing waiting list and whether the action plan took into account families and vulnerable people with housing needs, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management agreed that there should be a focus on the existing housing needs for the district and that a strategy had been developed to help ensure the implementation of the HDAP.

In response to a question regarding capacity of the Bicester and Oxford Sewerage works to handle the increase in demand from future housing developments, the Assistant Director - Planning and Development advised that detailed discussions had taken place with relevant stakeholders such as Thames Water and the Environment Agency who were satisfied with the proposals set out within the development plan.

In response to a question regarding the communication between utility companies and housing developers, and the role the council took aligning the two to mitigate any infrastructure issues that may occur, the Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager advised that relevant officers liaised with developers and infrastructure providers annually via the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Annual Monitoring Report, and that information was updated on an ongoing basis.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Housing Delivery Action Plan report be noted.
- (2) That it be noted that the proposed plan requires more resource than is currently available to deliver it.
- (3) That the following recommendations be submitted to the 10 June 2025 Executive meeting when it considers the Housing Delivery Action Plan:
 - (1) That the Executive is cognisant of the large numbers of people on the housing waiting lists.

- (2) That implementation of the Housing Delivery Action Plan include prioritisation of staffing and resources.
- (3) That more details on the resources to deliver the Housing Delivery Action Plan be provided by The Assistant Director - Planning and Development.
- (4) That the Leader write to central Government on any delays that might be caused by delays in responses by Government departments.
- (5) That suitable measures be taken to ensure that Section 106 agreements are processed on time to avoid delays.
- (6) That further consideration be given to necessary infrastructure developments to deliver the Housing Delivery Action Plan.
- (7) That further consideration be made to risk management of the delivery of the Housing Delivery Action Plan.

8

Work Programme Planning for 2025 - 2026

The Chair advised members that further discussions on the work programme for 2025/26 would be held at the next meeting of the Committee on 17 June. Prior to this meeting there would be an informal work programme planning meeting on 11 June 2025. Members were encouraged to forward work programme suggestions to the Democratic and Elections team for consideration at the informal work programme planning meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the Chair and Vice-Chair work with officers to bring forward a work programme, incorporating topics suggested by members, to the next Committee meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm

Chair:

Date: