

**Democratic Services**

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2 October 2019

## **SUMMONS TO ATTEND**

**MEETING:** ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**PLACE:** COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL OFFICES, WOODGREEN, WITNEY

**DATE:** THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019

**TIME:** 2.00pm

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Members of the Committee:

Councillors: Alaa Al-Yousuf (Vice-Chairman); Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Mike Cahill, Andrew Coles, Owen Collins, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Gill Hill, Liz Leffman, Martin McBride, Kieran Mullins, Elizabeth Poskitt and Alex Postan

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### **RECORDING OF MEETINGS**

The law allows the council's public meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Officer know before the start of the meeting.

## **A G E N D A**

**1. Election of Chairman**

Consequent on the appointment of Councillor David Harvey as a member of the Cabinet, to elect a Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the civic year.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June (previously circulated)**

**3. Appointment of Vice Chairman**

To appoint a Vice Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the civic year (necessary only in the event of the current Vice Chairman being elected as Chairman of the Committee).

**4. Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

**5. Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.

**6. Participation of the Public**

Purpose:

To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

**7. Committee Work Programme 2019/2020 (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To assist the Committee in considering its Work Programme for 2019/2020.

Recommendation:

That the Committee determines its Work Programme for 2019/2020 having regard to the information contained in this report and the recommendations agreed by Council.

**8. Cabinet Work Programme (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 21 May 2019.

Recommendation:

That the Committee decides whether to express a view to the Cabinet on relevant issues in its Work Programme.

**9. Draft Council Plan 2019 – 2023 (Report of the Chief Executive – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To consider and comment on a draft of the Plan so that Members' views and insights can be taken into account in developing the final version of the Plan.

Recommendation:

To provide comments as appropriate.

**10. Briefing on the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy (Report of the Group Manager – Commissioning – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To consider the draft Oxfordshire Energy Strategy.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

**11. Markets Update (Report of the Business Manager – Environment Services – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To provide an update on local Markets following the recommendations agreed following a review on Council's Markets undertaken in 2012.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the updates and considers the options provided in the report.

**12. Single Use Plastics Action Plan (Report of the Group Manager- Commissioning – verbal update)**

Purpose:

To provide an update on the single use plastics action plan from the Members Working Group.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

**13. Biodiversity Strategy (Report of the Group Manager-Commissioning – verbal update)**

Purpose:

To provide an update from the Group Manager – Commissioning.

Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

**14. Members' Questions**

Purpose:

To receive questions from Members relating to the work of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In order to ensure that appropriate information is to hand at the meeting, Members may wish to give notice of any questions through the Committee Officer.

Recommendation:

That Members' questions be dealt with as appropriate.



Giles Hughes  
Chief Executive

This agenda is being dealt with by Amy Barnes, Tel: (01993) 861522;  
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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 7</b>
Subject	<b>COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr David Harvey, Chairman Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: <a href="mailto:david.harvey1@westoxon.gov.uk">david.harvey1@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Committee with an update on its Work Programme for 2019/2020.
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex 1</a> - Approved Work Programme for 2019/2020
Recommendation	That the Committee notes the progress with regard to its 2019/2020 Work Programme.
Corporate priorities	To enable the Committee to review its Work Programme and support the Council's priorities to protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy, to meet the current and future needs of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. At the May meeting the Committee gave consideration to the development of its Work Programme for the year 2019/2020 having regard to the changes to the approach to scrutiny work adopted by Council on 22 October 2008.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. Attached at [Annex I](#) is the approved Work Programme for 2019/2020 incorporating items rolled forward from last year, taking account of the discussions at the last meeting and providing an update on progress in relation to each item.
- 2.2. In addition to the items contained in the Work Programme there will still be the opportunity to bring forward one-off reports and papers on particular issues of interest to the Committee but it will also be necessary to maintain a general overview of the ways in which external agencies are responding to community concerns. The inclusion of a standing agenda item for Members' questions also provides the opportunity to raise relevant issues.
- 2.3. The Committee is invited to consider progress in respect of the agreed Work Programme for 2019/2020 which is attached in the [Annex](#) to this report.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. None

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. Not applicable

## **6. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. Whilst there may be climate change implications arising from specific items within the Work Programme, there are none arising directly from this report.

## **7. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 7.1. In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, Committee has the power to investigate any matters it considers relevant to its work area, and to make recommendations to the Council, the Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council as it sees fit.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None

**ANNEX I**

	<b>Work Area</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Originator</b>
<b>1</b>	Thames Water Flood Prevention and Infrastructure Issues	<p>The Committee has already undertaken significant work in respect of flooding issues.</p> <p>Thames Water has agreed to keep the Committee updated on progress with the strategies.</p> <p>At the meetings in June and July discussion took place about representatives of Thames Water and the Environment Agency being invited to attend an event to respond to Members' concerns regarding sewage treatment infrastructure and water quality in rivers in the District.</p> <p>This took place on Thursday 4 October.</p> <p>It was agreed that a similar event would be held later in the year – arrangements now made for a WODC Water Day being held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019.</p>	October 2019	Environment O&S
<b>2</b>	Open Space Grass Cutting	<p>Following the County Council's withdrawal of funding, West Oxfordshire had agreed to supplement the resultant shortfall in grass cutting.</p> <p>The Council has also been looking at options for a more coherent approach including collaborative working with town/parish councils but has found it difficult to make progress.</p> <p>It was agreed that a link to the Council's mapping system would be</p>	Adjourned for the present to be revisited when resources allow.	Environment O&S

	<b>Work Area</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Originator</b>
		circulated & training organised if necessary.		
<b>3</b>	Implementation of Car Parking Strategy	<p>At the June meeting it was noted that the Cabinet was to give consideration to the implementation of the Car Parking Strategy and agreed that this item be added to the Work Programme.</p> <p>At the July meeting there was discussion around the enforcement of on-street parking and the adequacy of bay markings, which are the responsibility of the County Council and the Group Manager undertook to establish whether other districts enforced on-street parking on behalf of the county.</p>	Further updates will be provided as appropriate.	Environment O&S
<b>4</b>	Low Carbon and Environmental Plan - Biodiversity	<p>The WODC Low Carbon and Environmental Plan was approved in February 2014.</p> <p>Members receive regular updates on progress with actions in the plan.</p> <p>In considering a report on 12 July, the Committee agreed to request an update from planning officers on biodiversity and how it is integrated with the planning function.</p> <p>The Cabinet was due to consider a report in June 2019 but this was deferred due to Government announcements. It was likely that a report would be forthcoming in September 2019.</p>	On-going	Environment O&S
<b>5</b>	Environmental Regulations	At its meeting held on 21 July 2016 the Committee agreed to monitor the aftermath of Brexit and the dismantling of the Department for Energy and Climate Change in relation to environmental laws and regulations and, in particular, two issues with a direct bearing on West Oxfordshire; air quality and flood alleviation measures.	On-going	Environment O&S

	<b>Work Area</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Originator</b>
<b>6</b>	Oxfordshire Energy Strategy	A report on the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy will be submitted to this Committee prior to its consideration by Cabinet – deferred to October 2019.	October 2019	
<b>7</b>	Single Use Plastics	Update report from the working party & officers	Update to July 2019 meeting & Ongoing	Environment O&S
<b>8</b>	Waste Collection Data	Waste Team to provide tonnage data for plastics and other waste streams e.g glass for comparison	Ongoing / Rolling item to each meeting	Environment O&S
<b>9</b>	Review of Markets	To receive a report on the way in which the recommendations of the 2013 review of markets had been carried forward and to include Witney Farmers market.	Matt Kirby – October 2019	Environment O&S





WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 8</b>
Subject	<b>CABINET WORK PROGRAMME</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable members	James Mills, Leader of the Council <a href="mailto:james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk">james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 17 September 2019.
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex 1 – Cabinet Work Programme published 17 September 2019.</a>
Recommendation	That the Committee decides whether to express a view to Cabinet on relevant issues in the Work Programme for the period.
Corporate priorities	To maintain and enhance West Oxfordshire as one of the best places to live, work and visit in Great Britain and to meet the current and future needs of residents.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Cabinet Work Programme is produced on a monthly basis in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Regulations relating to publicity for Cabinet decisions that came into force on 10 September 2012. The programme sets out the Cabinet's work programme for the following three months, as applicable.
- 1.2. The programme [published on 17 September](#), covering the period to December 2019 is included in the [Annex to this report](#), for comment.

## **2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. None

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. Not applicable

## **5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 5.1. The Committee may take such action as it considers appropriate within its terms of reference

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1. None

## Cabinet Work Programme published 17 September 2019

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
1.	<p>Consideration of bids for the provision of an Electric Vehicle Charging Points Framework Agreement</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be an Appendix to the report which will contain information which will not be published because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person".</p>	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
2.	To adopt an Action Plan to reduce the Council's use of Single Use Plastics	No	No	Cabinet then Council	16 October 2019	None	Will first be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
3.	Community Infrastructure Levy: decision as to whether consultation on a revised charging schedule is needed, or whether the previously approved schedule can be put forward for examination	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
4.	Endorsement of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy Delivery Plan	No	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	It is hoped that this will first be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
5.	Approval of revised Council Plan, following consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees	No	No	Cabinet then Council	16 October 2019	None	
6.	Approval of award of contract for the enhanced play facilities at Madley Park, Witney  It is anticipated that there will be an Appendix to the report which will contain information which will not be published because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person"	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019		
7.	Approval of proposed revisions to Customer Access Channels	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
8.	Approval for financial contribution for the recommissioning of the Young Peoples Supported Housing Pathway	No	No	Cabinet then Council	16 October 2019	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
9.	Consideration of update and approval of any recommendations relating to the action plan prepared following the LGA Peer Challenge	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
10.	Approval of temporary accommodation placement policy	No	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	Will first be considered by Economic & Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee
11.	Approval for the re-commissioning of services for welfare benefit, housing, debt and money management and employment advice	No	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
12.	Approval of allocation of funding for High Street Clean Ups	No	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
13.	<p>Consideration and approval of land and property matter relating to economic development</p> <p>Proposed to be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person".</p>	No	Yes	Cabinet then Council	16 October 2019	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
14.	Approval of the adoption of the Oxfordshire countywide Joint Housing Strategy for Vulnerable People and Families	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
15.	Approval for financial contribution to Oxford City Council for the development of a new Engagement and Assessment Centre for rough sleepers and single homeless people	No	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	
16.	Approval of Commissioning Framework	No	No	Cabinet	16 October 2019	None	Will first be considered by Finance & Management O&S Committee
17.	Approval of Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Issues Paper	No	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	None	
18.	Consideration and approval of legislative and minor updates to the Homeseeker Plus Policy	No	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	None	
19.	Approval of West Eynsham Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	Consultation draft	
20.	Approval of North Witney Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Issues Paper for Consultation	No	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
21.	Consideration and approval of applications for Community Facilities Grants	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	None	
22.	Approval of Contaminated Land Strategy 2019-2024, following consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	Consultation draft approved 19 June 2019	
23.	To consider and approve a proposal that West Oxfordshire District Council undertake prosecutions under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 on behalf of social housing providers with properties within the district	No	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	None	
24.	Budget Monitoring for 2019/2020 quarter 2 including proposed amendments to Capital Programme 2019/2020 and Future Years.	No	No	Cabinet then Council	13 November 2019	None	
25.	Approval of Long Term Empty Property Strategy	No	No	Cabinet	13 November 2019	None	
26.	Approval of response to the consultation on the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway	No	No	Cabinet	11 December 2019	None	
27.	Approval of Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21, following consultation	No	No	Cabinet then Council	11 December 2019	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
28.	Approval of name for the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village	Yes	No	Cabinet	11 December 2019	Consultation/competition responses	
29.	Summary and Detailed revenue budgets for Base 2020/21; Fees and charges for 2020/21; Draft Capital Programme Revised 2019/20 plus future years (following consultation and comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committees)	No	No	Cabinet then Council	11 December 2019	None	





WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Name and date of Committee	<b>ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> <b>THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2019</b>  <b>FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> <b>WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER 2019</b>  <b>ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> <b>THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 9</b>
Subject	<b>DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2019-2023</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr James Mills, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Policy Framework and Corporate Plan Email: james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Head of Paid Service Tel: 01993 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	The Council's new corporate plan for 2019-23 (Council Plan) is being developed in order to succeed the previous plan that covered the period 2016-19. This report provides an opportunity for the Overview & Scrutiny Committees to comment on a draft of the Plan so that their views and insights can be taken into account in developing the final version of the Plan. A report of Overview & Scrutiny comments will be presented to Cabinet and then Full Council in October which will direct the finalisation of the Plan.
Annexes	Annex 1: Draft Council Plan 2019-23 Annex 2: Evidence Paper
Recommendation/s	a) <i>To provide comments on the draft Council Plan.</i>
Corporate priorities	ALL

Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Internal consultation with officers and Cabinet members.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1.** The Council's extant corporate plan (the Council Plan) covered the period 2016-19. As the current work directed through this plan comes to an end, effort has been directed to developing a new Council Plan to cover the forthcoming period.
- 1.2.** The development of a new Council Plan that addresses issues and challenges facing the District is an essential piece of work that will result in a high level Plan that can direct the Council's efforts. The Plan will direct action both within the Council and through collaborative work with partner organisations to improve the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.
- 1.3.** The initial work to develop a new Council Plan has been informed through learning derived from recent review work. A key part of this background evidence has been the findings and recommendations resulting from the Local Government Association's (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken in October 2018. The resultant action plan has been informed and endorsed through consideration in the Council's Finance and Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee and finalised through approval at Cabinet in April 2019. The Peer Review highlighted and made a recommendation around the significant potential of the new Council Plan in terms of the scope it offers to align strategic objectives and strengthen community engagement. The new draft Plan is brought forward in this context.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1.** As part of the information assembled to inform the background to the new Council Plan, a range of evidence has been reviewed and summarised in a supporting Evidence Paper (included at Annex 2). The Evidence Paper draws mainly on analyses of national statistics undertaken in the District Data Service (a joint resource supported through the partner Oxfordshire Districts) and analysis that supports Oxfordshire's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) (co-ordinated by Oxfordshire County Council). The paper is presented here to assist an understanding of the context in which the Council Plan is set.
- 2.2.** The early preparatory work towards developing a new Council Plan has included a liaison meeting in March 2019 convened between Council's Leader/ Cabinet Members (supported by the Head of Paid Service) and West Oxfordshire's Town and Parish Councils/ Meetings. The meeting focused on challenges and opportunities facing West Oxfordshire's communities and a high level summary of issues raised is included in the Evidence Paper at Annex 2. One of the points emerging from the session was a strong interest in further communication and engagement on key issues. The draft Council Plan has sought to take account of this entreaty. A further consultative session with Towns and Parishes is planned for 10 October 2019 and this will further inform the finalisation of the emerging Plan.
- 2.3.** The Cabinet held an away-day (supported by the Head of Paid Service and other officers) in June 2019 to discuss and form a draft statement of the vision and priorities that should form the core of the new Council Plan. Following that session, a draft Council Plan has been formed and is now brought forward for Overview & Scrutiny Committee review towards producing a final version of the Plan (draft Council Plan at Annex 1).
- 2.4.** The current draft Council Plan is presented as flat text at this stage (without any design/ pictures etc.) as it is intended to support consultation/ review and enhancement through

Scrutiny review. The final version may change as insight is gained through this process and design/ presentation will be applied at the final stage of production.

**2.5.** The draft Council Plan sets out a Council vision that is "to support West Oxfordshire to be fit for the future" through action across a set of priority themes:

- Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.
- Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.
- Realising the unique opportunities that we offer to businesses of all shapes and sizes.
- Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.
- Creating both high quality market and affordable housing for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.
- Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

**2.6.** As part of the development process for the new Plan, the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committees are now given the opportunity to comment on the draft document. In particular, insight from Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members is welcomed in informing the scope and framing of the proposed priority policy themes.

**2.7.** Further work to refine and shape the Plan will be undertaken as a follow-on to the Scrutiny process. It is also the case that in setting a path for the period 2019-23, the Council Plan gives rise to significant new areas of focus and project activity that will be further defined as the work develops. There will be subsequent Councillor involvement in key areas of strategy development (e.g. in connection with the environment). The Plan will inform service planning and will be used to specify appropriate performance management so we can demonstrate how we are making a difference in the key areas of focus. As part of this approach, baseline figures will need to be established for some of the measures of success. There will be a periodic review of progress.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**3.1.** None directly arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from the adoption of the final version of the Council Plan will be built into the Council's financial strategy and budget setting process over the lifetime of the Plan.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1.** None.

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**5.1.** The purpose of the Council Plan is to direct effort towards priority issues and this should help to ensure that resources are focused on delivering what is most important to the Council. Any significant actions will be subject to the Council's corporate risk management approach and will, therefore, be tested in terms of risk likelihood, potential impact and identification of mitigation steps.

**6. EQUALITIES IMPACT (IF REQUIRED)**

- 6.1.** The pursuit of a new Council Plan as outlined in the proposed draft should have a positive effect in terms of its equalities impact. It will be appropriate to complete an informed Equalities Impact Assessment as the work is further specified following corroboration and further development of the priority policy themes introduced through the Plan.

**7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS (IF REQUIRED)**

- 7.1.** None arising directly from this report. Addressing the climate change agenda through protecting and enhancing the environment by taking local action on climate change and biodiversity is one of the priorities in the draft Plan.

**8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1.** Not relevant.

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1.** None.

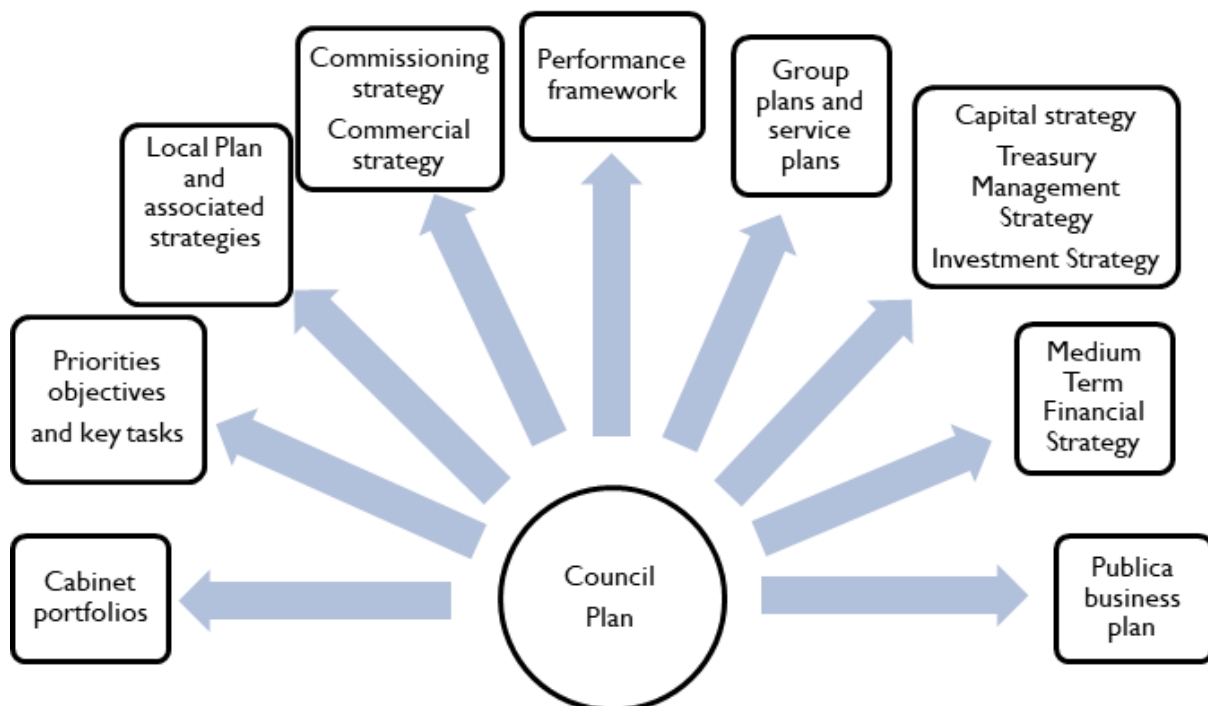
## Council Plan 2019-2023

### Introduction

This document sets out the Council's key priorities, areas which require particular focus, and shows how the Council intends to achieve its ambitions for supporting local communities and the delivery of local services.

We are proud of the distinctive and special place that is West Oxfordshire and want to do everything we can to ensure it continues to be a great place to live, work and visit.

It is vital that the District maintains its special character as its economy flourishes and we work to support the future growth and opportunities that lie ahead. The Council Plan sets a direction that will help with this commitment and it sits at the centre of a range of related strategies, illustrated in the diagram below.



The Local Plan is one of the key documents which support the Council Plan and its adoption (in September 2018) has been a significant step as it provides a framework to help grow a successful and sustainable economy, building much needed new homes and securing infrastructure, whilst enhancing and conserving West Oxfordshire's environment. It details the strategic objectives for the district and the geographical locations prioritised for development.

In 2018, we invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge - an external review of a Council's functioning and its ability to deliver on its plans. Its report outlines a range of positive factors in the Council's leadership and performance but it also provides some helpful pointers for improvement.

Our Peer Review found that the new Council Plan is an opportunity to:

- Align strategic objectives
- Make good use of community inputs – building on work in the Local Plan process
- Set out our economic ambitions as part of Oxfordshire's successful local economy; and
- Consider the scope to support future community development.

We are keen to take the initiative on this opportunity and this new Council Plan is a start, but to make sure we continue to develop this work, we need to work with our partner organisations and local communities, to secure their contributions to our action plan.

We will work in a variety of ways, leading by example, in support of our place-making role and advancing the future strength and sustainability of local communities. A key part of this will be our community leadership role working with partners and local areas.

Whilst taking a strategic lead to help create the future for West Oxfordshire, we plan to listen to and engage in joint work with our local communities. Our recent Town and Parish Forum (March 2019) is an example of this commitment.

We recognise that sometimes it will be a town or parish that takes a lead on a particular issue and the District Council and other partners will need to act in support of this initiative and enable improvements where possible. An example of this might be town partnership work that seeks to enhance the vitality of a market town.

Alongside our community leadership role, we will continue to ensure that we provide efficient value for money services. Our financial strategy is positioned to plan for and stay ahead of future challenges, such as changes to Government funding, service demand and other emerging risks. We are developing a Commissioning Strategy and Commercial Strategy which aim to ensure the Council retains its current healthy financial position whilst becoming less reliant upon volatile central government funding. Our planned Commissioning Strategy will cover everything we do and is focussed on meeting local needs and delivering excellent and efficient services in support of the Council Plan.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to support West Oxfordshire to be fit for the future by:

1. Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.
2. Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.
3. Realising the unique opportunities that we offer to businesses of all shapes and sizes.
4. Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.
5. Creating both high quality market and affordable housing for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.
6. Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.



## Key Priority: Climate and Ecological Emergency

We will develop our strategic approach to securing a low carbon future, take steps to mitigate and adapt to climate change and plan for a net gain in biodiversity.

- Develop and implement a climate change action plan for West Oxfordshire with key actions to include:
  - Identifying initiatives towards preparing for and adapting to climate change, including enabling residents to adapt to extreme weather events, informed through engagement with local communities and partners.
  - Piloting initiatives through the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village and consider wider applicability.
  - Increasing residential and commercial reuse and recycling and encourage composting.
  - Producing an action plan to reduce the Council's impact upon the environment through the services we deliver.
- Enhance our natural environment and boost biodiversity.  
Overarching goal to establish robust, resilient, well-functioning ecological networks which will require:
  - Ongoing support for key local projects and initiatives e.g. Lower Windrush Valley Project and the Wychwood Project.
  - Management of WODC's land holdings for biodiversity conservation and enhancement, including development of a tree planting programme on this.
  - Seek to implement and maintain recommendations contained in the 'Windrush in Witney' Landscape Management Strategy.
  - Continuing to support Oxfordshire's Conservation Target Areas and Local Wildlife Sites Project.
  - Using the Council's planning powers to ensure that new developments deliver a net gain in biodiversity.

### Measures of Success:

- District Council services to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- Installation of XX number of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in XX locations (for internal use and in public locations on Council-owned car parks).
- Increase residential recycling and composting rates to 70%.
- Establish a residents' panel to inform key actions towards our ambitions on climate change - identification of quick wins as well as longer term projects.
- Utilisation of Natural England's 'Eco-metric' to demonstrate biodiversity net gain in new developments, including 25% net gain at the Garden Village.
- Use of 'Building for Nature' standards for Green Infrastructure at the Garden Village to measure the achievement of environmental and biodiversity enhancement.

### **Key Priority: Working Towards Healthier Communities**

We will pursue a place-based approach, working collaboratively with the health sector, voluntary sector partners and local communities to secure enhanced health and well-being for West Oxfordshire's residents. Key actions to include:

- Work with the health sector (especially the Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health) and other partners to establish a comprehensive network of healthcare facilities
- Adopt a 'healthy place-shaping' approach in new and existing developments, ensuring that the necessary green and blue infrastructure, and the public realm, is provided to encourage healthy lifestyles; and that these link with established communities so that both new and existing residents benefit
- Work closely and creatively with residents to understand needs and co-produce sustainable community-led solutions to tackle health and wellbeing challenges
- Review and deliver the Council's grants programme to ensure that it facilitates the enhancement of community facilities and the provision of activities which promote healthy lifestyles
- Work proactively and in partnership to ensure residents benefit from effective large scale countywide or national health and wellbeing programmes.
- Deliver improvements to Carterton Leisure Centre and plan for a replacement Windrush Leisure Centre
- Amplify the voice of residents especially those who have been heard less
- Identify opportunities to enhance the use of country parks and other open spaces for a variety of activities which provide benefits for both physical and mental health
- Challenge the stigma around mental health and help to improve services especially for young people
- Work with communities on healthy living initiatives in partnership with our leisure contractor, GLL
- Create 'friendly communities' which support people with varying needs
- Pilot and learn creative interventions to tackle health inequalities

#### Measures of Success:

- Number of projects funded through the Council's grants programme.
- Submission of a Health Impact Assessment with all major planning applications and implementation of its findings through the development scheme to which it relates.
- Consider change shown in contextual indicators (a periodic look at how the District scores against the Thriving Places Index).

## **Key Priority: Vibrant Economy**

We will work to secure the future economic success of West Oxfordshire as a key part of the wider Oxfordshire economy. Key actions to include:

- Working with business groups and partners including the Oxfordshire LEP to ensure there is a comprehensive range of support available for businesses
- Working with business groups to keep abreast of key business issues and work to help identify solutions
- Creating an environment where businesses can grow through ample land/ sites for employment purposes, including key hubs at Carterton, Witney, Chipping Norton and the new Garden Village
- Working with partners to secure new and upgraded infrastructure, including enhancements to the A40 and the Cotswold railway line
- Identifying and pursuing creative solutions for the provision of housing for key workers (in partnership with main employers in the district)
- Developing an action plan to secure the future vitality and viability of our town centres (key actions need to include the promotion of towns as destinations)
- Promoting the development of successful tourism enterprises in appropriate, sustainable locations in accordance with Local Plan Policy
- The development of public realm improvement projects, electric vehicle charging points and policies to allow town centres to evolve to meet changing shopping and leisure habits
- Work with the LEP to expand opportunities to engage and inspire young people and create pathways into vocational work and skills in the local economy
  
- Measures of Success:
  - Employment / unemployment
  - Town centre occupancy rates
  - Town centre footfall
  - Business land / premises availability
  - Productivity (measurement to be considered)
  - Key worker housing / recruitment issues

## **Key Priority: Stronger Local Communities**

We will work with partners to strengthen the local communities across West Oxfordshire in order to enhance residents' quality of life. Key actions to include:

- Developing our relationship with Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings through regular Parish Forums
- Working with local businesses in the villages and countryside in order to raise awareness of the opportunities for diversification (eg community hubs; pub walks and railway station opportunities)
- Working with partners to promote West Oxfordshire as a visitor destination whilst protecting its essential character
- Help build resilience in communities with more effective multi-agency working and intelligence sharing
- Encouraging towns and parishes to engage with their residents in order to articulate local priorities and support them to address these

Measures of Success:

- Better communication and engagement with Towns and Parishes
- Reporting of pilot project activity of tourism work with local pubs. Assessment of possible candidate local areas for further development in 2020
- Various community safety data and contextual indicators in Strategic Intelligence Assessment
- Achievement of actions as directed through the Community Safety Partnership Plan

**Key Priority: Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Communities**

We will secure the range of housing that is needed by our local communities. Key actions to include:

- Measures to increase the number of affordable housing units delivered annually, including the promotion of innovative housing solutions, so that we can reduce the housing waiting list
- The promotion of self-build and custom build plots
- Investigating a new West Oxfordshire living rent to ensure that affordable homes are truly affordable for local people and key workers
- Using the planning system to ensure that new developments provide a range of housing products, including low-cost home ownership models, and the right size of properties to meet the needs of our residents
- Increasing the rate of delivery on larger strategic sites through proactive planning and the use of appropriate mechanisms (planning performance agreements, planning conditions etc), work with infrastructure providers, and sustainable methods of construction where appropriate

Measures of Success:

- Numbers of new affordable housing units constructed annually
- Total numbers of new dwellings constructed annually
- *Need to include some actual targets here*
- Waiting list numbers (a percentage reduction to aim for?)
- Number of new pitches and plots to meet the needs of the travelling community

**Key Priority: Council Services and Finance**

We will continue to ensure that we provide efficient, value for money services whilst modernising Council services to ensure that they meet the evolving needs of customers and the area.

The Council is developing a Commissioning Strategy and Commercial Strategy which aim to ensure our financial position remains healthy whilst becoming less reliant upon volatile central government funding.

Key actions to include:

- Work with Publica, Ubico and other partners, to improve services by maximising accessibility, simplicity and quality
- Engaging with service users to inform future service redesign
- Introducing a new Council website that enables improved service access
- Developing a property strategy/ asset management plan to outline how the Council can use its own property to deliver Council Plan objectives
- Refreshing the Medium Term Financial Strategy to incorporate financial targets from the Commissioning Strategy, Commercial Strategy and the property strategy which set out how the Council plans to respond to changes to funding from central government and maintain financial sustainability
- In light of the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy to set a policy on the level of Council Tax which facilitates the Council's financial sustainability
- Looking for opportunities through the One Public Estate programme to ensure that the public estate meets local needs and provides efficiencies
- Identifying, targeting and securing appropriate funding opportunities with external agencies

Measures of Success:

- Improvements in measures of customer satisfaction
- An updated Medium Term Financial Strategy which includes the impact of changes to central government funding, incorporates realistic and achievable actions to mitigate reductions in government funding, and plans to achieve a balanced budget within the next five years.
- An unqualified Value for Money opinion from the external auditor.
- Council tax level within lowest five shire districts in the country
- A financial strategy which facilitates the delivery of the priorities set out in this Plan.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# West Oxfordshire Council Plan 2019-23

Evidence Paper (August 2019)



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## Information sources and acknowledgement

The document below provides an overview of evidence about West Oxfordshire. The information summarised in the paper has been drawn from a number of sources. Principal sources include analyses of national statistics undertaken in recent years through the District Data Service (a support service that is jointly supported through the partner Oxfordshire Districts) and analysis that supports Oxfordshire’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in 2019 (led by Oxfordshire County Council).



**West Oxfordshire in 2019 - District Characteristics**

West Oxfordshire is a predominantly rural area with a population of 109,300 (ONS Mid 2017 population estimate). The District enjoys a strong sense of place due to the Cotswold character of its buildings and the features of the natural environment – rolling countryside and river valleys. Around one third of the District falls within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The main towns are Witney (population 28,535), Carterton (16,500) and Chipping Norton (6,590) (ONS Mid-Year Pop'n Estimates 2016). These main towns offer a good range of services and facilities. In addition to the principal towns there are six further settlements (Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock) that also support various services and facilities and are identified as rural service centres in West Oxfordshire's Local Plan (adopted in September 2018). The Local Plan makes provision for a new rural service centre in the form of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village to the north of the A40 near Eynsham. Moving beyond the District's main settlements, West Oxfordshire has a scattering of medium sized and smaller villages and hamlets.

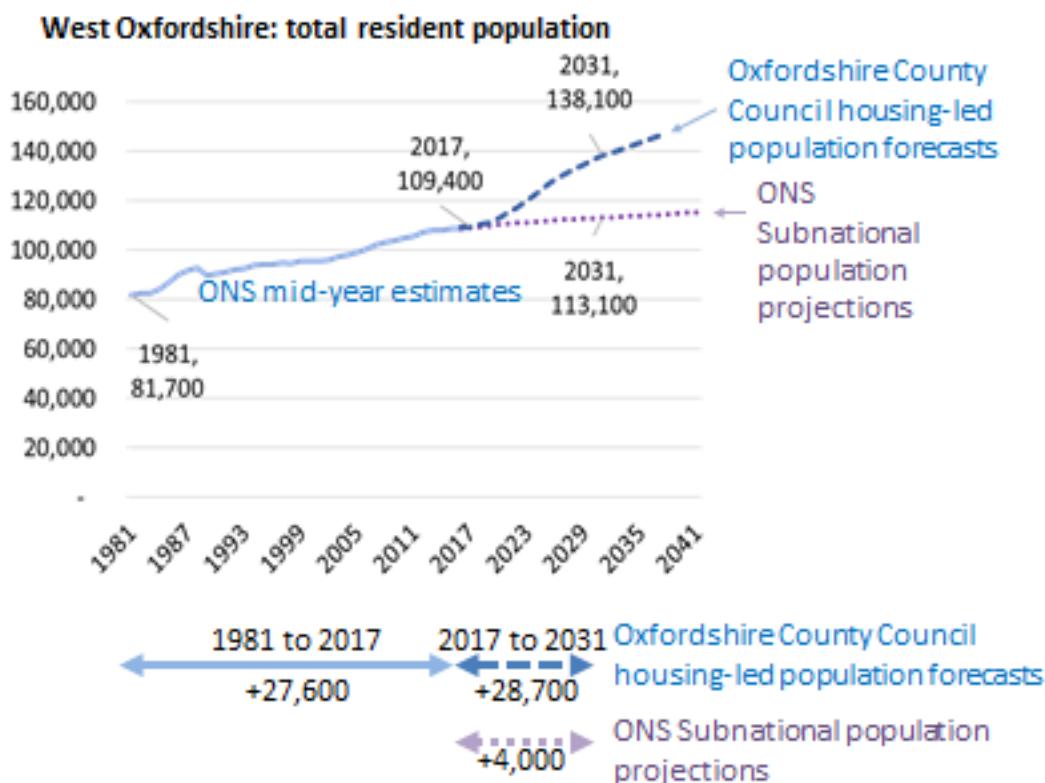
**Population**

The District has a growing and ageing population. The total resident population has increased 34% from 81,700 (1981) to 109,300 (ONS Mid 2017 Population Estimate). Recent population growth has mainly been in urban areas – Witney and Carterton – resulting from the construction of major development sites.

The growth in population will continue – planned for at a rate that is significantly higher than in preceding decades (a picture presented in Oxfordshire County housing-led population forecasts which show a population of 138,100 by 2031). The actual extent of the projected change that is forecast is dependent on which forecast method is used (ONS Subnational population projections outline a more conservative population growth to 113,100 by 2031 that is based on the historic trend of change).

10  
Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

### Future population growth depends on housing assumptions



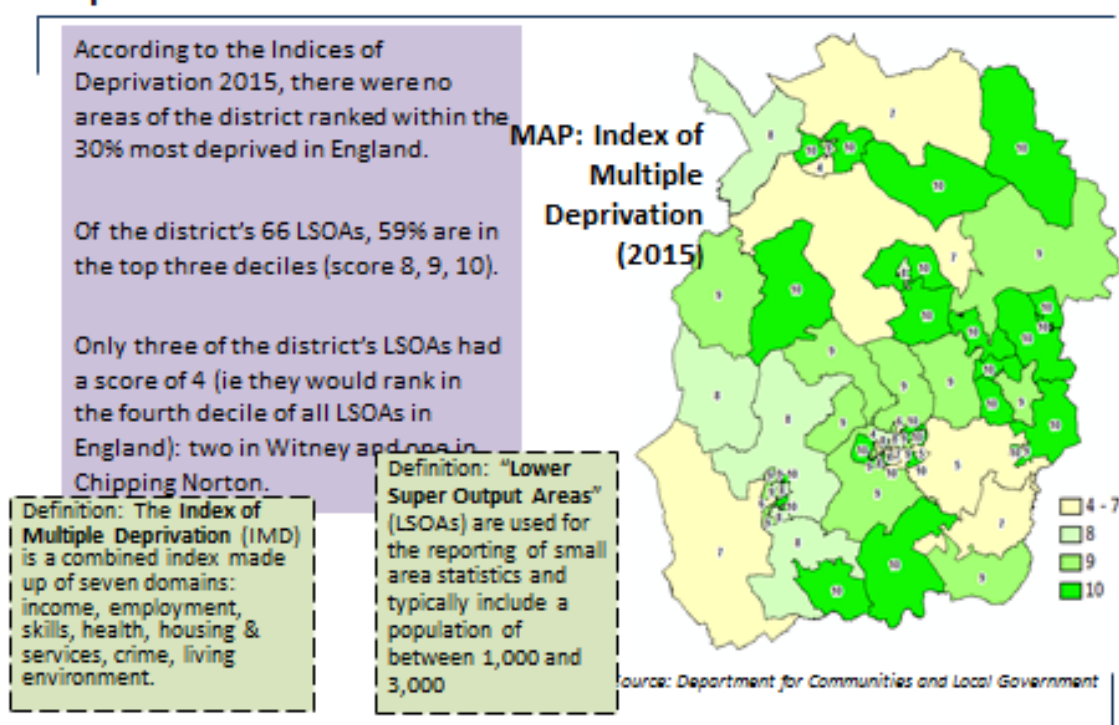
Source: ONS mid year estimates, ONS 2016-based subnational population projections and Oxfordshire County Council 2016-based housing-led forecasts published April 2018

A point that is common in forecast data is the growing elderly population in West Oxfordshire. The number of people in the oldest population group (people aged 85+) is forecast to increase from 3,400 (2017) to 5,500 (2031) (ONS mid-year estimates 2016). To put this in context, the count of people aged 85+ in 1981 was 800.

## Quality of Life

West Oxfordshire people are more likely to experience a good quality of life than residents in much of the rest of the country. The District has comparatively low levels of deprivation (as defined in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) which looks at a combined measure of income, employment, skills, health, housing and services, crime and living environment). According to the Indices of Deprivation 2015, there were no local areas in West Oxfordshire that ranked within the 30% most deprived in England. Indeed, of the District's 66 local areas (Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) used for reporting small area statistics) 59% are in the top three deciles (least deprived) in the England rankings. (see map)

### Overall, West Oxfordshire has comparatively low levels of deprivation



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A number of quality of life surveys place West Oxfordshire above the national average in terms of life satisfaction. For example, both the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported national survey data and the Halifax's Quality of Life Survey (2019) which consistently ranks West Oxfordshire in the top 50 Local Authority Districts in terms of the UK's best places to live.

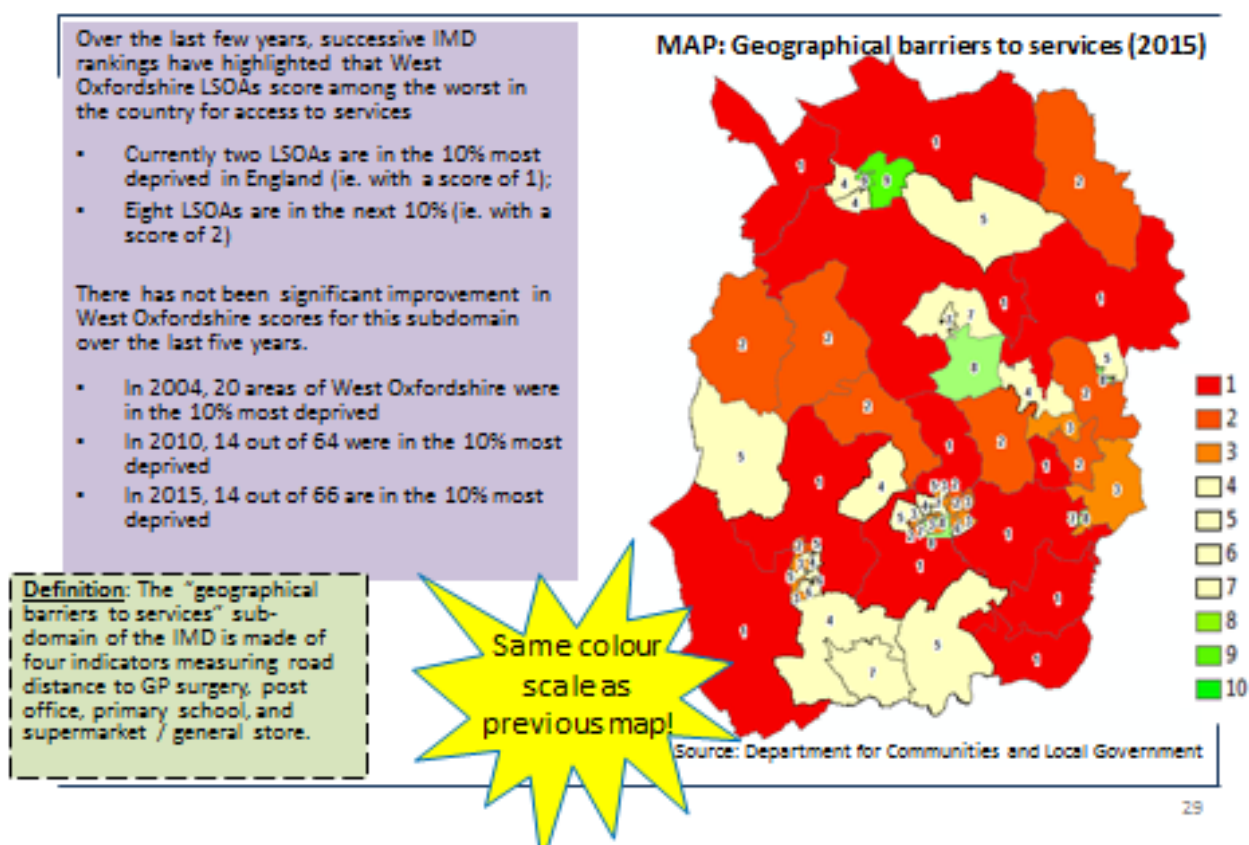
A further recent "Thriving Places Index" has looked first at the overall characteristics of the upper tier local authority areas (Oxfordshire County level) and has placed Oxfordshire as above average on all three of its core index measures (sustainability, local conditions and equality). Although scoring well

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in all three main components of the index, there were considerations that scored at medium or below medium levels compared to the national data. The lower scoring elements were: transport; local business; community cohesion; CO2 emissions; energy consumption per capita (all rated at medium); and income inequality (rated below medium). In a more recent analysis at District level, the “Thriving Places Index” ranked West Oxfordshire strongly overall on local conditions, but only medium across scoring areas related to sustainability and equality. Poorly scoring individual elements at District level included: transport; CO2 emissions; energy consumption per capita; and the overall position on income inequality.

Although the general picture on the comparative level of deprivation and quality of life is good there are of course pockets of deprivation and the District ranks poorly in terms of geographical access to services. In 2015, 14 out of the 66 local areas of the District are placed in the 10% most deprived areas in the national rankings (IMD “geographical barriers to services” sub-domain) (see map).

## West Oxfordshire has poor geographical access to services



This position has persisted over successive IMD analyses of this topic. The issue is recognised in Local Plan policy which seeks to protect against the loss of community facilities.

The access to facilities and services has worsened in recent years due to the significant reduction in the network of public transport that followed the removal of subsidies to bus routes. The removal of bus subsidies came into effect from 2016 and concern over the loss of services has been reported in Parish Survey responses measuring that inform our Local Plan monitoring.

## **Crime and community safety**

West Oxfordshire has the lowest crime rate in the County and overall crime is typically below average compared to statistically similar areas. The District is ranked as the 14<sup>th</sup> (out of 15) lowest crime area in a statistical group of areas with a similar character (where 1 = the highest crime rate area; Source: HMICFRS Jan 18 data release).

The historic data on anti-social behaviour also shows that the prevalence of this is at a relatively lower level compared to other Oxfordshire Districts. There were 83 anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) in West Oxfordshire in 2016. This gives the lowest rate of ASBOs in the county and is below the national average (relative to population count).

Although the crime rate is generally low, the level of recorded crime in West Oxfordshire has seen an increase (+12.4%) between 2017 and 2018 as outlined in the most recent Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA) (2019). The District is still ranked 14 out of 15 within the most similar group of 15 areas) (Source: Safer Oxfordshire Partnership: Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2019 (Draft, March 2019). Between 2016-17 and 2017-18, there was an increase in both recorded crime rates and in the severity of crime score in each of Oxfordshire's districts, similar to the national trend.

According to JSNA 2018 data, there was a 10% increase (2nd highest in the county) in the number of recorded victims of domestic abuse in West Oxfordshire between 2016 and 2017. There were slightly more male victims of domestic abuse in West Oxfordshire than in other districts.

There are areas of joint commitment between the Police and partnership bodies (including the Council) where collaborative working is seen as the best way for community safety partners to plan and target their work. The most recent SIA will be reviewed across partner agencies and further complementary analysis drawn together – this work will continue to assist community safety partners to plan and target their work.

## **The Local Economy**

As outlined in West Oxfordshire's Local Plan, the District has strong functional economic links with other areas. The travel to work area data indicates that the closest links are with Oxford City, which performs a City-Region role, Cherwell District and the Vale of White Horse District. West Oxfordshire's economic partnership work as part of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership is rooted in the functional economic geography of the Oxfordshire local economy.

As might be expected, the proportion of people working in Oxford is highest in the east of the District at Woodstock and Eynsham where around 30% of workers work in Oxford. (see map).

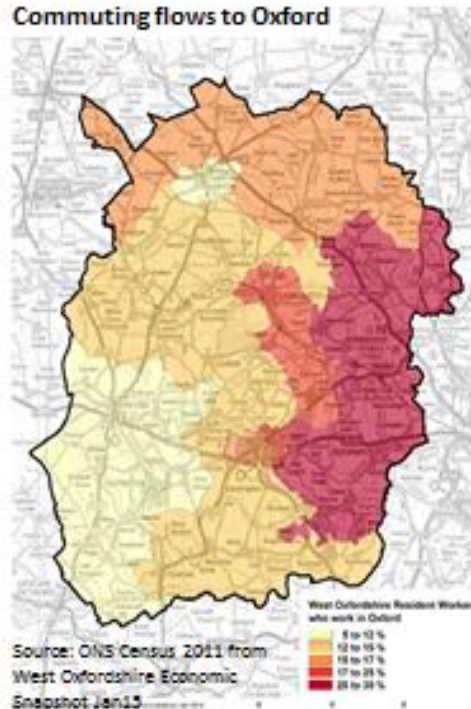


## Commuting to Oxford

According to the Census 2011 survey 7,500 residents of West Oxfordshire commuted to work in Oxford. This was 13% of employed residents.

In the areas around Woodstock and Eynsham, around 30% of workers commuted into Oxford.

## Commuting flows to Oxford



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The local economy profile in West Oxfordshire's Local Plan also shows that the majority of employment that is based in West Oxfordshire is concentrated in the south east of the District (35% of the District's employment is located in Witney with a further 25% in Eynsham and Woodstock). Carterton has a relatively low share of the District's employment opportunities (21%) compared to the size of its workforce. (Source of data: West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031).

The District continues to exhibit a strong and resilient local economy as evidenced in high rates of economic activity and a growing labour market. The District has an above average level of economic activity of 89.1% (South East: 80.8%; Great Britain: 78.5%). It has a low claimant count for people on out-of-work benefits of 1.1% (South East 1.7%; Great Britain: 2.7%). Employee jobs have increased from 42,000 in 2015 to 44,000 in 2017 and over the last decade the increase in jobs is mainly attributable to an increase in full time employment. There is an above average percentage of employment as managers and professionals 53.2% (South East: 50.9%; Great Britain: 46.4%). (Source: NOMIS Labour Market Profile – West Oxfordshire April 2019; Oxfordshire JSNA 2019; ONS Business Register and Employment Survey).

The comparative position in terms of jobs density (the ratio of total jobs to population aged 16-64) is favourable - based on the total number of jobs of 62,000 (this includes employees, self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces) the jobs density ratio for West Oxfordshire: 0.93



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(South East: 0.87; Great Britain: 0.86). (Source: NOMIS Labour Market Profile – West Oxfordshire April 2019).

Oxfordshire's baseline economic review for the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS 2018) shows that workplace wages in West Oxfordshire are lower than resident wages (Source ONS data; Analysis Oxfordshire LIS Baseline) as is also the case in Cherwell and South Oxfordshire but not Oxford City or the Vale of White Horse.

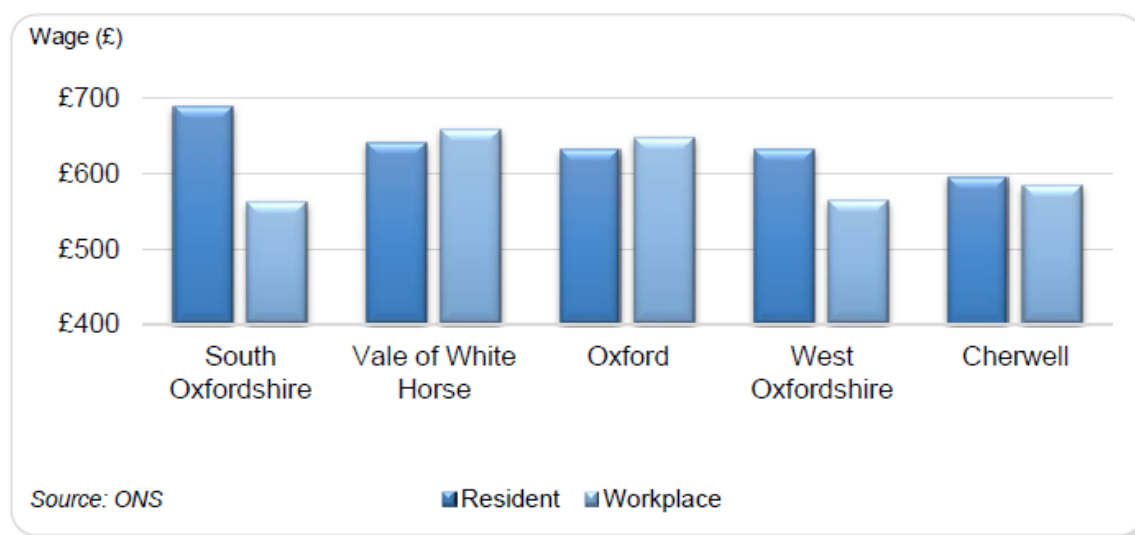
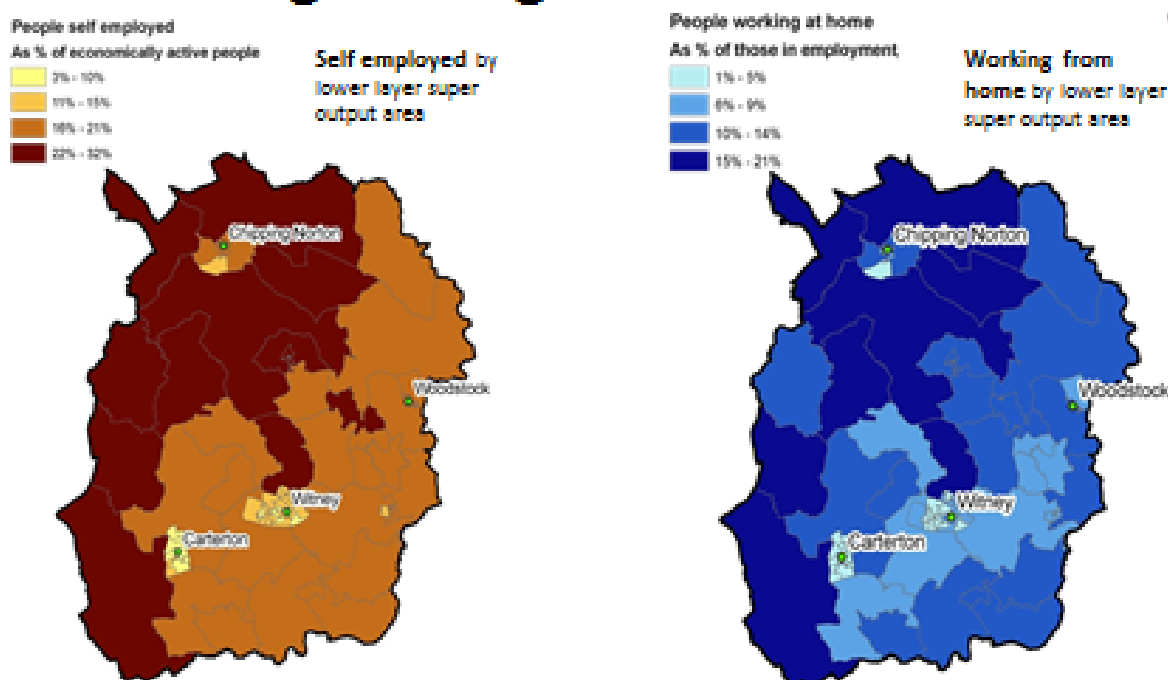


Figure 3-8 Oxfordshire local authorities' resident and workplace wage, 2017

West Oxfordshire has a diverse balance of employment across different industry sectors. As part of this, the District has maintained a relatively strong level of employment in manufacturing, which represents 12% of employee numbers (England: 8%). The employment in this sector is supported by a number of firms that include some involved in advanced manufacturing, reflecting a strong tradition in the engineering sector.

The District exhibits a high rate of home working with just under 8,000 (18% of West Oxfordshire's employed residents working mainly at or from home (at the time of the last Census – 2011). Rates of self-employment and home working are highest in the District's rural areas to the north and west (see maps).

# Rates of self employment and home working are highest in rural areas



Source: ONS Census 2011 table Q5601

Lower layer super output areas are a statistical geography used mainly for reporting Census data and have an average of around 1,500 residents and 650 households

Source: ONS Census 2011 table Q5701

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There is an increasing number of local business enterprises based in West Oxfordshire (5,185 in 2010 moving to 5,655 in 2018 – with 90% of these being “micro” (0-9 employees; a further 9% of enterprises classified as small (10-49 employees); and few large businesses (over 250 employees). Although the number of enterprises in West Oxfordshire has increased (9% between 2010 and 2016), **the level of increase has not kept pace with the national increase for England (23% over the same period)**. (Data Source: NOMIS April 2019; JSNA 2019; and West Oxfordshire District Economic Snapshot 2018, District Data Service).

## Tourism

Tourism and the visitor economy remains an important factor in West Oxfordshire’s local economy. In 2014, the spend from tourist activity was £280m, accounting for an estimated 3,559 (full time equivalent) jobs (Economic Impact of Tourism on Oxfordshire 2014, published August 2015 – cited in the Local Plan).

The most recent economic review of the impact of tourism in West Oxfordshire showed that the total visitor spend was £247.3m and total business turnover supported was £282.5m (2017 (Source: The Economic Impact of West Oxfordshire’s Visitor Economy 2017, published: Nov 2018). The impact study is not directly comparable to the earlier tourism economic assessment as a different methodology has been used.



**Recent National and Local Economic Policy Context**

A lot of strategy work has been done in recent years, including – the development of a Strategic Economic Plan (2016) for the county and the joint pursuit (with other Oxfordshire authorities) of a Housing and Growth Deal with Government. In 2018 the Oxfordshire authorities signed the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. In return for guaranteed funding for affordable housing, infrastructure and economic growth, Oxfordshire’s local authorities have undertaken to submit Local Plans for each of the districts that provide for the delivery of 100,000 new homes to 2031 (through the combined effect of those plans).

A key strand of the Growth Deal is the preparation of a new, joint statutory spatial plan - ‘the Oxfordshire Plan’ covering the period to 2050. The Oxfordshire Plan is currently under development and has recently been the subject of an initial public consultation on the key issues that need to be addressed through a new strategic plan for Oxfordshire. The purpose of the Oxfordshire Plan is to set out the aspirations for the County and to harness the growth opportunities as a positive factor to improve the quality of life across the County. West Oxfordshire District Council will have opportunities to work collaboratively to inform the vision and strategic development guided through the Oxfordshire Plan.

As part of the launch of the UK Industrial Strategy and the agreement under Oxfordshire’s Growth Deal, Government invited Oxfordshire to be one of the first regions to develop a Local Industrial Strategy. The Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy was prepared as a Working Draft document at the end of 2018 and it sets out an ambitious twenty year plan to build on strengths in the local economy and world leading assets to deliver transformative growth and prosperity locally and to provide additional benefits to other UK regions. The approach fostered aims to be innovation led and driven by higher productivity. The Strategy is intended to be inclusive, place-sensitive and sustainable – enhancing our communities, the natural environment and the quality of life in the County. It will be aligned closely with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted September 2018) has been informed of the strategic work forming at county level and it provides a sound spatial policy context for the term of the Council Plan (2019-2023). Our Local Plan makes provision for at least 15,950 homes over the period 2011 – 2031. This comprises 13,200 homes in the period 2011 – 2031 to meet West Oxfordshire’s identified housing needs and a further 2,750 homes in the period 2021 – 2031 to meet a proportion of Oxford City’s identified housing needs.

A key function of West Oxfordshire’s Local Plan is to direct growth to the most appropriate and sustainable locations – to ensure that the right balance is struck between growth and protection of the local environment. The complementary role of the Council Plan is to now frame corporate objectives and tasks that can address our priorities and deliver relevant action.

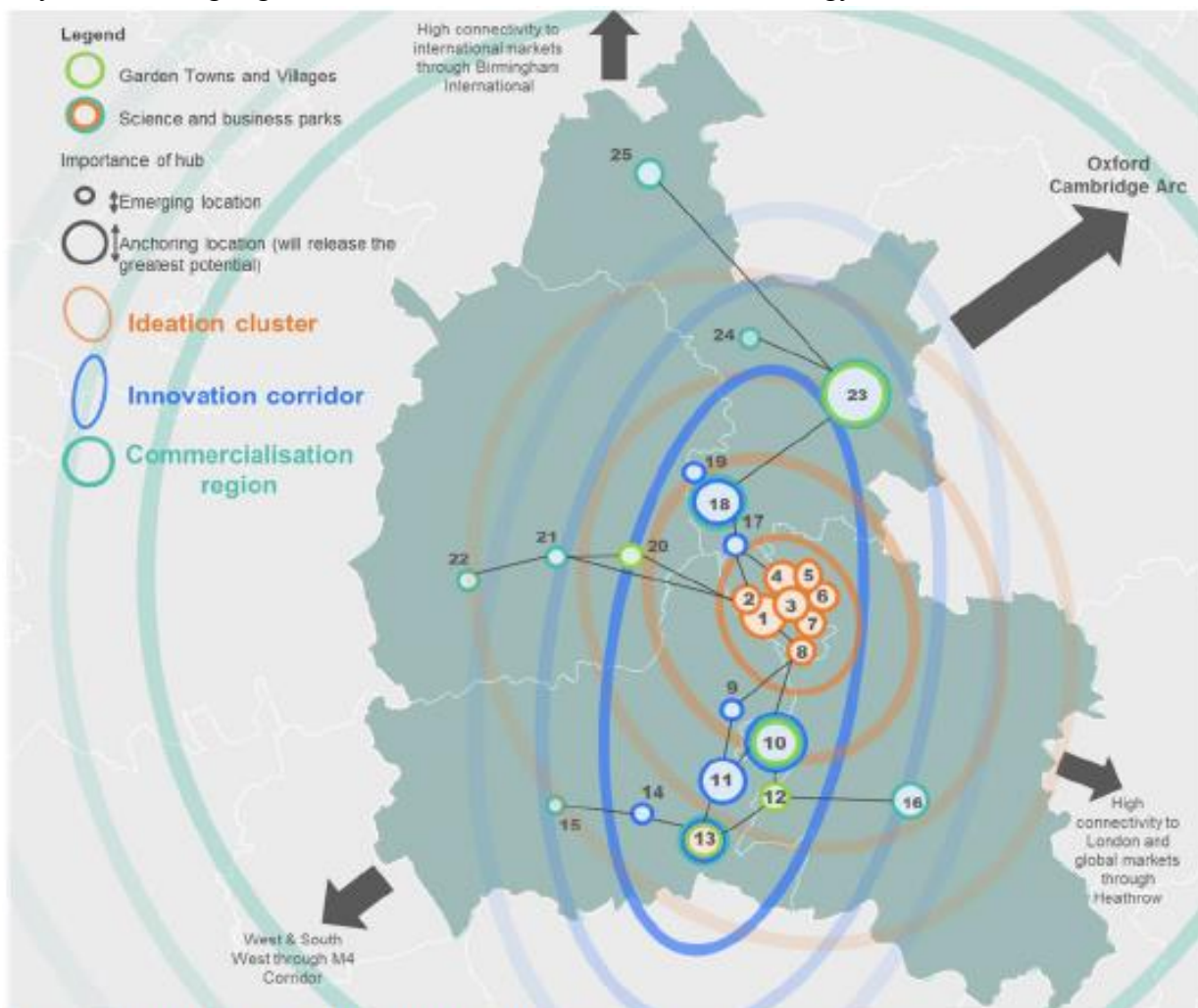
The pursuit of strategic development opportunities is now about putting West Oxfordshire into the mix and securing our economic future. This type of action unfolds under the direction of our Local Plan which has of course been framed alongside other key strategies and evidence – the Joint Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire, the Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy and the Oxfordshire Rail Strategy. In tandem,

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these schemes will help address some of the major challenges such as improving the A40 corridor and dualling the Cotswold line. It is a co-ordinated and strategic approach that will secure the required Government investment in infrastructure.

There will be opportunities to strengthen our economic future through playing a proactive role in our strategic work with local partners across Oxfordshire. The anticipated ripple effect of Oxfordshire’s future economic growth is shown in the extract below from the Draft of Oxfordshire’s Industrial Strategy which shows key locations:

Key locations highlighted in Oxfordshire’s Draft Industrial Strategy



Key locations within the innovation ecosystem:

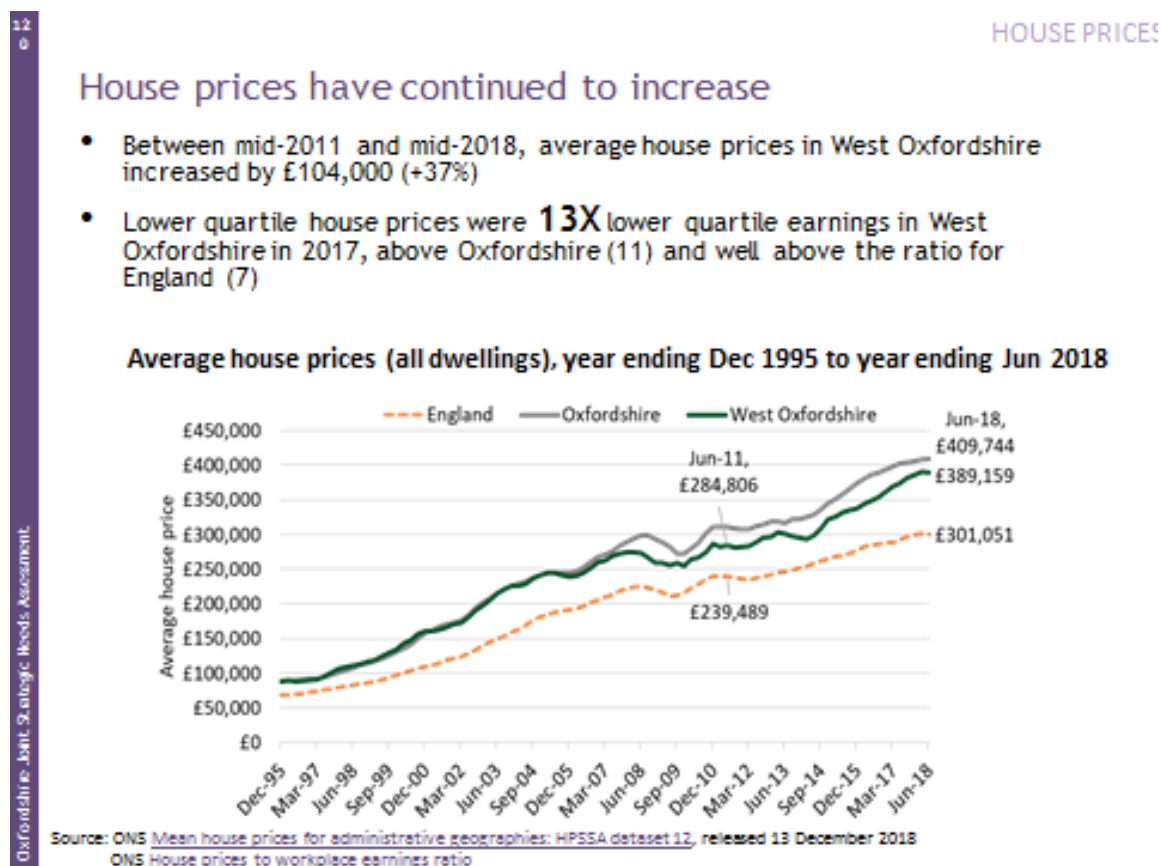
- |                                       |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Oxpens, West End & Station Quarter | 10. Culham Science Centre                 | 18. Begbroke Science Park and Innovation Centre |
| 2. Osney Meads Innovation Quarter     | 11. Milton Park                           | 19. Oxford Technology Park                      |
| 3. Oxford University                  | 12. Didcot Garden Town                    | 20. West Oxfordshire Garden Village             |
| 4. Oxford Centre for Innovation       | 13. Harwell Science and Innovation Campus | 21. Witney Business & Innovation Centre         |
| 5. Oxford Brookes University          | 14. Grove Technology Park                 | 22. Carterton & RAF Brize Norton                |
| 6. Headington Hospital Quarter        | 15. Defence Academy, Shrivenham           | 23. Bicester Garden Town                        |
| 7. Oxford Business Park               | 16. Howbery Business Park                 | 24. Heyford Park                                |
| 8. Oxford Science Park                | 17. Oxford North                          | 25. Banbury                                     |
| 9. Quadrant, Abingdon Science Park    |   |   |

West Oxfordshire is well placed as part of a strong and high value added/ knowledge intensive Oxfordshire local economic area. The District has the opportunity to secure further, successful economic development through its proximity to Oxford and current plans for a new science park as part of the proposed Garden Village.

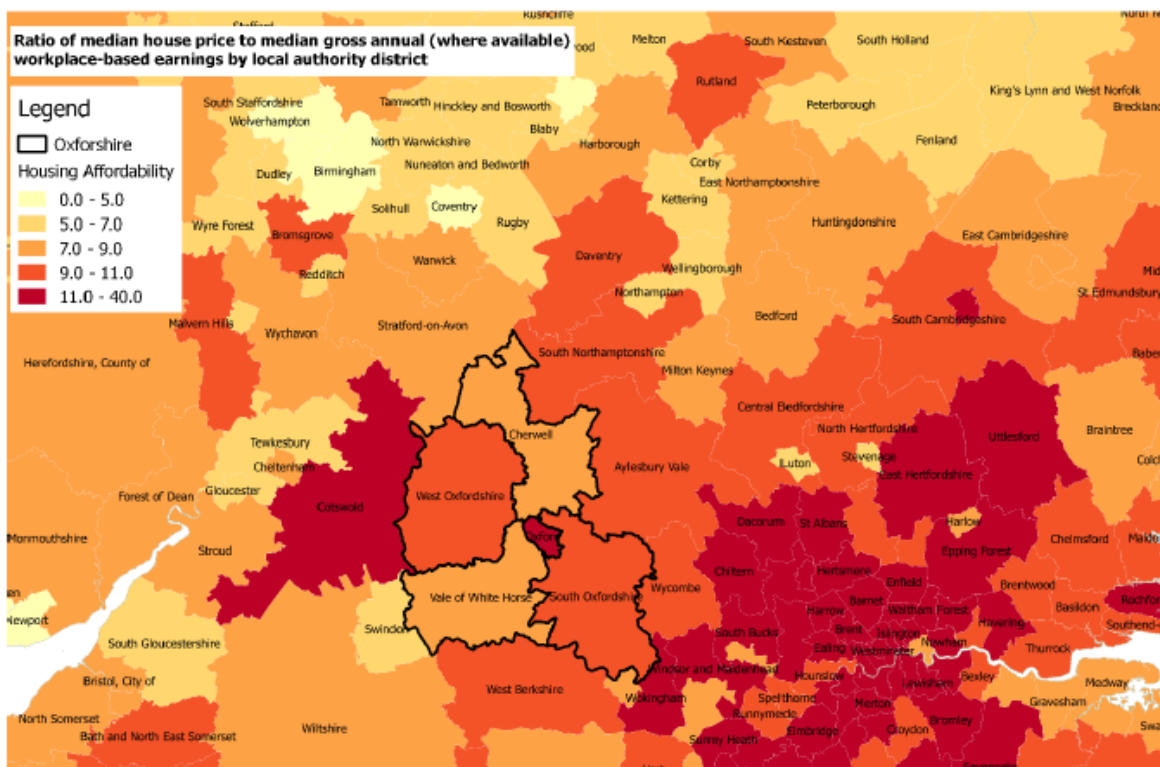
## Housing

According to the 2011 Census, there were 43,000 households in West Oxfordshire. In terms of tenure – 70% of the homes were owned (in full or with a mortgage – compared with 63% across England). Between 2001 and 2011 the total number of households in West Oxfordshire increased by 4,800 (+13%) – the highest percentage growth was in private rented households. (District Data Service – West Oxfordshire Briefing Note: Housing 2018; Source: ONS Census 2001 and 2011). A more recent analysis shows that in 2017 there were 47,560 occupied households in West Oxfordshire (District Data Service – West Oxfordshire Briefing Note: Housing 2018; Source: MHCLG Live Table 100, downloaded 20/08/18).

As summarised in our Local Plan, housing affordability is a significant issue in the District. A recent analysis has shown that between mid 2011 and mid 2018 average house prices in West Oxfordshire increased by £104,000 (+37%). In 2017, lower quartile house prices stood at 13x lower quartile earnings (above Oxfordshire (11) and well above the ratio for England (7) (Source: Oxfordshire JSNA 2019 based on ONS mean house prices data released 13 Dec 2018). (See graph).



The baseline economic analysis for Oxfordshire’s Local Industrial Strategy (LIS 2018) shows that across Oxfordshire there is a substantial need for new housing and consequently buying and renting housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable.



Source: ONS Housing affordability in England and Wales: 2017  
 Figure 5-6 Ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings by local authority district.

Source: Oxfordshire LIS 2018 Economic Review: Baseline Dec 2018

A summary of key housing and homelessness statistics in 2018 shows the following position:

## SUMMARY & KEY FACTS

### *In West Oxfordshire...*

- **HOMELESSNESS**
  - 7 rough sleepers
  - 63 applications for housing under the Homelessness Act, of which 34 were accepted
- **HOUSE PRICES**
  - The median price of houses sold was £337,500
  - The median price of houses sold is 55% higher than a decade ago
  - (Affordability:) The median house is 10.6 times income [England: 7.9]
  - (Affordability:) Lower quartile houses are 12.6 times income [England: 7.3]
- **RENT**
  - Social sector rent is £110.48 pw [England: £96.61]
  - Private sector rent is £883 pcm [England: £675]
- **OTHER**
  - 1,218 vacant dwellings
  - 518 additional dwellings in 2016/17, mostly through new builds
  - 5,100 extra dwellings since 2008
  - 70% own their home; 12% are social renters; 15% rent privately

There has been an increase in people who are accepted as statutorily homeless. West Oxfordshire was the only district where there was an increase in acceptances of status over the past year. (JSNA Summary for West Oxfordshire 2018)

### **Transport (Local Plan extract)**

Transport is a critically important issue for West Oxfordshire. In terms of travel patterns, the District demonstrates a reasonable level of self-containment, with 65% of residents in employment either commuting within the District, working at home or having no fixed place of work and 35% commuting out of the District to work elsewhere. Almost 12,000 people commute into the District each day and 20,000 commute out, meaning a net outflow of around 8,000, just under 15% of the District's resident workforce. This represents a slight increase since 2001. There is a particularly high net outflow of workers in the education, health and professional scientific and technical sectors.

The majority of out-commuters (7,500) travel to Oxford City, with most travelling by car. This places significant pressure on the road network with severe traffic congestion on the A40 to Oxford being a daily occurrence. The problems associated with the A40 also have wider impacts as drivers choose to take alternate routes leading to congestion elsewhere including the A4095, A415 and A44 as well as minor roads including the B4449 which suffer because of narrow, historic crossing points across the River Thames. Congestion also occurs within some towns with air quality management areas having been designated at Witney and Chipping Norton.

Public transport provision in West Oxfordshire is variable in terms of coverage and frequency. There are two main rail lines, the Cherwell Valley Line and the Cotswold Line. A very small proportion of the Cherwell Valley Line runs through the eastern part of the District with a station at Tackley providing services northwards to Birmingham and southwards to Oxford and onto London Paddington.

The Cotswold Line passes through the largely rural central part of the District, connecting several small towns and villages with Hereford in the west and Oxford and London in the east. Notably, neither of the District's two rail lines serves the three main towns. The Oxford Parkway Station located nearby in Cherwell District opened in October 2015 thereby offering additional journey choice to West Oxfordshire residents.

In terms of bus provision, Witney and Carterton, the two largest settlements, are connected to Oxford by high frequency services. The Woodstock area is also well served by public transport. Other bus services operate throughout the rural area with varying frequencies. In July 2016 Oxfordshire County Council announced that subsidies would be withdrawn for a large number of bus services operating in West Oxfordshire leaving some settlements with very few or no bus services at all, although some services have continued on a commercial basis.

Most cycle and pedestrian routes are focused on the main towns although there are dedicated cycle routes between Witney, Eynsham and Oxford along the A40 and from Woodstock to Oxford along the A44.



## Local Economic Policy Context – Growth and Housing

As part of the evidence base to support West Oxfordshire’s Local Plan, the Council commissioned an economic snapshot that highlighted the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) facing the District (reported: January 2015). A summary of the SWOT analysis is set out below:

Figure 5.3: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Skilled Work Force	Congestion – particularly along A40 corridor
Quality of Life	Infrastructure – poor rail links
Environment	Broadband – though a programme is in place to address this
Proximity to Oxford	Low productivity
Legacy of successful businesses	Lack of critical mass
Industrial structure – including range of sectors	Land supply – lack of sites and little recent development
Blenheim Palace	Aging stock
	Land ownership
	Business Facilities
Opportunities	Threats
Oxford City Region – especially growth opportunities around Eynsham	Oxford/Science Vale
Nurture Local Businesses	Failure to adapt and get on new curve
Brize Norton – Lyneham relocations	Climate change?
Rationalise commercial activity	Loss of key employers
Potential healthcare cluster – based around Abbot and Owen Mumford	Defence closures
Cotswold Live Work	Deterioration of congestion
	Differential in value between employment land and residential
	Housing shortages
	Skills shortages

(Source: CAG Consultants, January 2015)

The local economy SWOT analysis has informed our Local Plan policies and it has given a context to our subsequent economic partnership work with other Oxfordshire authorities and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Key recent steps have been the development of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (2016) and the joint pursuit (with our Oxfordshire partner local authorities) of a Housing and Growth Deal with Government.

In 2018 the Oxfordshire authorities signed the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal with the Government (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (Nov 2017) MHCLG). In return for guaranteed funding for affordable housing, infrastructure and economic growth, the Oxfordshire authorities have committed to submit a Local Plan for each District that plans for the delivery of 100,000 new homes to 2031 (through the combined effect of those plans) and to the development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (background document: Oxfordshire Joint Statutory Spatial Plan Scoping Document (Oct 2018)).

This is a much longer period than is covered in our current Local Plan (which covers to 2031) and it is important in the strategic context it provides. A significant extent of joint work across the Oxfordshire authorities has already taken place and this has informed West Oxfordshire’s current Local Plan (to 2031). The period to 2031 is therefore specified in a good level of detail in terms of planned future development. The latter period of the Oxfordshire Plan to 2050 will be based on a new evidence base

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produced specifically for the joint project work – future Local Plans (including West Oxfordshire’s future Local Plan) will sit within the framework defined by the Oxfordshire Plan.

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is currently under development and there has been recent public consultation (Feb – March 2019) to inform the approach. The eventual purpose of the Oxfordshire Plan will be to set the framework for future decision making on big issues like development infrastructure and place-making. The intention of the Plan is that it is aspirational and that it uses the opportunity of growth as a positive to improve the quality of life for everyone in the county.

West Oxfordshire District Council and its local communities will have opportunities to work collaboratively to inform the common purpose and vision for the county as expressed in the Oxfordshire Plan. Our recently adopted Local Plan sets out our vision, core objectives and overall strategy to 2031. The current Council Plan complements this by providing a corporate strategy context that frames relevant actions to address priorities.

**Education**

The analysis of data for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2019 shows school pupils and young people in West Oxfordshire are performing relatively well academically. 77% of pupils aged 5 achieved a good level of development in Early Learning Goals (73.5% Oxfordshire; 75% South East). 48.9% achieved strong passes (9-5) in GCSE English and Maths (46.6% Oxfordshire; 43.5% England) in 2018. The GCSE attainment 8 score (a broad based measure of attainment) for West Oxfordshire pupils of 48.8 is relatively strong (Oxfordshire: 46.8; South East 47.8; England (state): 46.6). (Source: JSNA 2019 analysis).

In line with the general position across Oxfordshire, the proportion of young people in the District aged 16-19 who are not in education, employment or training (so called NEETs) has declined over recent years (in August 2018, this stood at under 2%; compared to just under 5% in August 2011) (Source: Oxfordshire JSNA 2019).

Over time, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of West Oxfordshire’s residents that are qualified at the highest levels (NVQ4 or NVQ5 – indicating a degree/ higher diploma or above). In 2004, 26% of West Oxfordshire were at this level (the same as the national average of 26%). By 2015, the proportion had approximately doubled to 50% (at NVQ4+) (the national average had increased to 37% over this period). (Source: District Data Service Analysis)

**Health and well-being**

West Oxfordshire’s health profile (2018) shows that the health of people in the District is generally better than the England average. Life expectancy for men stands at 82.1 (2.6 years longer than the England average of 79.5) and for women at 84.1 (1 year longer than that for England at 83.1). The



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health summary for the District shows that across most measures of health and disease, West Oxfordshire compares favourably.

## Health summary for West Oxfordshire

The chart below shows how the health of people in this area compares with the rest of England. This area's value for each indicator is shown as a circle. The England average is shown by the red line, which is always at the centre of the chart. The range of results for all local areas in England is shown as a grey bar. A red circle means that this area is significantly worse than England for that indicator. However, a green circle may still indicate an important public health problem.

- Significantly worse than England average
- Not significantly different from England average
- Significantly better than England average
- Not compared



	Indicator names	Period	Local count	Local value	Eng value	Eng worst		Eng best
Life expectancy and causes of death	1 Life expectancy at birth (Male)	2014 – 16	n/a	82.1	79.5	74.2		83.7
	2 Life expectancy at birth (Female)	2014 – 16	n/a	84.1	83.1	79.4		86.8
	3 Under 75 mortality rate: all causes	2014 – 16	747	247.7	333.8	545.7		215.2
	4 Under 75 mortality rate: cardiovascular	2014 – 16	142	47.7	73.5	141.3		42.3
	5 Under 75 mortality rate: cancer	2014 – 16	333	109.6	136.8	195.3		99.1
	6 Suicide rate	2014 – 16	31	11.0	9.9	18.3		4.6
Injuries and ill health	7 Killed and seriously injured on roads	2014 – 16	184	56.5	39.7	110.4	●	13.5
	8 Hospital stays for self-harm	2016/17	204	200.0	185.3	578.9	●	50.6
	9 Hip fractures in older people (aged 65+)	2016/17	135	569.5	575.0	854.2	●	364.7
	10 Cancer diagnosed at early stage	2016	316	59.3	52.6	39.3	○	61.9
	11 Diabetes diagnoses (aged 17+)	2017	n/a	67.2	77.1	54.3	●	96.3
	12 Dementia diagnoses (aged 65+)	2017	1,082	69.1	67.9	45.1	●	90.8
Behavioural risk factors	13 Alcohol-specific hospital stays (under 18s)	2014/15 – 16/17	34	50.1	34.2	100.0	●	6.5
	14 Alcohol-related harm hospital stays	2016/17	538	495.0	636.4	1,151.1	●	388.2
	15 Smoking prevalence in adults (aged 18+)	2017	11,786	13.7	14.9	24.8	●	4.6
	16 Physically active adults (aged 19+)	2016/17	n/a	71.9	66.0	53.3	●	78.8
	17 Excess weight in adults (aged 18+)	2016/17	n/a	54.7	61.3	74.9	●	40.5
	Child health	18 Under 18 conceptions	2016	20	10.8	18.8	36.7	●
19 Smoking status at time of delivery		2016/17	81	7.7	10.7	28.1	●	2.3
20 Breastfeeding initiation		2016/17	917	82.7	74.5	37.9	●	96.7
21 Infant mortality rate		2014 – 16	10	2.8	3.9	7.9	●	0.0
22 Obese children (aged 10–11)		2016/17	155	14.7	20.0	29.2	●	8.8
Inequalities		23 Deprivation score (IMD 2015)	2015	n/a	8.1	21.8	42.0	○
	24 Smoking prevalence: routine and manual occupations	2017	n/a	22.8	25.7	48.7	●	5.1
Wider determinants of health	25 Children in low income families (under 16s)	2015	1,460	7.6	16.8	30.5	●	5.7
	26 GCSEs achieved	2015/16	633	60.3	57.8	44.8	●	78.7
	27 Employment rate (aged 16–64)	2016/17	54,200	83.4	74.4	59.8	●	88.5
	28 Statutory homelessness	2016/17	20	0.4	0.8			
	29 Violent crime (violence offences)	2016/17	771	7.1	20.0	42.2	●	5.7
	Health protection	30 Excess winter deaths	Aug 2013 – Jul 2016	161	16.7	17.9	30.3	●
31 New sexually transmitted infections		2017	319	475.5	793.8	3,215.3	●	266.6
32 New cases of tuberculosis		2014 – 16	14	4.3	10.9	69.0	●	0.0

For full details on each indicator, see the definitions tab of the Health Profiles online tool: [www.healthprofiles.info](http://www.healthprofiles.info)

**Indicator value types**

1, 2 Life expectancy - Years 3, 4, 5 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population aged under 75 6 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population aged 10 and over 7 Crude rate per 100,000 population 8 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population 9 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population aged 65 and over 10 Proportion - % of cancers diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 11 Proportion - % recorded diagnosis of diabetes as a proportion of the estimated number with diabetes 12 Proportion - % recorded diagnosis of dementia as a proportion of the estimated number with dementia 13 Crude rate per 100,000 population aged under 18 14 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population 15, 16, 17 Proportion - % 18 Crude rate per 1,000 females aged 15 to 17 19, 20 Proportion - % 21 Crude rate per 1,000 live births 22 Proportion - % 23 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 score 24, 25 Proportion - % 26 Proportion - % 5 A\*-C including English & Maths 27 Proportion - % 28 Crude rate per 1,000 households 29 Crude rate per 1,000 population 30 Ratio of excess winter deaths to average of non-winter deaths (%) 31 Crude rate per 100,000 population aged 15 to 64 (excluding Chlamydia) 32 Crude rate per 100,000 population

“Regional” refers to the former government regions.

If 25% or more of areas have no data then the England range is not displayed.

Please send any enquiries to [healthprofiles@phe.gov.uk](mailto:healthprofiles@phe.gov.uk)

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The Older People's Health and Wellbeing Profile for West Oxfordshire (as reported in the JSNA 2019) shows that older people in the District have similar or better than the regional average positions against the main health and wellbeing indicators. The diagnosed dementia rate in West Oxfordshire is above average and continuing to rise.

Young people's mental health continues to be an area of concern. In Oxfordshire the 15-19 age group continued to make up the largest proportion and number of patients referred to Oxford Health mental health services in 2016-17 and has seen the biggest increase since 2011-12. Between 2011-12 and 2016-17, the number of patients referred aged 15-19 increased by 80% compared with a 22% increase overall (all ages). There was also a significant increase of patients referred in the younger age group aged 10-14 (+67%). At the same time waiting times for CAMHS Services (Child and Adolescent Mental Health services) have increased significantly. In West Oxfordshire the percentage of young people seen within 12 weeks has decreased from 78% in May 2017 to only 54% in December 2017. This is the second lowest rate in Oxfordshire where on average 66% of patients are seen within 12 weeks.

**Lifestyles and wider determinants of health**

Across Oxfordshire as a whole, participation in sport is consistently above the prevailing rate nationally. However, there has been an apparent decline in participation in sport in recent years. The percentage of the adult population playing sport at least three times a week (this was reported as 27.7% in 2008 and at 24.5% in 2016 (however, the difference in the survey based data may not be statistically significant).

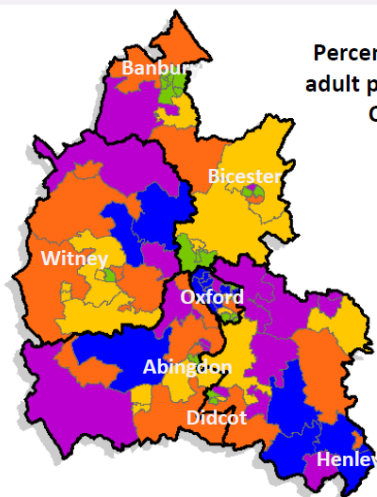
Although the general health position is favourable, there are some issues where the position could be better. This is true in the sphere of lifestyles and behaviours that contribute as wider determinants of health. There is a variation in the level of physical activity across the District. The monitoring data on this that is reported through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the work undertaken through Active Oxfordshire provides data analysis that can help inform targeted work to improve physical activity.

The most recent JSNA (2019) analysis shows that 71.9% of adults in West Oxfordshire achieved the recommended level of physical activity (2016/17) (this is the third highest of the Oxfordshire districts – behind Oxford (74.0%) and Vale of White Horse (73.1%) and is above the overall Oxfordshire level (70.1%); South East region (68.9%) and England level (66.0%). At the time of the JSNA 2019 analysis, trends were not yet available for this data.

There is variation in physical activity levels within districts. The estimated data indicates that the proportion of people aged 16+ meeting adult physical activity guidelines tends to be higher in more affluent areas of the county (see chart)

## There is variation in physical activity levels within districts

These estimates are calculated using the same data as local authority figures (previous page), but use adults **aged 16+** as their population. They report the proportion of people meeting CMO physical activity guidelines for adults (150 minutes per week). Current CMO guidelines for 16-18 year olds recommend at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of physical activity per day.



Percentage of people aged 16+ meeting adult physical activity recommendations, Oxfordshire MSOAs, 2016/17

- These estimates indicate that the proportion of people aged 16+ meeting adult physical activity guidelines tends to be higher in more affluent areas of the county
- Percentages are lowest in the south of Oxford (Blackbird Leys, Northfield Brook, Littlemore) and Banbury (Ruscote and Neithrop)

Source: [Small area estimates](#), Sport England  
 Source: [CMO Physical Activity Guidelines](#), Department of Health and Social Care  
 Mapping by Oxford City Council, © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. Ordnance Survey 100019348

Excess weight in adults is recognised as a major determinant of premature mortality and avoidable ill health. The JSNA 2019 outlines that an estimated 54.7% of adults were classified as overweight or obese in 2016/17 (Oxfordshire level: 56.0%; South East Region: 59.7%; England: 61.3%).

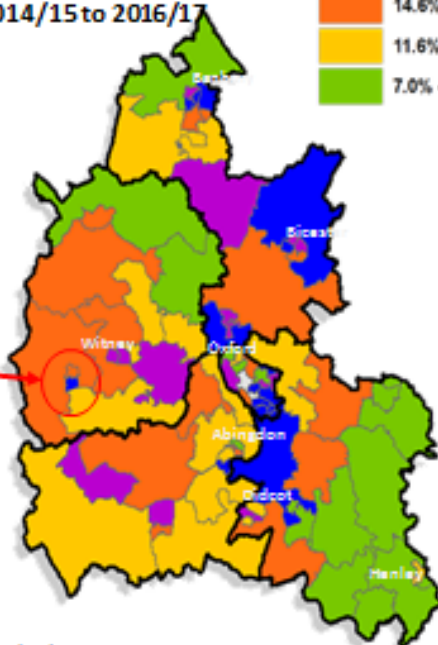
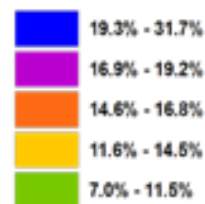
For young people, the latest JSNA (2019) analysis shows that the obesity rate for year 6 children in West Oxfordshire has remained the same with variable rates across the district (see chart) and therefore remains an area of concern.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Obesity rate for year 6 children in West Oxfordshire has remained the same; rates vary across the district

- Data at national level shows that obesity prevalence is considerably higher in children from more deprived areas
- In 2017/18 there were 165 children aged 10 or 11 in West Oxfordshire measured as obese
- This was a rate of 14%, the same as in 2007/08, 10 years previously
- The highest rate (for 2014/15 to 2016/17) was in South Carterton (22%) and the lowest were the Enstone area (10%) and Woodstock (10.5%)

Obesity prevalence %  
Year 6 (age 10-11)  
2014/15 to 2016/17



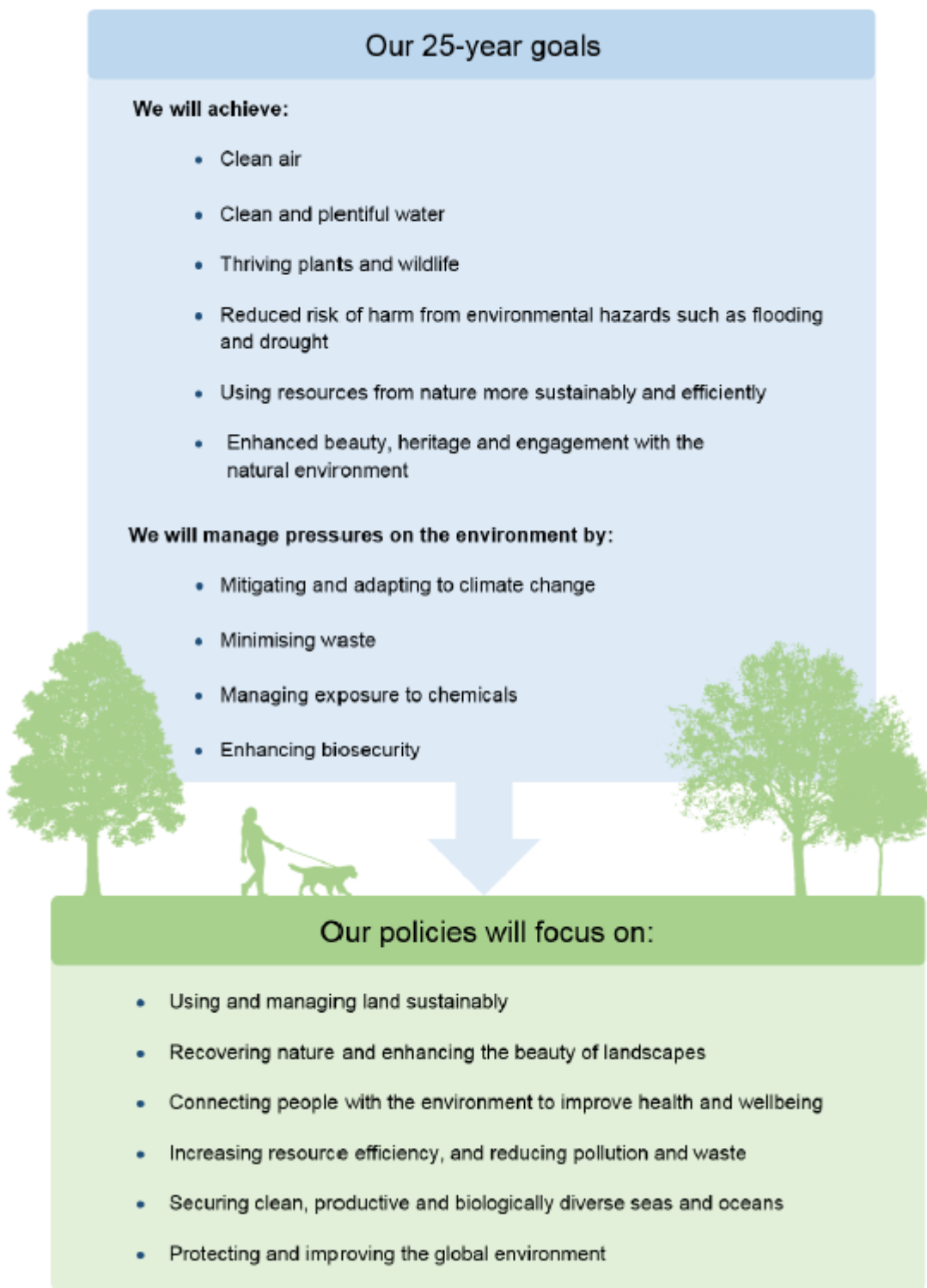
For the most up to date information about obesity in children in Oxfordshire districts, visit the [Public Health Surveillance Dashboard](#). For ward level data, visit the Oxfordshire [Health Inequalities Basket of Indicators](#).

England

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## Environment - National and Local Policy Context

The national strategic context for our work in addressing key environmental and climate change concerns is framed in the Government's 25 year Environment Plan. This establishes a range of important goals and an environmental policy focus. A brief outline taken from the Government's Environment Plan shows the important goals and policy focus that have been established:



Source: A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (HM Government 2018)

The Council recognises West Oxfordshire's high quality environment and has sought to protect and enhance this through Local Plan policies and allocations and through associated development management and through a range of relevant strategic environmental work and partnership activity. In future, key parts of this work will be our strategy on carbon reduction and climate change and our consultative work to deliver a waste and resources strategy.

A part of our future strategic environmental work has been considered recently through review work reported to our Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (December 2018) – a Low Carbon and Environmental Plan – Biodiversity. This report has advanced our future approach and paved the way for biodiversity issues to be more effectively encompassed in our work. The report and the proposed review and update of our Low Carbon and Environmental Plan will help us address our commitments under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) and recent changes/ publications – including the Government's 25 Year Plan and the adoption of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (containing environmental and biodiversity policies).

There are other significant areas of environmental strategy work that we will need to advance over the coming Council Plan period. This work will include low carbon and climate change strategic initiatives and work to complement DEFRA's Waste and Resources strategy. The Council is developing an Action plan to reduce Single Use Plastics and will also develop a more strategic plan to consider the strands across multiple services which can contribute to a reduction in carbon. The low carbon and climate change strategic initiatives will be informed in part by the emerging Oxfordshire Energy Strategy. Led by Ox LEP, the strategy is aligned to the Government's Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy with the aim for Oxfordshire to be at the forefront of energy innovation to foster clean growth

Over time, the Council has undertaken various partnership work that has been focused on environmental project work - there will be scope to maintain and develop this activity with a range of partner interests. This work includes our engagement as a partner in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); the Wychwood Project; the Windrush in Witney project work; and the Lower Windrush Valley Project.

There has been a significant focus on practical environmental services continue to deliver strong results. The Council is ranked as one of the best authorities in the country for recycling and there has been a significant ongoing effort in promoting recycling and reducing the amount of waste, whilst keeping the District clean.

### **Natural environment (Local Plan extract)**

The District has a rich natural environment with around 34% of the area falling within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Land on the eastern edge of the District falls within the Oxford Green Belt and at Cassington Meadows there is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) of European importance. There are also a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) areas of Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Sites. There is however an acknowledged need to further

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enhance and extend habitats to develop networks and a series of Conservation Target Areas has been identified where the restoration and enhancement of habitats would have the greatest benefit.

There are several rivers flowing through West Oxfordshire which are important corridors for biodiversity, provide opportunities for recreation and form part of the setting of many towns and villages. However they also present a flood risk, with severe flooding events affecting many communities in 2007.

West Oxfordshire contains some extensive sand and gravel and limestone resources particularly in the southern half of the District, focused on the Lower Windrush Valley which has seen extensive mineral extraction for a number of years. The District Council continues to engage with the County Council as mineral planning authority in relation to the overall strategy for future sand and gravel extraction in the County as guided by the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

The after-use of mineral sites presents the opportunity for leisure and tourism uses as well as creating opportunities for nature reserves but it is vital that mineral extraction is properly managed in order to protect environmental quality and public amenity and to help ameliorate flood risk.

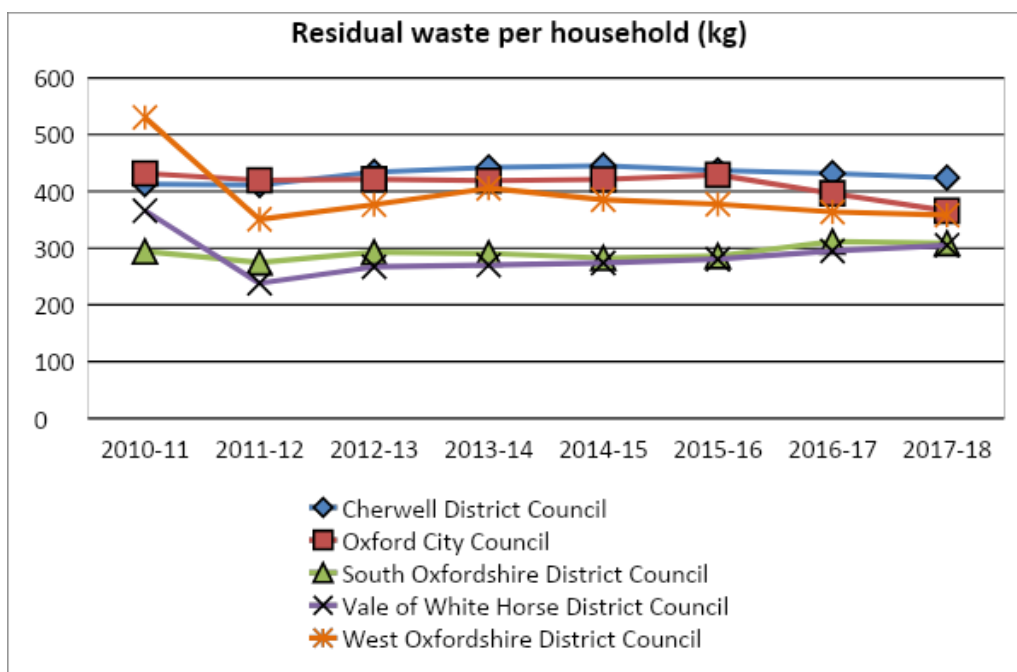
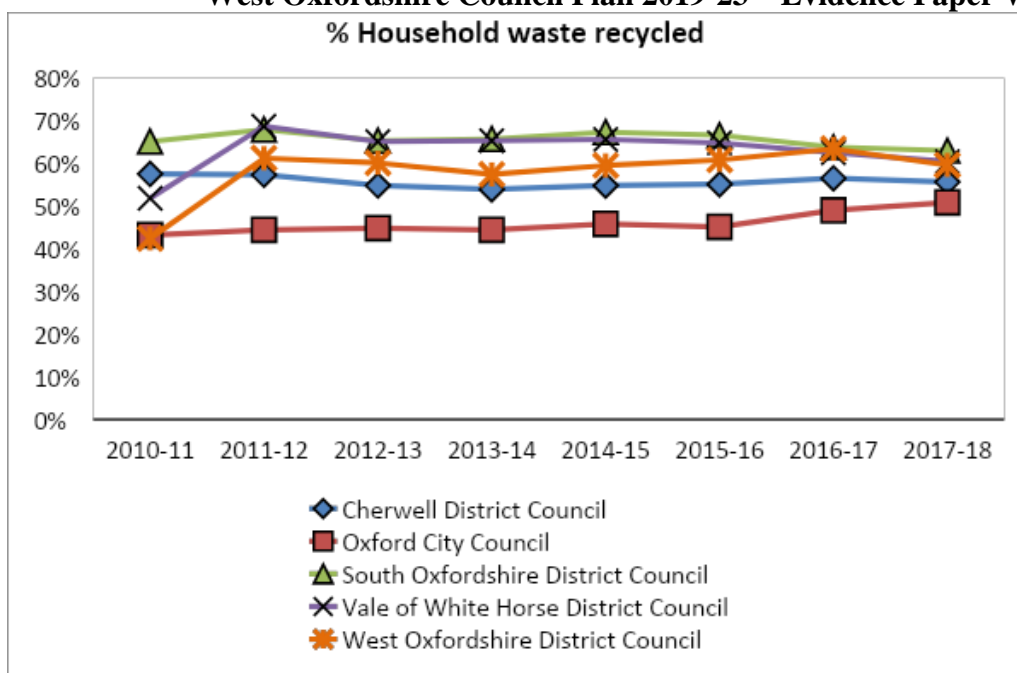
**Environment – air quality**

West Oxfordshire has two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). The latest report on air quality in the District (June 2018) indicates that the levels of nitrogen dioxide at Chipping Norton and Witney AQMAs remain higher than the national objective level. Concentrations outside of the AQMAs are below the objectives at relevant locations (Source: Local Plan Monitoring Report 2017-18 – Reported to Cabinet, March 2019).

**Waste and recycling**

West Oxfordshire District achieves a high composting and recycling rate placing it at 12<sup>th</sup> in England from April 2017 to March 2018 despite the challenges of delivering the service in a rural district.







**Management of all Local Authority collected waste financial year figures in England 2013/14 to 2017/18 (thousand tonnes)**

Waste disposal method	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2017/18 % change over 2016/17
Landfill	7,933	6,361	5,133	4,136	3,213	-22.3%
Recycled / composted of which:-	10,931	11,067	11,065	11,252	10,860	-3.5%
Household waste	9,980	10,117	10,075	10,329	9,980	-3.4%
Non household waste	950	950	990	923	880	-4.7%
Total Incineration of which:-	6,245	7,798	9,259	10,169	10,834	6.5%
Incineration with EfW	6,204	7,773	9,067	9,946	10,620	6.8%
Incineration without EfW <sup>1</sup>	41	25	192	224	214	-4.1%
Other	537	589	668	761	719	-5.5%
<b>Total local authority waste managed</b>	<b>25,645</b>	<b>25,816</b>	<b>26,124</b>	<b>26,319</b>	<b>25,626</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>
Recycled / composted waste as a percent of total	42.6%	42.9%	42.4%	42.8%	42.4%	-0.4 percentage points

Defra's Our Waste, Our Resources: Strategy for England published in December 2018 sets out how the national strategy to preserve the country's stock of material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. At the same time there will be an emphasis on minimising the damage caused to our natural environment by reducing and managing waste safely and carefully, and by tackling waste crime. Building on the commitments in the Strategy, the government is consulting on significant reform of waste and recycling services. There have been four key areas being consulted on: Reform of the extended producer responsibility scheme; the potential to deliver greater consistency of waste services; Deposit Return Schemes and Plastic packaging tax.

Each of these consultations could lead to significant financial and service model changes which will directly impact upon the waste services local councils deliver. In particular, the simplification of the existing recycling system in which there will be a consistent set of recyclable materials collected from all households and businesses. These will include separate weekly food waste collections for every household in England and could include free garden waste collections for households with gardens.

To support the implementation of Defra's Strategy and to supersede the outdated Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy the Council have adopted Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Strategy 2018-23. The strategy has been developed on behalf of all Oxfordshire local authorities through the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP).

The next 25 years will see rapid change for Oxfordshire in population and housing growth. The types of waste and the way in which we collect and manage waste are expected to change over time as technology innovation transforms society and organisations. Attitudes towards global and local waste issues will evolve and manufacturers will adapt by seeking to make their products more sustainable. The strategy is bold and ambitious. We want to continue to be amongst the very best in the country, helping economic and population growth while using our resources sustainably.

The three aims of the strategy are

- Keep household waste growth to zero (per person, per year)
- Increase the amount of household waste we recycle to 70% by 2030

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- Send less than 3% of our household waste to landfill by 2020

*The Council resolves to work towards elimination of all avoidable plastic waste and calls upon the Cabinet Member for Environment to bring forward proposals by Spring 2019 to:*

- *Phase out the use of avoidable Single Use Plastics (SUPs) in all District Council premises*
- *Work with UBICO, PUBLICA and contracted partners to end purchase and procurement of avoidable SUPs through the Council's supply chain*

### **Carbon emissions and fuel poverty**

The UK is committed to reducing carbon emissions by 57% by 2032 and a reduction of 80% by 2050. The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy (currently under development) sets a strategic objective to lead nationally and internationally to reduce countywide carbon emissions by 50% compared to 2008 levels and set a pathway to achieve zero carbon growth by 2050. It also aims to secure a smart, modern, clean energy infrastructure which supports the planned housing, industrial and commercial growth and changing energy requirements. Energy used for transport remains the highest energy consumer across the county. In West Oxfordshire district, transport contributes 225.5 ktCO<sub>2</sub> of carbon emissions due to the rurality of the district, 208.5 ktCO<sub>2</sub> from Industry and Commerce and 195.3 ktCO<sub>2</sub> from Domestic demand. West Oxfordshire district has 5.6 tonnes of carbon emission per person. The national average is 5.9 tonnes and the county average is 6.6 tonnes per person. The transition to low carbon will be achieved by supporting innovative and clean generation projects in both rural and urban areas and reducing the energy demand and improve the energy efficiency for domestic, commercial and industrial buildings and transport.

In England, 11.1% of all English households are in fuel poverty. In West Oxfordshire, 7.6% of households are considered to be fuel poor compared to 8.7% of households in Oxfordshire. Fuel poverty is measured in England using the low income-high cost definition, which states that a household is in fuel poverty if: their income is below the poverty line (taking into account energy costs) and; their energy costs are higher than is typical for their household type. Fuel poor households are likely to be living in properties with the lowest energy ratings (Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) E, F or G), many fuel poor households are living in the private rented sector and are considered to be vulnerable households containing children, the elderly or someone with a long term illness or disability. The rural nature of West Oxfordshire means it has the highest number of postcodes that are off the gas grid in Oxfordshire. The homes are heated using expensive fuels such as oil or electrical heating. Also 30% of West Oxfordshire's dwellings have poor energy performance (an EPC of E or below). These factors combined contribute to some of the rural fuel poverty in West Oxfordshire.

Data sources:

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. 2018. Local Authority CO<sub>2</sub> emissions estimates 2005-2016 (kt CO<sub>2</sub>) – Full datasets. [Online] [Accessed April 2019] Available <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2016>

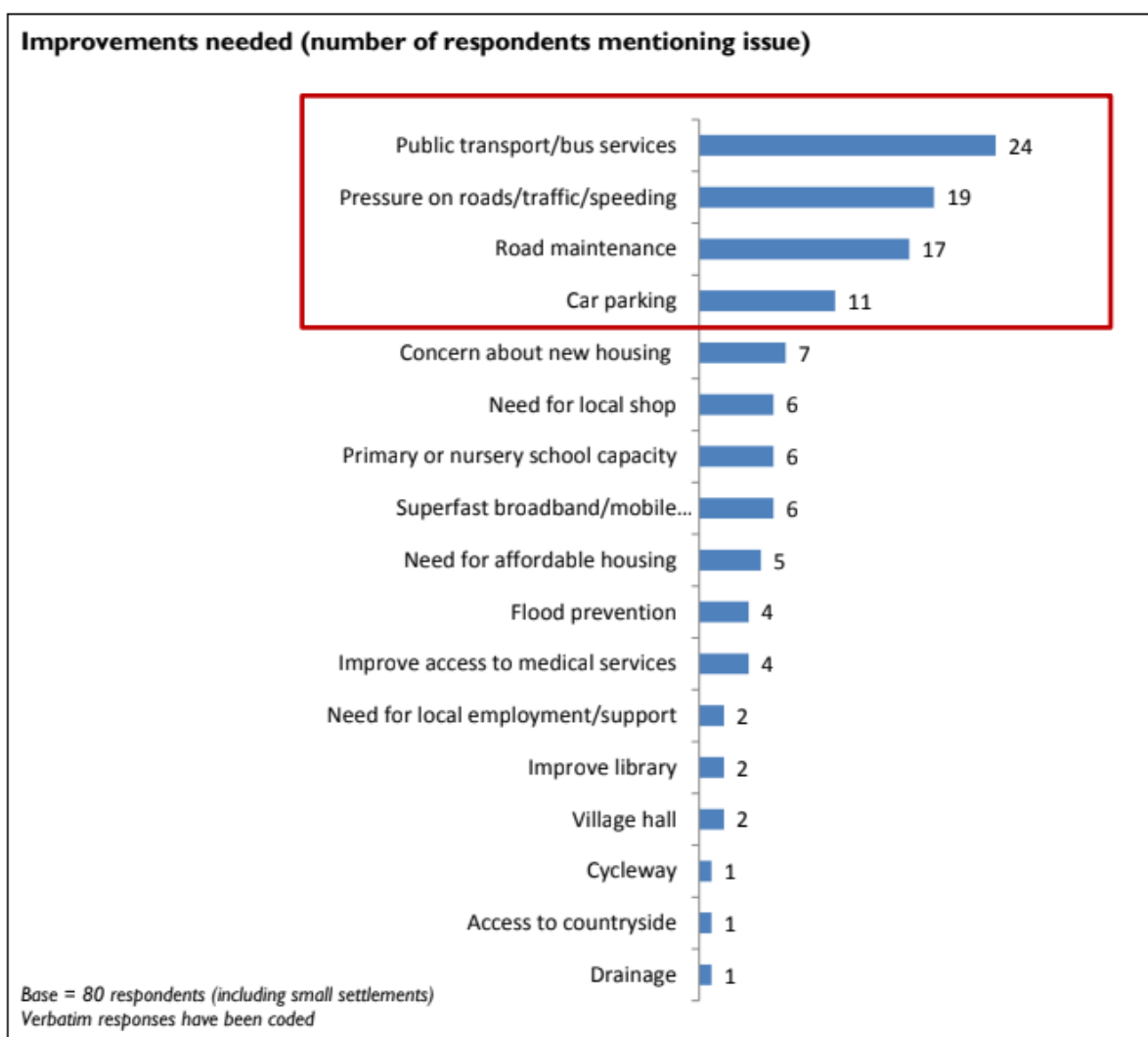
OxLEP. 2019. Oxfordshire Energy Strategy. [Online] [Accessed April 2019] Available <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/energystrategy>

National Energy Action. 2019. Fuel Poverty Statistics [Online] [Accessed April 2109] Available <https://www.nea.org.uk/about-nea/fuel-poverty-statistics/>

## Social and community issues

The background evidence assembled in support of West Oxfordshire's Local Plan has set out a range of positive and negative issues, opportunities and challenges facing communities in the District (an extract from our Local Plan is included below).

A recent survey of parishes (2016) has highlighted community concerns at the loss of bus services following the removal of bus subsidies that coincided with the timing of the survey. At the time of the survey, 24 parish responses commented on significant reductions in bus services and 19 others mentioned a general lack of bus services. The residents that respondents believe are most affected by the withdrawal of bus service subsidies included shoppers,; people getting to college or work; non-driving residents; and older people. The range of concerns listed as issues where improvement is needed are shown in the chart below.



Source: Local Plan Parish Survey (July 2016)

The Council held a liaison meeting with Town and Parish Councils/ Meetings in March 2019 to help inform the development of the new Council Plan. One of the points emerging from the session was a strong interest in further communication and engagement on key issues and an interest in an increased

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interaction. The session also corroborated the local challenges and opportunities facing communities across the different communities in West Oxfordshire – see below for an aggregated summary of the more frequently cited issues (a full capture of points raised has also been retained and was distributed to Parishes following the session).

**Parish Event (March 2019) – summary of issues raised**

	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>Social and Community</b>	Support for community groups House prices Correct types of houses Funding for improving infrastructure Infrastructure not matching population growth (school places etc) Ageing population Development process and community engagement Community facilities Retention of RAF personnel retirement (aero industry)	Working with town and parish councils  Community initiatives – shops, pubs, shared transport  Investment in Carterton  Communities underpinned by diverse businesses - resilience
<b>Economy</b>	Villages – support for people working from home Locating employment sites in the right areas Encouragement of small businesses Employment out of the area Availability of local employment Creation of enough local jobs to match population growth Lack of public transport Lack of funds Affordable housing Deprivation in an area of affluence Increasing population Proximity to other centres	Tourism  Carterton/ Brize Norton  Encourage more businesses to towns  Community ownership of shops/ pubs  University proximity – science corridor  Business support
<b>Environment</b>	Protecting the countryside and providing open spaces Air pollution A40/ road network Public transport links Flooding Pressure on the natural environment Green space loss Housing/ infrastructure – managing growth Drugs – County lines activity Rurality – service issues (social care/ ambulance service)	Improving sustainability with all new build  Tourism – including Thames based  Community involvement/ initiatives  Parks and green spaces/ walks  Recycling  Management of green space
<b>Connectivity and access</b>	Poor transport due to reduced funding Bus routes closing	Free parking  Joined up public transport for bus

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	<p>No buses from villages to Carterton</p> <p>Need to reinstate railway connections through Witney</p> <p>Distance to essential services</p> <p>The A40 State of road repair Broadband access/ slow and interrupted connections</p> <p>Villages on periphery of District gain less focus.</p> <p>Closure of village resources – banks, post offices, shops, pubs</p> <p>Digital services – increasing use of online services</p> <p>Infrastructure for new housing</p>	<p>and train services</p> <p>Uber type approach to community transport</p> <p>Electric car charging points</p> <p>Being more creative</p>
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### Voluntary and community sector

In 2018, Oxfordshire County Council requested that the Local Government Association (LGA) undertake a Peer Challenge of the Council’s relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). The peer challenge was to be used as a marker on the state of the relationships and how they can be improved as the public sector moves forward in the county. The peer challenge provided an overview of the state of the VCS sector in the county and the extent and adequacy of the enabling support that is provided to the sector.

The LGA Peer challenge recognised that Oxfordshire benefits from thriving local communities - it commented: “Oxfordshire society is active, with an estimated 4,500 voluntary and community organisations in the county. There are 2,301 registered organisations which represents 2% of the national figure of active registered voluntary organisations. This is a significantly higher proportion than the national average. There is a vibrant parish and town sector giving voice to local communities as well as, in many cases, providing important local services”.

At a County level, the level of provision of core infrastructure provision that supports VCS activities is relatively thin compared to what could reasonably be viewed as what is needed in Oxfordshire (this point is covered in the findings arising in Oxfordshire County Council’s Voluntary and Community Sector: LGA Peer Challenge Report , March 2018). The LGA Report comments on a “jigsaw of VCS engagement and support that is generic, fractured and confusing”.

West Oxfordshire District itself has a strong voluntary and community sector – the District Council works in partnership with a host of VCS bodies across a wide range of policy priorities. The Council has protected its grant funding budgets available to support local VCS bodies through the recent years of financial challenge.

## Local Plan – key issues and challenges summary

The Local Plan sets out a summary of key issues and challenges based on the profile of the District and relevant background information. The resulting SWOC analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges) is included here as it informs the Council Plan).

**West Oxfordshire – Strengths/ Weaknesses/ Opportunities/ Challenges**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Central, accessible location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality environment – landscape, built heritage and biodiversity</li> <li>• Strong sense of place</li> <li>• Generally good place to live with a high quality of life</li> <li>• Strong and articulate community groups</li> <li>• Generally vibrant town centres, particularly Witney</li> <li>• Strong and diverse local economy including many small businesses, specialisms in high-tech manufacturing and engineering plus RAF Brize Norton</li> <li>• Relatively skilled workforce with no major skills gaps although perhaps lacking in some technical skills</li> <li>• High rates of economic activity and low unemployment</li> <li>• No significant areas of dereliction</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Cotswolds - important tourism sector with nationally important attractions</li> <li>• Blenheim World Heritage site</li> <li>• Good variety of formal and informal leisure opportunities</li> <li>• High levels of owner-occupation</li> <li>• Reasonable level of self-containment (about 65%)</li> <li>• Two railway lines and inter-urban bus routes</li> <li>• Reasonably well-balanced population in terms of different age groups</li> <li>• A generally healthy population</li> <li>• Extensive sand and gravel resources provide a local source of construction aggregate to support future growth</li> <li>• High rates of home working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out-commuting and reliance on the private car and rural road network</li> <li>• Severe traffic congestion in Witney and on Oxford approach roads, particularly A40 east of Witney</li> <li>• Air quality problems within Witney and Chipping Norton</li> <li>• Limited public transport in more rural areas</li> <li>• Districts three main towns are not directly served by rail</li> <li>• Lack of direct access from the primary road network to Carterton</li> <li>• Imbalance between jobs and homes in Carterton with a consequent high level of commuting</li> <li>• Limited opportunities for safe travel by foot or cycle outside main towns such as where routes are adjacent to roads</li> <li>• Disturbance from activity at RAF Brize Norton</li> <li>• House prices higher than the national average and very high in some areas</li> <li>• A predominance of larger properties exacerbates problems of housing affordability</li> <li>• Some rural areas have poor access to services and facilities plus trend for loss/closure of rural services</li> <li>• Limited access to high speed broadband</li> <li>• Small pockets of rural poverty with lower wages for workers in West Oxon compared to those travelling to work elsewhere</li> <li>• Generally limited or no spare capacity in existing primary schools</li> <li>• Many areas and communities affected by flooding, particular in the south of the District</li> <li>• Only just above average rates of educational attainment</li> <li>• Very few large multinational companies</li> <li>• Some older employment areas in need of investment/redevelopment</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Challenges
<p>Address traffic congestion on the A40 between Witney and Oxford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising design standards across the District</li> <li>• New development to help secure increased affordable housing provision as well as new and improved supporting infrastructure, including green infrastructure</li> <li>• To attract additional inward investment and achieve a more self-contained local economy</li> <li>• Further investment at RAF Brize Norton</li> <li>• Regenerating areas of MOD housing in Carterton</li> <li>• Capitalising on and contributing to the Oxfordshire high tech and knowledge economy including the provision of a new 'science park' north of the A40 near Eynsham</li> <li>• Improvements in internet and mobile phone technology</li> <li>• New sustainable construction methods and renewable energy schemes</li> <li>• Investment in town centres</li> <li>• Biodiversity Conservation Target Areas</li> <li>• Biomass and woodland management</li> </ul> <p>Sustainable drainage schemes to reduce flood risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further enhance and expand habitats and networks</li> <li>• Provision of new green infrastructure through after-use of mineral working</li> <li>• Improvements in public transport, walking and cycling facilities to help reduce the use of the private car</li> <li>• Provision of primary road connection between Carterton/RAF Brize Norton and the A40</li> <li>• Provision of major road infrastructure improvements to facilitate future growth</li> <li>• Further develop the District's tourism offer</li> <li>• Further develop the role of the Thames for leisure and recreation</li> <li>• To further increase levels of home working to reduce the need to travel</li> <li>• To increase opportunities for those wishing to self-build their own home</li> <li>• Increased access to, understanding and enhancement of the historic environment</li> </ul>	<p>Housing affordability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The delivery of historically high, for West Oxfordshire, housing targets given the local track record of the development industry</li> <li>• A relatively 'tight' labour market (i.e. employers must compete for employees)</li> <li>• An ageing population</li> <li>• Meeting the needs of local communities with access to services and facilities whilst maintaining West Oxfordshire's high environmental quality</li> <li>• Provision of a mix of different housing types to meet the needs of different groups including young people, families, older people and those wishing to self-build</li> <li>• Reduction in our higher than average carbon footprint</li> <li>• Reducing dependence upon travel by private car including long distance travel to main urban centres including London</li> <li>• Pressures from economic growth centres close to West Oxfordshire including the Oxfordshire 'knowledge spine'</li> <li>• Helping meet Oxford City's unmet housing needs</li> </ul> <p>Climate change – extreme weather events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood risk</li> <li>• Water scarcity</li> <li>• Use of Greenfield land to meet development needs</li> <li>• Satisfactorily accommodating and benefitting from the expansion of RAF Brize Norton</li> <li>• Modernisation of older employment stock</li> <li>• Supporting the agricultural sector and diversification of the rural economy</li> <li>• Mitigating the impacts of sand and gravel extraction</li> <li>• Roll out of superfast broadband in rural areas</li> <li>• Increasing physical activity</li> <li>• Improving rates of educational achievement</li> <li>• A number of designated heritage assets considered to be at risk</li> </ul>



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Name and date of Committee	<b>ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 10</b>
Subject	<b>BRIEFING ON THE OXFORDSHIRE ENERGY STRATEGY</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Norman MacRae Cabinet Member for Environment Email: <a href="mailto:norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk">norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Claire Locke (Group Manager – Commissioning) Tel: 01285 623427 Email: <a href="mailto:Claire.locke@publicagroup.org">Claire.locke@publicagroup.org</a>
Summary/Purpose	<p>a) To highlight the recently published county wide Energy Strategy in underpinning planned housing and economic growth, and in setting the agenda for growing the county’s low carbon sector.</p> <p>b) To set out the background to the strategy, why it is important, and how it will support the ambitions of the Growth Board.</p> <p>c) To highlight the Strategy’s delivery plan themes and work streams for the Council to consider in the development of the future Climate Change Action Plan.</p>
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex A – energy strategy delivery plan – emerging themes and work streams</a>
Recommendation	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
Corporate priorities	<p>Corporate aim to ‘protect and enhance the environment of West Oxfordshire and maintain the district as a clean, beautiful place with low levels of crime and nuisance’.</p> <p>Reducing the Council’s own impact on climate change and supporting local residents, businesses and groups in reducing their impact and adapting to climate change.</p>
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	



## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funded all Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) to prepare Energy Strategies for their areas to support the Industrial Strategy in August 2017. The development of the Oxfordshire strategy has been led by the OxLEP in collaboration with an energy strategy steering group. The steering group included OxLEP, Thames Water, Low Carbon Hub, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford, OxLEP Business, Culham Science Centre, Oxford Bus Company, Scottish and Southern Energy Network (SSEN), British Gas and Oxfordshire Growth Board.
- 1.2. The Growth Board is a key stakeholder in the energy strategy (with representation on the project steering group). In addition, the County Council's Energy Strategy Team and the City and District Councils' Energy Officers have all provided significant support to the project.
- 1.3. Oxfordshire is entering a period of rapid planned growth, alongside a period of innovation and disruptive technological change. The Energy Strategy builds on the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy and provides a strategic framework for energy investment across Oxfordshire.
- 1.4. The Energy Strategy will support delivery of the Growth Deal by:
- Seeking to address grid constraints so the electricity grid meets the needs of the new homes and businesses committed through the Housing and Growth Deal.
  - Setting the framework for an innovation, local smart energy network which will make the best use of our existing infrastructure and avoid much of the need for expensive network reinforcement to meet increased demand.
  - Driving economic growth – high ambition for low carbon alongside our planned growth could create an additional 11,000 jobs and add £1.3 billion pa to Oxfordshire economy by 2030<sup>1</sup>. The low carbon sector already accounts for 7% of the local economy and we have existing strategic advantage in low carbon industry – particularly automotive, building technologies and renewables.
- 1.5. The strategy sets three objectives which together create a framework for future investment priorities:
- Secure a smart, modern, clean energy infrastructure – including increased electricity grid capacity – which supports Oxfordshire's planned housing, industrial and commercial growth, and changing energy requirements;
  - Enhance existing energy networking and partnership working to focus on the low carbon energy challenges and funding opportunities arising from the Clean Growth Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> University of Oxford Environmental Change Institute and Low Carbon Oxford, 2014, Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Economy. <http://lowcarbonoxford.org/reports/oxfordshires-low-carbon-economy/>

- Lead national and internationally to reduce countywide emissions by 50% compared with 2008 levels by 2030 and set a pathway to achieve zero carbon growth by 2050. The economic benefits of this low carbon transition will be realised by supporting:
  - Ambitious and innovative clean generation projects across the county, both in urban and rural areas, and in growth locations;
  - Projects that reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency for domestic, industrial, commercial buildings and transport energy.

**1.6.** The approach to delivery leverages the Oxfordshire energy community's strengths, and focuses on:

- Innovation and learning – using the concept of Living Labs, which are being developed through the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy and linked to new housing settlements including garden towns and villages, to provide a space to trial and demonstrate proof of concept.
- Supporting delivery through:
  - Policy and regulatory frameworks which make and shape markets;
  - Sharing best practice; and
  - Engaging with the delivery chain.
- Coordination to increase impact and influence.

**1.7.** Coordination and partnership working are key to delivering the strategy. Whilst effective programme and project management and collective oversight will be needed to steer and prioritise, the end result will be achieved through a multitude of autonomous projects. A rigorous review process will monitor progress against our objectives and prioritise areas for further action and investment.

**1.8.** The Energy Strategy extends across all sectors, power, heat and transport. The projects and actions needed to meet the objectives fall onto key themes which reflect this and will be delivered through a range of interdependent, mutually supporting work streams. [Figure 1](#) provides a schematic overview – there will be many interconnections and cross fertilisation between the work streams. Actions will be required across the full spectrum.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

**2.1.** The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy has now been published on the OxLEP website at the following link <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/energystategy> and is due to be launched later this Autumn (a date to be confirmed). The resourcing for the delivery of the Energy Strategy has not been confirmed by OxLEP.

**2.2.** Cabinet will be asked to endorse the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy at its meeting on 16 October 2019. The Committee may choose to comment.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None associated with this report

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None associated with this report

**5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**5.1.** None associated with this report.

**6. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS (IF REQUIRED)**

**6.1.** The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy themes and work streams will be influential in the development of WODC's Climate Change Action Plan and will be considered by the Climate Change Working Group.

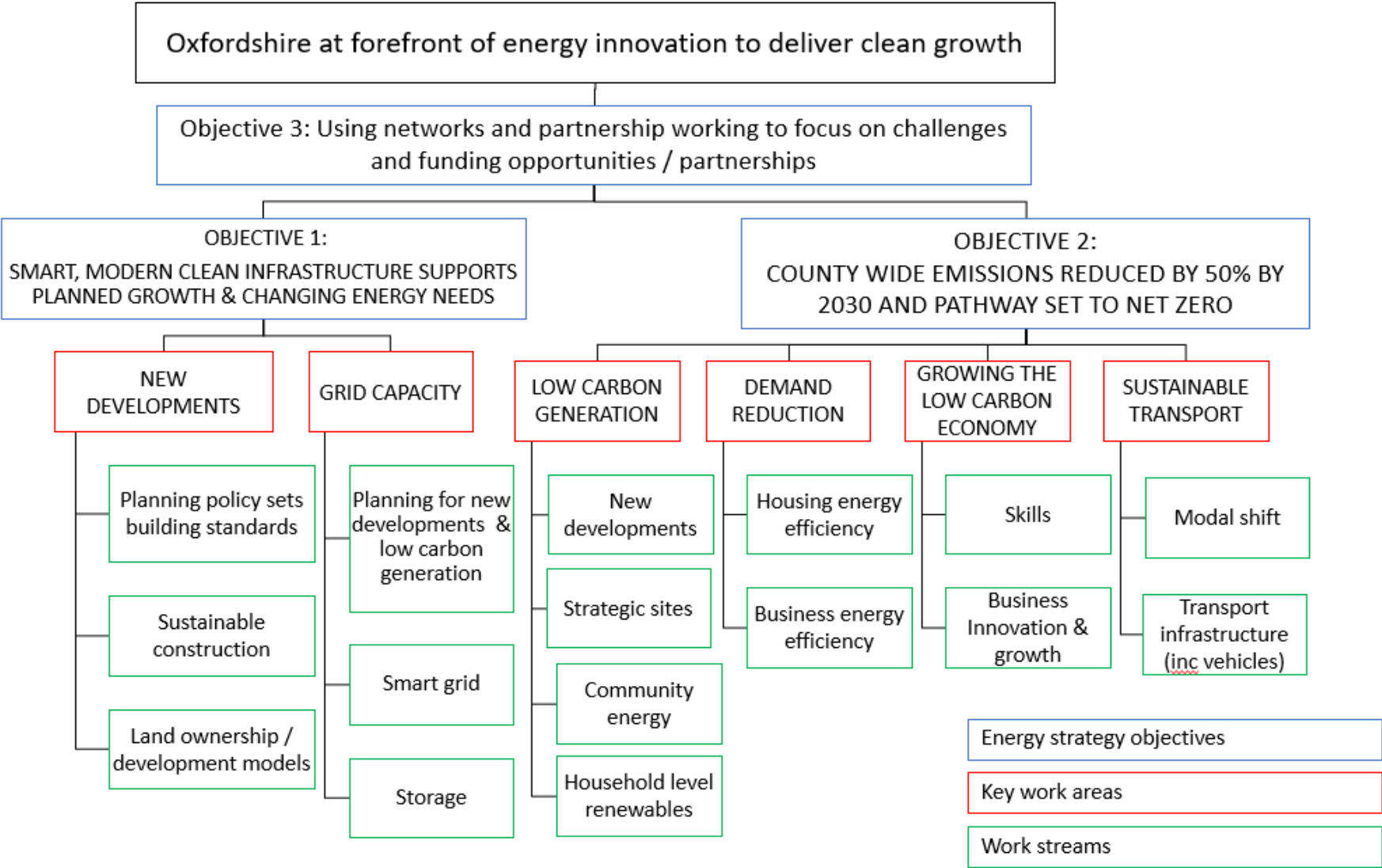
**7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

None associated with this report.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPER**

**9.1** None

Figure 1 Energy strategy delivery plan –emerging themes and work streams





WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Name and date of Committee	<b>ENVIRONMENT O&amp;S COMMITTEE – 10 OCTOBER 2019</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM 11</b>
Subject	<b>MARKETS UPDATE</b>
Wards affected	Witney, Chipping Norton
Accountable member	Cllr Norman MacRae Cabinet Member for Environment
Accountable officer	Mr Matthew Kirby – Business Manager – Environment Services
Summary/Purpose	In 2012, the Council had established a small team of Members and Officers to conduct a review of the Council's Markets. The project team's report was considered by the Cabinet in September 2013 and various initiatives were put in place. At a recent Committee meeting Councillor Harvey noted that the Witney Market appeared to be somewhat less vibrant as of late and it was AGREED that the Committee should receive a report on the way in which the recommendations of the review had been carried forward. Councillor Coles suggested that this work should be extended to give consideration to the operation of the Witney Farmers Market which also appeared to be in decline.
Annexes	Annex A – Memo from Ron Spurs dated 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2014
Recommendation/s	<i>a) That the Committee notes the updates provided in the report. b) That the Committee considers the options provided in the report.</i>
Corporate priorities	1. Protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy 2. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	YES
Consultees/ Consultation	N/A

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1.** West Oxfordshire District Council has a responsibility for managing the Charter Markets at Witney and Chipping Norton. There is also an independently operated Farmers Market in Witney which operates on the last Friday of each month.
- 1.2.** The Council exercises no control over the Farmers Market as this is privately run.
- 1.3.** The management of the Charter Markets was transferred from Finance based at WODC to Public Protection in 2012, which subsequently became part of the shared ERS service in 2016.
- 1.4.** Prior to the transfer to ERS the markets were left very much to their own devices. Two part time market superintendents (one at Chipping Norton and one at Witney), supervised the collection of Fees from traders and supervised day to day operations. Since ERS took control the superintendents no longer operate, and fees are collected using invoiced subscription. One technical officer oversees the markets approximately 1 day per week. This includes fee collection, pitch management and gazebo maintenance/replacement.
- 1.5.** In 2013 the then Head of Community Services carried out a review of markets in Witney. The report highlighted a number of recommendations and set implementation dates. A summary of the current position is provided below;

Recommendation	Date	2019 Update
1. Continue to operate the Witney Charter Market weekly on a Thursday and Saturday	Aug 2013	Complete
2. Provide opportunities for specialist markets in Witney throughout the year	Dec 2013	Complete and Ongoing
3. Endorse the refurbishment of the Market Square in Witney	Aug 2013	Complete
4. Re-brand the Witney Market, calling it 'Witney Buttercross Market'	Aug 2013	Complete
5. Develop a marketing and communications plan for Markets in West Oxfordshire	Nov 2013	Not Completed
6. Explore the options for permanent signage to promote Witney Markets	Nov 2013	Not Completed
7. Launch the 'First Pitch' market trader scheme run by the National Market Traders Federation	Nov 2013	Not Completed
8. Support the Love your local market campaign	Ongoing	Ongoing
9. Support the Real Deal national charter scheme	TBD	Not Completed
10. Achieve National Charter Status run by the National Market Traders	TBD	Not Completed

Federation		
11. Review the implementation of the adopted review recommendations	June 2014	Completed – Memo from Ron Spurs to Kate Bishop on 8/9/14 – attached at Appendix 2.
12. Give consideration to the future management of markets in Witney and West Oxfordshire	Oct 2013	Limited review has taken place since Mr Spurs memo of 8/9/14
13. Review the Council street trading policy	Oct 2014	The policy was reviewed in 2015 and will be due for further review in 2020
14. Give consideration to operating Witney Farmers Market on a Saturday	Oct 2013	This was suggested but the operator wished to keep the markets separate

- 1.6.** A number of tasks were not completed by the Public Protection team at WODC – this was prior to the hand over to ERS so it is difficult for the author to comment. The final report of progress appears to be the memo written by Mr Spurs in 2014 attached in Appendix 1. His recommendations were made before the transfer to ERS and appear to centre around the disposal of the Markets.
- 1.7.** The Charter Markets were transferred to ERS in 2016. Since transfer the service has sought to deliver a basic administrative service which includes the collection of fees, and provision and maintenance of the gazebos.
- 1.8.** Commercial waste has historically been collected from the markets – however this is likely to be withdrawn subject to an impending cabinet decision. The existing market rules state that traders should dispose of their own waste.
- 1.9.** No resource provision has been made for the strategic assessment and review of the Charter Markets.

## **2. CURRENT POSITION**

- 2.1.** The twice weekly Charter Market at Witney sells a variety of food, produce, sweets, flowers, stationary and gifts. The market square has a capacity for 30 stalls 3mx3m. Currently there are 20 pitches let on a Thursday and 21 on a Saturday. The number of pitches does not reflect the number of stall holders, as some take more than one pitch.
- 2.2.** The Charter Market at Chipping Norton sells similar goods to Witney and takes place on a Wednesday and there are 16 pitches on this site.
- 2.3.** Although there remain vacant pitches at Witney, new traders have recently been attracted; these include a meat stall, basketware and a tea stall. Chipping Norton has remained more stable, although it has been noted that the closure of banks on the bottom side of town and the opening of out of town shops such as Aldi, M&S and Mountain Warehouse has reduced town centre footfall.
- 2.4.** In January 2019 the business manager visited Witney market and spoke to traders about how we could better support the market. The two points that most traders made was;
- I. a request to improvement to their gazebos through an updating regime

2. a request that the Council did not outsource the market to a private company – many traders were concerned this would push up fees with little added commercial benefit. Some traders gave examples of where this had happened locally.

### 3. FINANCIAL POSITION

- 3.1. The overall financial position for the Charter Markets in 2018 is shown below;

	Employment Costs (+20% oncost)	Direct Expenditure	Income
2018 Witney and Chipping Norton Charter Markets	£6170	£20,651*	£68,294

\*Direct Expenditure is likely to reduce if the waste provision is removed as this currently costs £12,492 per annum

### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. The Charter Markets provide a useful source of revenue for the Council. Members may wish to consider the following options;
  1. To maintain the current level of service provision provided by ERS.
  2. To recommend the allocation of resource to strategically review and assess the future strategic direction of the markets. This is likely to require specialist consultancy support as such commercial development skills do not exist within ERS.

### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. None Identified

### 6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. No major risks identified

### 7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1. No further alternative option considered at this stage

### 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS



# Memorandum

To: Kate Bishop, Shared Head of Public Protection and Regulation

Tel: 1633

From: Ron Spurs, Principal Community Safety and Licensing Officer  
2014

8<sup>th</sup> September

## Witney and Chipping Norton Charter Market – Future Management

The purpose of this report is to examine the operation of the Charter Markets at Chipping Norton and Witney which are managed within Public Protection with a view to transferring responsibility to an external operation or to another area within the authority.

### Background

West Oxfordshire District Council has a responsibility for managing the Charter Markets at Witney and Chipping Norton, having obtained the market rights from the Duke of Marlborough through its predecessor authority in 1925.

There is also an independently operated Farmers Market in Witney which operates on the last Friday of each month on the Market Square.

In 2012 management of the markets was transferred from Finance based at WODC (prior to the introduction of “Go Shared Services”, to Neighbourhood Services which is now Public Protection in the Environment Services directorate.

Prior to this transfer from Finance to Neighbourhood Services it is fair to say that the markets were left very much to their own devices, two part time market superintendents (one at Chipping Norton and one at Witney), supervised the collection of fees from traders and supervised day to day operations.

Elsewhere in West Oxfordshire. Carterton Town Council operates a market on a Thursday in the town centre, this currently has 7 stalls.

The twice weekly Charter Market at Witney sells a variety of food produce, sweets, flowers, bric a brac, stationary and gifts. The market square has a capacity for 30 stalls 3m x 3m. Currently there are 24 pitches let on a Thursday and 25 on a Saturday. The number of pitches does not reflect the number of stall holders, as some take more than one pitch.

The Charter Market at Chipping Norton sells similar goods to Witney and takes place on a Wednesday and there are 10 pitches on this site.

A table outlining the income from both markets is shown below:

Chipping Norton - 10 stalls x 50 weeks x £20.40 =	£10,200
Witney	£52,185

In 2013 the then head of Community Services carried out a Review of markets in Witney. The report included public and trader consultation.

The key results of this consultation are shown below:

The Market Traders Key Points:

- 65 % of traders are from the Oxfordshire area
- 52% have traded in Witney for over 10 years and 35% between 6 months and 3 years
- The majority of market traders would like to see a twice weekly market remain
- 70 % of market traders would like to see the scope of the market broadened
- Comments from traders generally focused on the need for more support for the markets eg. “Witney market needs to be improved “The Council needs to invest in advertising in order to give more scope and more choice rather than supermarkets. “Markets are fantastic to grow and should be supported so they keep going and are an important part of life.”

Local Business Survey Key Points

- The majority of businesses felt Saturday was their busiest day for trading with Monday being the quietest
- Comments about the Charter and Farmers Market were largely positive eg “I believe the market traders are an asset to Witney generating additional footfall in a well controlled area” and “Positive effect for town”

General Public Survey Key Points

- 52% of those surveyed came from the OX28 postcode (Witney), 19% from the OX29 (Area North / West of Witney), 11% from OX18 (Carterton) and 18% from other locations
- Nearly half (47%) use the market occasionally, 22% never uses it and 28% use it once or twice a week
- Over half (52%) never use the street traders, 36% occasionally use them and 8% use then once or twice a week
- Of those people who use the markets/street traders frequently 37% use them because they are good value and 36% because of good quality
- 66% of people would like to see the Charter and Farmers’ markets combined
- 78% of people would like to see specialist markets in Witney

Generally the comments from the public are supportive of the markets “a market town has its heart ripped out when there is no active market”. There were some negative comments about the street traders in terms of positioning and food smells.

The survey highlighted strong local support for the Charter Market and a desire for it to develop.

Subsequently, on the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2013 the then Head of Community Services submitted a report to Cabinet.

### **Report Key Points:**

“This work (the Review), has identified a number of improvements that need to be made before consideration can be given to how the market is managed. Officers have identified the following tasks that need to be completed:

- All market trader’s agreements need to be reviewed
- A new streamlined market traders payment process needs to be introduced
- A market traders selection process needs to be introduced
- The visual appearance of the market stalls needs to be reviewed
- The number of market stalls needs to be increased
- A review of the support and operating costs

These measures will ensure the market is managed in the most effective manner and provide a ‘stable platform’ on which to determine how the market should be managed in the future.”

### **Current Operation of Chipping Norton and Witney Charter Markets**

#### Chipping Norton

The Review mentioned above and the Report were focussed on the operation of markets in Witney. Since the operation of Chipping Norton Charter Market was transferred to Public Protection the appearance of the market has remained the same and is untidy. The introduction of the Go Shared Service Agresso payment system has meant that the traders are invoiced via “Go Shared Services”. The market superintendent, who works two hours per week is still in post and deals with day to day queries from traders. There has been no investment in new gazebos for the traders who operate Chipping Norton Charter Market although two of the traders who operate at both markets use the gazebos supplied by WODC. The market is located in the town centre on a steep slope which seriously restricts development.

#### Witney

Shortly after the management of the Charter Market was transferred to Public Protection the market superintendent resigned and has not been replaced. The Charter Market is managed by the licensing team. (This involves approximately .1 FTE for both markets). New gazebos have been purchased for the traders (who are repaying the cost with their weekly fee), a number of events have taken place to attract customers, new market regulations are in force and a much more hands on approach to management of the Charter Market is in place.

Also, the county council has refurbished the Market Square paved area where the market is held.

The refurbishment of the market has been extremely well received by local politicians and the public. The appearance of the market is much more professional and attractive to visitors and residents.

### **Potential for increased profitability**

## Witney

There is an opportunity to increase the number of stalls on the opposite side of the road to the main market square and the area near the Woolgate in the area which is still designated as Market Square by 7 /8 units per day.

## Chipping Norton

There is an opportunity to increase the number of stalls by a small proportion by better management of the existing space on the current site. To substantially increase the number of stalls operating the market consideration would need to be given to changing the location of the market. (Some alternative sites have been identified).

### Options for the future

The management of the Charter Markets does not sit in the normal activity of Public Protection. The forthcoming changes to the way in which Public Protection is delivered throughout West Oxfordshire and the other council's involved necessitates either the transfer of the management of charter markets to another unit within the council or totally outsourcing the market operation.

There are five principal avenues open to the authority to dispose of the charter market:

- Commercial market companies
- Local authority operated – transfer to another directorate within WODC
- Community management (including town and Parish councils)
- Co-operative of stall holders
- Local business is set up to operate the markets

The strengths and weaknesses of each option are shown below:

### Commercial market companies

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Operated in a commercial manner	The council has direct control over the type of traders working on the markets. This would cease with a commercial operator.
Operator has to make the market profitable	The commercial operator could drastically change the market trader conditions and fees
Local authority manage the operators performance through a contract	The relationship between the council and agencies such as Oxfordshire highways and the town councils in managing issues arising from the operation of the markets could be jeopardised
Operator has greater knowledge and experience than the Council	Loss of income from trader fees
Operator can make capital investments to improve the market	Market traders may leave the market if they do not like how the new operator works
Operator has incentive to improve the market to increase income	When the previous head of community services spoke informally to commercial operators it seemed unlikely that the council would be able to generate any income from the contract
Officer involvement is greatly reduced	Lack of local control and direction unless part of contract
Management of the contract would sit outside Public Protection	The character of the market could change contrary to local wishes
	Lack of personal service
	It is unlikely that a commercial company would be

	based in West Oxfordshire
	Lack of political control

### **Retain local authority management-outside of Public Protection**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Control of strategic direction	Need to identify service to manage charter markets
Maintenance of standards	Increased officer time and training required from new service
Income from stalls	Difficulty in finding service area where charter markets will "fit"
Maintain good relationship with stallholders	

### **Community management – Parish or Town Council**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
No input from WODC	At this time no formal approach has been made to either council. It is not known whether they would wish to undertake management of the charter markets
Local interest and commitment is maintained	Both councils would need to employ additional staff to manage the markets
Each Charter Market would be able to develop independently of the other	Lack of experience - Neither council has experience of running charter markets
Opportunity to develop profitability at both locations	A lack of WODC political control
Likely to have good relationship with market traders	Loss of income to WODC
WODC has excellent working relationship with town councils	Possible political indecision and lack of oversight

### **Co-operative of stall holders**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
No input from WODC	The number and type of stalls changes regularly. This would impact on the professionalism of the market managers
Local interest and commitment is maintained	No or limited influence by WODC
Each Charter Market would be able to develop independently of the other	Standard of stalls could suffer
Opportunity to develop profitability at both locations	No input ref types of traders
Likely to have good relationship with market traders	Would still require input from officers to a certain extent

### **Local business invited to operate the charter markets**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
No input from WODC	Success dependent upon procurement process to find good company
Local interest and commitment is maintained	Issues such as refuse need to be sort out prior to contract being signed (Currently £8k per year, mostly incurred by one trader)
Each Charter Market would be able to develop independently of the other	No income to WODC – unless negotiated with new provider
Opportunity to develop profitability at both locations	No strategic control outside of terms of contract
Likely to have good relationship with market traders	No local political control
Contract between WODC and company will need to have terms that allow development and progress	
Saving in officer time	

Next step

- Conduct informal discussions with Town councils to establish if they are interested in operating the charter markets.
- Conduct informal discussions with commercial market operators – expressions of interest
- Identify local firm or individual willing to take on the operation of the markets
- Check the above processes with Procurement to ensure fairness of process
- Seek political guidance as to a preferred option

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