

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 8 September 2026 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor David Rogers (Chair)
Councillor Dom Vaitkus (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Brown
Councillor Dr Faltermeyer
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Rob Packard
Councillor Julius Parker
Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill
Councillor Michael Wilson

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Robert Parkinson
Councillor Linda Ward

Also Present:

Councillor Paul Jeffreys
Councillor Lesley McLean - Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Regeneration.

Also Present Virtually:

Adrian Unitt, Managing Director - Graven Hill Village Development Company
Terry Fuller, Non Executive Director - Graven Hill Village Development Company

Officers:

Stephen Hinds, Executive Director Resources
Kaimi Ithia, Head of Chief Executive's Office
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning
Paul Seckington, Head of Development Management
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead

Officers Attending Virtually:

Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

9 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

10 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 June 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

11 **Chair's Announcements**

There were no Chair's announcements.

12 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

13 **Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2026-2027**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of the Chief Executive's office, that detailed the council's performance position as at the end of Quarter one 2026/27.

Introducing the report, Leader of the Council – Strategic Leadership and Regeneration updated the Committee in relation to the Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) milestone 'Examination of the local plan', which was reporting as red. As detailed in the commentary for the milestone, a new inspector had been appointed in July and the Council was waiting to hear if the process could proceed. The Leader of the Council updated that the inspector had subsequently confirmed examination could proceed, and the milestone would be updated accordingly.

Officers responded to questions that had been submitted in advance of the meeting, and confirmed that details would also be published as a supplement after the meeting. The supplement would include technical information regarding the methodology for calculating CO2 emissions, as covered by the 'Environmental stewardship' corporate key performance indicators.

In response to comments from the Committee, the Chair agreed to meet with the Monitoring Officer to discuss the possibility of answers to pre-submitted questions being circulated prior to the meeting, similar to the process used for written questions to Full Council.

With regard to ADP action 'make best use of council owned assets', and associated milestone 'conduct financial appraisal and site surveys for the repurposing of Lower Bridge Street', the Head of the Chief Executive's office agreed to come back with further information after the meeting.

In response to comments regarding the commentary for BP1.2.02, number of homeless households living in nightly charged (hotel) temporary accommodation, and the use of the word 'client', the Leader of the Council explained that terminology used to refer to residents in various circumstances was under continual review, and the comments made would be fed back.

Regarding BP2.2.01, waste recycled and composted, the Leader of the Council agreed to request detailed information regarding whether the move to co-mingled recycling collections had had any impact, positive or negative, on the overall percentage of recycling and the price the council received for the recycled material.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council's Quarter One performance report be noted.

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Update on Executive Responses to Previous Scrutiny Recommendations

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer that provided an update on progress of recommendations previously agreed by Executive.

Introducing the report, the Principal Officer – Scrutiny & Democratic Lead explained that this was the first time progress on previous recommendations had been reported to Committee. As the report was for noting only, future progress updates would be circulated outside the formal meeting.

In response to questions relating to the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion recommendations, specifically the inclusion champions, the Performance and Insight Team Leader agreed to circulate more details regarding who the inclusion champions were, and the work undertaken to date.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress made on previous recommendations made to the Executive, as detailed in appendices one (Climate Action) and two (Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion), be noted.

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Work Programme Update

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Following the work programme planning workshop held in July and subsequent discussions with relevant officers, the Principal Officer – Scrutiny & Democratic Lead had updated indicative dates for consideration of various items.

With regard to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and the recent announcement from central government that the programme had been paused, the Executive Director – Resources confirmed that as and when more information was known about the overall status of the reorganisation, an update would be provided to the Committee.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding how much had been spent on LGR so far, the Leader of the Council explained that the figure was £189,569.68, but clarified that this was subject to validation and any additional costs.

In relation to the item 'Performance of S106 delivery – infrastructure focus', listed under 'items to be allocated', it was proposed by Councillor David Rogers, seconded by Councillor Kieron Mallon and agreed by the Committee that a working group be established, involving all members of the Committee, to carry out a scrutiny review via a series of virtual meetings.

With regard to the item 'lessons learnt from Kidlington illegal landfill', also listed under 'items to be allocated', the Committee noted some questions for the Environment Agency at the relevant time, regarding any contamination of the land and associated issues with the water table, and the impact on the Environment Agency budget if it wasn't able to recoup the costs of the clean up from those responsible for the landfill.

Resolved

That:

- (1) The Scrutiny Work Programme update be noted
- (2) A whole Committee working group be established, to consider the subject of Section 106 Delivery.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved

- (1) That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Update on progression of Graven Hill Village Development Company

The Committee considered an exempt report from the Shareholder Representative, which presented an overview of performance during the 2025/26 financial year, an update on Stage 2 of the development and governance arrangements for Graven Hill Village Development Company (GHVDC).

The Committee received an exempt presentation from GHVDC Managing Director Adrian Unitt, and Chair of the Board Terry Fuller. The presentation summarised the sales figures and reservation levels, and the performance position as at the end of the 25/26 financial year.

In response to a number of questions from the Committee regarding affordable housing and the policy definition of 'affordable', the Shareholder Representative agreed to circulate a briefing note on the subject.

Regarding a preferred social housing provider, the Managing Director GHVDC explained that the current operator had changed their operating demographic, and as a result an alternative partner was currently being sought.

Officers confirmed that the Committee had not previously considered an item on social housing performance, but a request could be made of the current provider at Graven Hill to attend a future committee.

In response to queries regarding primary care provision at Graven Hill, officers confirmed that Oxfordshire County Council were the lead health authority and would be responsible for leading any conversation into site specific GP provision.

Having previously visited the site, the Chair of the Committee highly recommended a visit to new members of the Committee, to see the site in person and understand the scale and type of development taking place. The Managing Director GHVDC confirmed he would be happy to meet with members onsite and answer any further questions.

Resolved

- (1) That the Stage 2 progress, performance in 2025/26, and governance arrangements be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.07 pm

Chair:

Date: