



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. 10</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: <a href="mailto:james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk">james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: 01993 861658 Email: <a href="mailto:giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk">giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
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	<i>a) 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.