

Public Document Pack



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Issued: Tuesday 2 April 2024
Re-Issued: Wednesday 3 April 2024

Tel: 01993 861000
email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday 10 April 2024 at 5.30pm.**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Giles Hughes".

Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Rizvana Poole (Vice-Chair), Thomas Ashby, Hugo Ashton, David Cooper, Julian Cooper, Rachel Crouch, Jane Doughty, Phil Godfrey, Andy Goodwin, Natalie King, Nick Leverton, Andrew Lyon, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Mathew Parkinson, Carl Rylett, Sandra Simpson, Ruth Smith, Harry St. John, Alistair Wray, Liam Walker, Mark Walker and Alex Wilson.

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
To receive any Apologies for Absence from Members of the Committee, and to receive details of any temporary appointments.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 5 – 20)**
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 February 2024, and to note the actions arising from previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
4. **Chairs Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. **Participation of the Public**
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

Anyone who lives in the District, or who pays council tax or business rates to the Council, is eligible to read a statement or express an opinion at this meeting.

Registrations to address the Committee are made by sending a written submission of no more than 750 words to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, no later than 10.00am on the working day before the meeting.

6. **Mobile Network Coverage**
Purpose:
To receive a presentation from Gareth Elliott, Director of Policy and Communications at Mobile UK, as a result of a Motion considered by Council on 27 September 2023 regarding mobile network coverage across the District.

Recommendation:

That the Committee Resolves to:

- I. Note the contents of the presentation from the Director of Policy and Communications.

Invited:

- Gareth Elliott, Director of Policy and Communications at Mobile UK;
- Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council;
- Phil Martin – Assistant Director, Business Services.

7. **Report back on Recommendations (Pages 21 – 24)**
For the Committee to note the Executive's response to any recommendations arising from the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

8. **Committee Work Programme (Pages 25 – 30)**

Purpose:

To formulate an Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan for 2024/25.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes and comments on the draft work programme.

9. **Executive Work Programme (Pages 31 – 38)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Executive Work Programme.

Recommendation:

That the Committee agrees which items on the Executive Work Programme should be subject to pre-decision scrutiny and the priority order of those items.

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 5.30 pm on **Thursday, 29 February 2024**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Rizvana Poole (Vice-Chair), Thomas Ashby, Julian Cooper, Rachel Crouch, Jane Doughty, Natalie King, Nick Leverton, Michele Mead, Sandra Simpson, Ruth Smith, Harry St John, Liam Walker, Mark Walker, Alex Wilson, David Jackson and Elizabeth Poskitt

Officers: Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrew Brown (Democratic Services Business Manager), Georgina Dyer (Chief Accountant), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Bill Oddy (Assistant Director for Commercial Development), Max Thompson (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Andy Barge (Assistant Director for Communities), Alison Borrett (Senior Performance Analyst), Hannah Kenyon (Climate Change Manager) and Stuart Rawlinson (Business Manager - Resources, Data and Growth)

Other Councillors in attendance: Andy Graham, Alaric Smith, Tim Sumner, Andrew Prosser and Deputy Leader - Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright

46 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hugo Ashton, Andy Goodwin, Phil Godfrey and Alistair Wray (Councillor Dave Jackson substituted for Councillor Alistair Wray and Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt substituted for Councillor Hugo Ashton).

Apologies were also noted from Councillor Enright, Deputy Leader of the Council.

47 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

48 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 February 2024 were approved by the Committee.

49 Chair's announcements

The Chair updated Members that the first meeting of the Leisure and Wellbeing Task and Finish Review would be held the following day at 3.00pm over Teams.

Members were asked to consider what issues the Committee wished to include in its work plan for 2024/25 and to provide any suggestions to the Chair, Councillor Poole and Democratic Services.

50 Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

51 Carbon Action Plan

29/February2024

The Climate Change Manager provided a copy of the Carbon Action Plan attached to the agenda. Lily Paulson, the Climate Change Officer was introduced and thanked for all her hard work on the project.

The report explained that West Oxfordshire District Council (the Council) declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, making its pledge to become a carbon neutral Council by 2030. A pledge to be carbon neutral meant that the Council needed to balance the carbon dioxide emissions produced as a result of its everyday activities with the amount of carbon dioxide emissions that was removed from the atmosphere. Therefore, the first objective was to minimise the amount of carbon dioxide emissions being released because of Council activities bringing these as close to zero as possible. Any remaining 'residual' emissions would then need to be offset through verified means.

While the Carbon Action Plan focused on reducing emissions from Council activities, buildings and services, the Council was also committed to facilitating the reduction of wider district emissions through the delivery of its Climate Change Strategy 2021-25.

The document provided an updated version of the Climate Action Plan, covering actions to be undertaken between 2024 and 2030 to reach the carbon neutral target.

The plan only focused on the Council's internal emissions and set out the pathway and actions required to meet the 2030 targets.

A range of actions were required to meet these targets and currently the Council was not on course to reach the 2030 targets. The actions that were required in certain areas, the co-benefits, the financial implications, importance for external funding and how monitoring and reporting would be undertaken was explained.

Various questions and points of clarification were raised with Officers providing answers and points of clarification as follows:

- It would be difficult to achieve Carbon neutrality without funding or opportunities to secure funding.
- Grey Fleet meant vehicles that employees own and use for business purposes (which could include petrol, diesel, electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles).
- The waste fleet fell under "scope one" emissions within the Carbon Action Plan.
- Leased assets were commercially let and not delivering services for the Council.
- The Old Port House had been reviewed and was the first project; which proved important for social impact and the Asset Management Team would look at retrofitting the Council held buildings within a timeframe of the next eighteen months.
- The cycle to work scheme was being reviewed in the Active Travel Plan and what could be done to facilitate the switch to staff not using their vehicles was being examined. Information on how many staff use this scheme would be provided in due course.
- Leisure centres were key projects for decarbonisation and the prices were highly inflated in the market due to not many suppliers quoting which had caused viability issues. Grant funding was being looked at.
- There had been a switch to Green energy suppliers and there was a requirement for an Energy Manager to oversee this.
- The Climate Team were ensuring continued maintenance of all leisure facilities and not just awaiting funding. In particular, any roof issues were being looked at.

29/February2024

- Hybrid meeting options and condensing the need to travel were part of the Plan's objective and Members' travel was important and the team were happy to look at that and discuss with the Executive.
- Air source and ground source heat pumps could be suitable for some projects.
- A variety of mixed habitats were acknowledged and the nature recovery work was being reviewed.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points and their infrastructure were progressing; other alternatives were being viewed with an open mind.
- There was approval for two nature recover specialists to join the Climate Team.
- EV trials would be considered in the fleet of vehicles.

There was an additional question around funding and what the costs of reaching climate neutrality would be if no external funding was obtained. Officers explained that it would be very difficult to achieve that objective without any funding streams and exact deficit figures could be provided outside of the meeting. **Action Point:** Officers would provide deficit figures to Members.

RESOLVED that the Committee **AGREED** to submit the following recommendation to the Executive on 6 March 2024:

- I. That consideration is given to how the carbon footprint of Councillors may be reduced.

52 Financial Performance Report – 2023/24 Quarter Three

The Executive Member for Finance introduced the report that detailed the Council's financial performance for Quarter Three 2023-2024. It was explained that the position at year end was forecasted to be an overspend of £326,268. The equivalent figure at Q2 was £783,170. The outturn position had significantly improved due to the contribution of £554,000 in additional Treasury Management investment income and an expected £250,000 reimbursement from Publica relating to early delivery against savings targets and slightly higher employee turnover.

The Finance Director asked the Committee to note the recommendation of delegated authority on page 62 of the report and that it was to ensure reserves could be used to address various risks if required.

Various questions and points of clarification were raised with Officers providing answers and points of clarification as follows:

- Earmarked reserves that were no longer required for specific projects could be used to help with the general fund.
- The budget was set on a general fund and the earmarked reserves were separate.
- On page 63 the funds were earmarked but not ring-fenced. Therefore there was a request for delegated authority to revisit and move some monies into areas that were more of a risk if required.
- All four risks that were referenced in the budget and medium term financial strategy (MTFS) were in the public domain.
- This was an annual review and a risk assessment exercise that identified and assessed the highest risks.
- Section 106 monies were not held in earmarked reserves.
- The amount to be spent on mitigating the risks was not known yet.

29/February2024

RESOLVED that **AGREED** to submit the following recommendation to the Executive on 6 March 2024:

- I. That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is included as a consultee in the delegation to the Director of Finance to review and repurpose earmarked reserves, in addition to the Executive Member for Finance.

53 Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund Phase 2

Members were made aware that there was an exempt report and if it was discussed there would be a requirement to go into exempt session.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects introduced the report that sought approval for the Council to enter into an agreement with Sport England for the acceptance of a grant from the Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) Phase 2; and for the Council to draw down funding awarded to Chipping Norton Lido, acting in its capacity as lead authority for the delivery of the SPSF.

It was explained that the SPSF had been allocated to local authorities in England by the government as a support package for public leisure facilities with swimming pools and was split into two phases. Following the announcement of the second phase of the grant scheme in September 2023, a series of interventions were considered for each of the sites in the District. Funding bids totalling almost £754,000 were developed and for Carterton Leisure Centre, Chipping Norton Leisure Centre, Chipping Norton Lido (bid submitted by Lido management team), Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney, and Woodstock Outdoor Pool. Only 2 bids were accepted due to an overwhelming demand; funding for both Windrush Leisure Centre in Witney and Chipping Norton Lido were accepted.

Various questions and points of clarification were raised with Officers providing answers and points of clarification as follows:

- Bids were put in for a number of buildings. Funding would come directly from Sports England and this was not money the Council allocated; the Council only facilitated the grants and it could not be used for any other purposes.
- Clarification on the solar panels on Windrush Leisure Centre and any payments or additional costs around those would need clarification from the leisure operator, GLL.
- Criteria for the funding was weighted on community facilities and the menu of interventions. There was no further explanation as to why the other bids were not accepted.
- Complementary heating activity for swimming pools was being examined to reduce energy demands.
- Funding could be partially lost if there were to be a new leisure centre built but these issues would be addressed if that scenario occurred and it was unlikely Sports England would claw back any money paid from the grant if the Council was extending leisure provision within the District.

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the report.

54 Service Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Three

The Senior Performance Analyst introduced the report that provided details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2023-24 Quarter Three (Q3).

29/February2024

Highlights of the report were shared and it was explained that the Climate Team, in collaboration with other Oxfordshire authorities, secured £298k of Innovate UK funding to enable nature-based carbon offsetting in Oxfordshire.

Witney Christmas Market witnessed approximately 15,000 shoppers at the Marriotts Walk shopping centre, marking a 59% increase compared to the same period in 2022 and a significant 70% surge from the previous week's visitor count.

In November, the Executive approved a new delivery model, jointly developed by Green Axis and Homes England, for the zero-carbon housing development at Waterbush Road, Chipping Norton, with legal agreements currently in progress.

Planning permission had been granted in November for the decarbonisation of Carterton Leisure Centre.

An overview of progress against all actions in the Corporate Plan was attached at Annex A and the Council Priority highlight report was attached at Annex B. Service performance indicators both above and below targets were listed in the report and some explanation was provided where required.

Various questions and points of clarification were raised with Officers providing answers and points of clarification as follows:

- A comparison had been made and benchmarks were created for the process of collection and writing off of Council Tax debt. The set target of 99% remained and was viewed as achievable.
- A breakdown of appeals for both the Uplands and Lowlands planning sub-committee areas would be added to the next report brought to Committee.
- In regard to uncollected bins, that data would be broken down into parishes and added to the next report brought to Committee.
- A review of the service level agreement would occur when the waste service was under review and the Committee would be updated accordingly.

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the report.

55

Publica Transition Plan

The Chief Executive Officer introduced the report that considered the Local Partnerships report and other findings and recommendations therein of the Publica review.

Frank Wilson had been recruited as the new Interim Managing Director of Publica. Christine Gore had been appointed as the new Chair of the Board and Andrew Pollard had been appointed as the Interim Programme Director.

The report explained that most Council services were delivered through Publica, a joint vehicle owned by the Council together with Cotswold District Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Forest of Dean District Council. An options appraisal review of Council services and the way in which they were delivered had been undertaken by a company called Human Engine in 2023. The final report recommended that a significant number of services should move from Publica and return to being under direct control of the Councils. This would leave Publica delivering a range of support and customer services for the Councils.

29/February2024

The Human Engine report would inform the preparation and implementation of a detailed transition plan that would be presented by the Interim Programme Director and Chief Executive later in the year.

Local Partnerships come with a wealth of experience and were well placed to be able to refer to the wider public sector's experience of insourcing to provide illustrations of governance, organisational design and service transformation, having been involved in undertaking service reviews for a number of councils in the past. This knowledge and approach facilitated bringing services back in-house following best practice, rather than simply 'lift and shift'. The brief agreed with Local Partnerships was for the provision of a high-level set of recommendations, following those set out in the Human Engine report, to enable the councils to take the project forward. The Local Partnerships report did not intend to seek to identify all service areas to be transferred, but to give a high-level overview of and suggest key phases of services as part of the transition. It would be for the Interim Programme Director to develop this further with more specific detail in due course. It was envisaged that the detailed transition plan would be completed by the end of April, with subsequent reporting back through the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive.

The Interim Programme Director introduced himself and outlined his experience whilst explaining how he could go about developing a detailed, fully analysed and costed Transition Plan.

Various questions and points of clarification were raised with Officers providing answers and points of clarification as follows:

- Member consultation would be organised in due course; however, all service options would be considered for a reasonable and sensible approach to ensure economies of scale and resilience. There would need to be robust frameworks and agreements in place to protect all Councils.
- There were two aspects and the Interim Programme Director explained the hub and spoke approach that used the many hands principles and that there were gatekeepers to keep track of the costs. It was also explained that all options would be examined and considered.
- It was explained that it was important for an organisation to recognise its ethos and values and then to recognise what was wanted, needed and what was affordable. Those were the three key elements that needed capturing and then what the purpose was and how that fit with the Corporate Plan. The design and structure and needed to be balanced with TUPE, the law and the Council's the obligations and responsibilities to its employees. It was extremely important that all this was considered. The communication work stream was also very important to mitigate risks.
- There were no costs available for this plan as of yet and it was emphasised that it was very important to consider and explore joint service arrangements, other partnerships and sovereign services. There would be options and choices within each service.
- There were often various reasons for shared services to split and each authority would have a different reason for doing this.
- No redlines had been expressed and those would be revealed after analysis and consideration of the options; therefore, none had been identified at this time.

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the report.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

29/February2024

Councillor Cooper and Leverton wished it to be recorded that they were not in favour of the report.

56 Report back on recommendations

The Democratic Services Business Manager provided a list of the recommendations arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Wednesday 7 February 2024. Comments were then provided by the Executive and this would be a standing item going forward as it demonstrated good practice.

Councillor Alex Wilson requested that it be recorded that he was disappointed his recommendation was rejected.

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the Executive's response to the recommendations arising from the 7 February 2024 Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

57 Committee Work Programme

The following was requested for the Committee Work Programme:

- The Committee agreed to bring the waste service contract update; once it was ready to scrutinise.
- Information on the CCTV upgrade in April and the requested statistics would be chased and shared with Members.
- Community Infrastructure Levy report requested to come to the April meeting.
- Knight's Court would be added back on to the work programme.

58 Executive Forward Plan

The following was requested for the Executive Forward Plan:

In regards to a query on the CIL Draft Charging Schedule and whether it was a key decision; it was confirmed that it was not a key decision because the report was only seeking authority to consult on a draft and Council would be the final decision maker when the charging schedule was adopted.

The Meeting closed at 7.48 pm

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank

Actions arising from previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

February 2024



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Outstanding Actions			
Meeting date	Minute	Action Owner	Update
7 February	<p>The Lead Planning Policy & Implementation Officer agreed to follow up on a question about whether the Council needed to have a 5-year land supply for gypsy and traveller sites and the status of this.</p> <p>After emailing – Councillor Beaney Responded with this query:</p> <p>My question was based around the appeal in Over Norton - Part of the reason for allowing it was that we had no site identify. If we don't, why not and if we do where are they - Without them, Do, we stand a much higher rate of losing appeals?</p> <p>On the point of 5 and 5 in H7 is that a rolling 5 or a first come first serve?</p> <p>Councillor Harry St John added this further query - On the same sort of subject I notice that seems to be an ever expanding site and activities (even at night) at Cuckoowood Farm on Cuckoo Lane south of Freeland. Has any planning officer been on a visit to see that and what is going on because it should be as per any consents /conditions? There is a very substantial building and every time I pass the site at night it is lit up inside - after what one would expect be normal working hours... hence my question. There were</p>	<p>Chris Hargraves Janice Bamsey</p>	<p>The O&S Committee were chasing a response to the following action in the minutes from the last meeting on 7 February 2024 .</p> <p>The Lead Planning Policy & Implementation Officer agreed to follow up on a question about whether the Council needed to have a 5-year land supply for gypsy and traveller sites and the status of this.</p> <p>The Government have a separate national policy position statement on travelling communities (updated in December 2023) which says:</p> <p>9. Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers as defined in Annex I and plot targets for travelling showpeople as defined in Annex I which address the likely permanent and transit site</p>

engineering works going on at the entrance the other week with a JCB etc. doing work. I suspect the JCB may be resident on site. A quick analysis of enforcement cases across the District show a significant proportion of cases involve the travelling or related community by comparison to everyone else - one case has been going on for ages with social services, police, ect. involved.

accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities. In this respect, Policy H7 of the Local Plan says that: West Oxfordshire will provide at least 5 pitches and 5 plots to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople respectively from 2016 – 2031. This is obviously a very modest requirement based on the evidence of need at that time and may even have been met in full by now (Janice can probably advise on this point). Paragraph 10 of the Government's position statement says: 10. Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan: a) identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets 4 b) identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 5 c) consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more

			<p>flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries) d) relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density e) protect local amenity and environment.</p> <p>On a related note, footnote 41 of the NPPF says: For the avoidance of doubt, a five-year supply of deliverable sites for travellers – as defined in Annex 1 to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites – should be assessed separately, in line with the policy in that document.</p> <p>My understanding is that whilst we have produced a 5-year supply position statement on mainstream housing, we have not produced anything separate for travellers and have never been asked to do so although it is clear that there is a policy requirement to do so. We may have previously included some information in our Annual Monitoring Report but would</p>
--	--	--	---

		<p>need to check that and it is likely to have been more general in terms of permissions granted etc. So in answer to the question, yes there is a national policy requirement for the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets. In terms of the status of this, I am hoping that Janice and Andrew can advise on our position vis a vis the modest 5 pitch and 5 plot targets included in the local plan.</p> <p>It would also be worth making Members aware that work is ongoing in relation to a new assessment of need for travelling communities which would be reflected in the emerging local plan.</p> <p>Janice Bamsey added - Since the adoption of the local plan in 2018, and the requirement to provide at least 5 pitches and 5 plots between 2016 and 2031, referred to in Chris email below, approval has been given for an additional 11 pitches* and 6 plots in West Oxfordshire.</p>
--	--	---

			(* located at Fulbrook, Minster Lovell, Barnard Gate and Chipping Norton. Applications for additional pitches are also currently under consideration at the Weald and Eynsham.)
7 February	The Safer Communities Officer agreed to share further information with the Committee about the crime figures for the district and what action was being taken to address the increases in violence against the person offences and rape.	Emmylou Brossard	<p>I was asked about the increase in rape victims and sexual assault victims in West Oxfordshire and would ask Executives to have a look at page 25 of the Strategic Intelligence Assessment where they will see that despite seeing a significant increase, we also have the lowest numbers in Oxfordshire. This represents 84 recorded victims of rape. When you look at Office for National Statistics data, rape accounted for 36% of recorded sexual offences (nationally) in the year ending March 2022, it also highlighted that around 14% of Crime Survey for England and Wales respondents had experienced rape.</p> <p>As I explained in the meeting, sexual assault, rape and domestic abuse are just some of the types of hidden harm, which are likely to be underreported. Many victims do not come forward to</p>

			<p>disclose to police or to seek support from other agencies. As a Community Safety Partnership, we have always been focused on trying to raise awareness of how and where to access support. Violence Against Women and Girls is a priority for the Community Safety Partnership and we are currently working with police, public health and a wide range of other professionals to identify the work currently going on locally and countywide, as well as the opportunities to increase awareness of support services and how to access them. I would also recommend that Executives take a look at Thames Valley Police Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023/2025.</p> <p>With regards to Violence Against the Person offences, Thames Valley Police are currently undergoing a Force Review and there is an imminent restructure of their services, with the aim of increasing the capacity of Neighbourhood Policing Teams to spend more time in communities. Locally, the Neighbourhood Team have focused on ensuring regular police foot patrol in towns and communities, and this is reviewed</p>
--	--	--	--

			<p>on a fortnightly basis, identifying hotspot areas where violent crime takes place. Thames Valley Police have recently introduced an app for police officers to easily identify where they should patrol based on crime trends and data.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police are part of a Pilot to apply to the Courts to issue Serious Violence Protection Orders to deter offenders from carrying weapons, for more information please click here. You can also find information about the work of Thames Valley Violence Reduction Partnership here, and I can confirm that the Community Safety Partnership are actively involved in the shaping of that service which actively seeks to reduce the most serious violent crimes.</p> <p>I understand that on 4 June 2024, the Chief Constable and Police & Crime Commissioner will be giving their annual address to West Oxfordshire District Council and that may be the perfect opportunity to learn more about their priorities and the Force Review.</p>
--	--	--	--

29 February	There was an additional question around funding and what the costs of reaching climate neutrality would be if no external funding was obtained. Officers explained that it would be very difficult to achieve that objective without any funding streams and exact deficit figures could be provided outside of the meeting. Action Point: Officers would provide deficit figures to Members.	Hannah Kenyon Lily Paulson	Chased on 20/03/24
-------------	---	-------------------------------	--------------------



Executive response to recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 February 2024

Item	Recommendation	Agree (Y / N)	Comment	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
Carbon Action Plan (item 15 on Executive agenda)	Recommendation: That consideration is given to how the carbon footprint of Councillors may be reduced.	Y	<p>Carbon training will be provided to Members to inform decision making and communication on carbon reduction.</p> <p><u>Carbon & Climate Literacy Training for Members</u> Following discussions with councillors, climate teams, monitoring officers and a Climate Literacy Experience Workshop with 20 other Local Authorities within the Net Zero Living Programme, a proposal for a blended approach to Councillor engagement and training on carbon and climate is now being produced for consideration by the Publica Councils. The proposal is to provide a range of engagement and training opportunities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Onboarding / Induction- Short online awareness training- Regular Informal engagement (e.g. a program of short informal briefings)- Role / responsibility specific short courses (e.g. portfolio holders)- Carbon Literacy Accreditation <p>Key topic areas:</p>	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Change	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate Awareness - Climate and Carbon Communication - Decision making and use of tools (e.g. Climate Impact Assessment Tool) - Effective project and programme management for Carbon reduction - Collaboration and engaging with communities on climate action and carbon reduction - The role of Climate Teams <p>The Climate Impact Assessment Tool will be used to embed climate and sustainability considerations in Member's decision making (Action 1). The Carbon Action Plan also aims to minimise paper consumption by Members and staff (Action 6) and emissions from business travel (Action 7). Members' travel emissions on council business are accounted for in carbon reporting. Wording has been added to the Carbon Action Plan to clarify that: (i) business travel covers public transport, vehicles owned by staff and Members, and flights; (ii) emissions will be minimised from staff and Member travel; and (iii) staff benefits will be reviewed to encourage green and active travel.</p>		
Financial Performance Report 2023/24	That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is included as a	N	The review and repurposing of earmarked reserves is an operational finance decision and is	Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance



<p>Quarter Three (item 11 on the Executive agenda)</p>	<p>consultee in the delegation to the Director of Finance to review and repurpose earmarked reserves, in addition to the Executive Member for Finance.</p>		<p>an exercise that is carried out regularly to ensure that reserves held are appropriate and adequate.</p> <p>Delegation to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Executive Member of Finance is proper in terms of governance. However, adding the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny as a consultee would blur Executive and non-Executive responsibilities and would therefore not be appropriate.</p> <p>All members are notified when decisions are taken by officers acting on delegated authority and therefore there is full transparency with regards to this process.</p> <p>Any key decisions taken by officers under delegated authority would be subject to call in by Members.</p>	<p>Member for Finance</p>	
--	--	--	--	-------------------------------	--

This page is intentionally left blank



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
28 MARCH 2024 – 30 MAY 2024**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Executive form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Executive decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council. Overview and Scrutiny has an important role in holding the Executive to account and in contributing to policy development.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Executive reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In setting and reviewing its work plan, the Committee will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and may prioritise based on the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

Timeliness: Is it timely to consider this issue?

Organisational priority: Is it a Council priority?

Public Interest: Is it of significant public interest?

Influence: Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

Cost: Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

Call in

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider any “call-in” of an executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented. This enables the Committee to consider whether the decision made is appropriate given all relevant information (but not because it would have made a different decision). It may recommend that the Executive, an Executive Member or the Council should reconsider the decision.

Item	Executive Member	Lead Officer
Wednesday, 10 April 2024		
Mobile Network Coverage	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Support phil.martin@publicagroup.uk
Wednesday, 5 June 2024		
Development Management Improvement Programme	Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development - Charlie Maynard	Phil Shaw, Business Manager - Development Management phil.shaw@publicagroup.uk
Publica Transition Update	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Pollard, Interim Programme Director Andrew.Pollard@publicagroup.uk
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule	Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development - Charlie Maynard	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager chris.hargraves@publicagroup.uk
Climate Change Strategy	Executive Member for Climate Change - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
Knights Court Business Case	Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare - Cllr Geoff Saul	Business Manager Assets & Council Priorities - Andrew Turner
Customer Services Telephone Report (Trial of Telephone Opening Hours Closure - 2.00pm to 5.00pm)	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Tim Sumner	Michelle Clifford, Business Manager - Customer Experience & Resources michelle.clifford@publicagroup.uk
Approval of Upgrade to WODC Public Space	Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities

CCTV Provision and Monitoring Arrangements	Housing and Social Welfare	andy.barge@publicagroup.uk
Wednesday, 3 July 2024		
Waste Service Update	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Simon Anthony, Business Manager - Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
Public Convenience Contract	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@publicagroup.uk
Wednesday, 4 September 2024		
Consultation	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Wednesday, 2 October 2024		
Supporting market town and village centres	Deputy Leader - Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	Philippa Lowe, Business Manager Localities philippa.lowe@publicagroup.uk
Wednesday, 6 November 2024		
District Boundary Review - Council Size Proposal	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Annual Monitoring Report	Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development - Charlie Maynard	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager chris.hargraves@publicagroup.uk

Wednesday, 4 December 2024

Affordable Housing Delivery

Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare - Cllr Geoff Saul

Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director - Planning and Sustainability charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk

Wednesday, 8 January 2025

Wednesday, 5 February 2025

Wednesday, 5 March 2025

Community Grants

Executive Member for Stronger Healthy Communities - Cllr Joy Aitman

Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities andy.barge@publicagroup.uk

Wednesday, 16 April 2025

Items for Leisure and Wellbeing Task and Finish Group

Leisure Strategy - Strategic Outcomes Planning Model

Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Tim Sumner

Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing jacqueline.wright@publicagroup.uk

'TOPIC' Scoring Criteria for Scrutiny Work Plan Items

Criteria

Description

Scoring

T imely	Work plan prioritisation should take account of work in other areas, and avoid duplication. Key questions to ask include: Is now the best time to consider this issue? Are legislative or policy changes afoot? Is the issue due for inspection or auditing?	Is it timely to consider this issue? No - 0 Somewhat - 1 Yes - 2
O rganisational Priority	Work plans should take account of the Council's overall vision for the area. Committees should ensure that a good proportion of their work relates to the Council's plan and priorities. This is key in demonstrating how Scrutiny can add value to the Council.	Is it a council priority? No - 0 Somewhat - 2 Yes - 3
P ublic Interest	Councillors' representative roles are an essential feature of Scrutiny. They are the eyes and ears of the public, ensuring that services meet local needs. The interests of local people should therefore influence and guide the issues chosen for scrutiny.	Is it of significant public interest? No - 0 Somewhat - 2 Yes - 3
I nfluence	Scrutiny Committees have varying levels of influence, depending on the issues they review. They are better placed to influence council services than external agencies. Will your input drive outcomes and change, or be unwelcome and lack impact?	Can we have meaningful influence? No - 0 Somewhat - 1 Yes - 2
C ost	Services or decisions which incur a high level of income, expenditure or savings should be prioritised. Effective scrutiny of financial matters is a cornerstone of good scrutiny, and significant spending plans should not go unscrutinised.	Is the issue costly? No - 0 Somewhat - 1 Yes - 2

The TOPIC scoring system has been developed to assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in prioritising work plan items. Criteria led work planning has been advocated by national governance experts and organisations alike, premised on the objective prioritisation of items against pre-set criteria. TOPIC can be used as a reference guide for councillors in selecting items, or it can be rigidly applied as a scoring system. How strictly the criteria is applied will depend of the number of items suggested and the resources available.

Whilst the scoring system aspires to be objective, it cannot necessarily take account of the nuances and complexities of all issues, and Committees should use their best judgement in agreeing which items to take forward.

This page is intentionally left blank



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION
1 APRIL 2024 – 31 JULY 2024

By virtue of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, local authorities are required to publish a notice setting out the key executive decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before such decisions are to be taken. The Regulations also require notice to be given of any matter where it is proposed that the public will be excluded during consideration of the matter.

This Forward Plan incorporates both of these requirements. In the interests of transparency, it also aims to include details of those items to be debated by the Executive that relate to either policy/budget formulation, matters which will be subject to a recommendation to the Council, and other matters due to be considered by the Executive. This programme covers a period of four months, and will be updated on a monthly basis. The timings of items may be subject to change.

It should be noted that although a date not less than 28 clear days after the date of this notice is given in each case, it is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given provided, in the cases of key decisions and matters to be considered in private, that the 28 day notice has been given. In this regard, please note that agendas and reports for meetings of the Executive are made available on the Council's website at www.westoxon.gov.uk/meetings five working days in advance of the meeting in question. Please also note that the agendas for meetings of the Executive will also incorporate a necessary further notice which is required to be given in relation to matters likely to be considered with the public excluded.

There are circumstances where a key decision can be taken, or a matter may be considered in private, even though the 28 clear days' notice has not been given. If that happens, notice of the matter and the reasons will be published on the council's website, and available from the Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon, OX28 1NB.

Key Decisions

The Regulations define a key decision as an executive decision which is likely –

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or*
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the authority'.*

The Council has decided that a cost or saving of an amount greater than £150,000 is necessary to constitute expenditure or savings which are significant for the purposes of this definition.

Please note that if a matter is approved by the Council following a recommendation from the Executive, that decision will not be a key decision.

Matters To Be Considered in Private

The great majority of matters considered by the Council's Executive are considered in 'open session' when the public have the right to attend.

However, some matters are considered with the public excluded. The public may only be excluded if a resolution is passed to exclude them. The grounds for exclusion are limited to situations where confidential or exempt information may be disclosed to the public if present and, in most cases involving exempt information, where in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The definitions of these are set out in the Council's Constitution.

Documents and Queries

Copies of, or extracts from, documents listed in the programme and any which subsequently become available are (subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure), obtainable from the following, and this contact information may also be used for any queries.

Democratic Services - Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk Tel: 01993 861000.

West Oxfordshire District Council: Executive Members 2023/24

Name of Councillor	Title and Areas of Responsibility
Andy Graham (Leader)	Leader of the Council: Policy Framework; Town and Parish Council engagement, Council Plan; Strategic Partnerships including Pan regional Partnership, Future Oxfordshire, South East Councils and OXLEP; Oxfordshire Leaders; Publica and partnership authorities and Ubico, Democratic Services; Communications; Legal Services; Counter Fraud; Emergency Planning; and Customer Services
Duncan Enright (Deputy Leader)	Economic Development: Business Development; Visitor Economy; Town and Village regeneration; and Customer Services.
Alaric Smith	Finance: Finance & Management; Council Tax and Benefits; Asset Management, South West Audit Partnership; Performance management; Capital Investment strategy; Strategic Housing Investment; and Customer Services
Charlie Maynard	Planning and Sustainable Development: Local Plan; Government planning policies and guidance; Conservation and Historic Environment; Landscape and Biodiversity; Development Management; and Ensuring planning policies meet 2030 requirement; and Customer Services
Tim Sumner	Leisure and Major Projects: Leisure provision including swimming pools; Culture and Heritage; Public Art; Agile Working, Car Parking and Customer Services
Joy Aitman	Stronger Healthy Communities: Voluntary sector engagement; Health and Safety; Community and Public Health; Refugee Resettlement Programme; Young People; Equality and diversity; and Customer Services
Geoff Saul	Housing and Social Welfare: Housing Allocations; Homelessness; Provision of affordable homes; Sheltered Housing Accommodation; Safeguarding – Community Safety Partnership; Crime and Disorder; Neighbourhood Policing; Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner; and Assets of Community Value.
Lidia Arciszewska	Environment: Flood alleviation and sewage; Environmental Partnerships – WASP and Evenlode, North East Cotswold Cluster; Waste collection and recycling; Street Scene (cleansing, litter and grounds maintenance); Air Quality; and Land, food, farming and Customer Services Delivery.
Andrew Prosser	Climate Change: Energy Advice; Renewable energy and retrofit investment; Biodiversity across the District; Carbon neutral by 2030; Fossil fuel dependence reduction; Local, national and county wide liaison on climate; EV Charging Rollout. and Customer Service

For further information about the above and all members of the Council please see www.westoxon.gov.uk/councillors

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Open or Exempt	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Executive Member	Lead Officer
Ubico Business Plan 24/25	No	Open	Executive	17 Apr 2024	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Simon Anthony, Business Manager - Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
Local Housing Authority Fund Round 3 Application	Yes	Open	Executive	17 Apr 2024	Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare - Cllr Geoff Saul	Murry Burnett, Strategic Housing & Development Officer Murry.Burnett@westoxon.gov.uk
Funding Request for Asset Management Strategy	No	Open	Executive	17 Apr 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Claire Locke – Assistant Director, Property and Regeneration claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Funding for Decarbonisation Scheme – Carterton Leisure Centre	Yes	Open	Executive	17 Apr 2024	Executive Member for Climate Change - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Claire Locke – Assistant Director, Property and Regeneration claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Approval of Upgrade to WODC Public Space CCTV Provision and Monitoring Arrangements	Yes	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities andy.barge@publicagroup.uk
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule	No	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development - Charlie Maynard	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager chris.hargraves@publicagroup.uk
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan	No	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Deputy Leader - Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	Will Barton, Business Development Officer william.barton@westoxon.gov.uk

Climate Change Strategy	Yes	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Executive Member for Climate Change - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
Endorsement of the Oxfordshire Town and Parish Charter	No	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Customer Services Telephone Report (Trial of Telephone Opening Hours Closure - 2.00pm to 5.00pm)	No	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Tim Sumner	Michelle Clifford, Business Manager - Customer Experience & Resources michelle.clifford@publicagroup.uk
Knights Court Business Case	No	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare - Cllr Geoff Saul	Business Manager Assets & Council Priorities - Andrew Turner andrew.turner@publicagroup.uk
Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)	Yes	Open	Executive Council	12 Jun 2024 24 Jul 2024	Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development - Charlie Maynard	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager chris.hargraves@publicagroup.uk
One-Year Publica Business Plan	No	Open	Executive	12 Jun 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Frank Wilson, Managing Director - Publica frank.wilson@publicagroup.uk
Publica Transition Update	Yes	Open	Executive Council	12 Jun 2024 24 Jul 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Pollard, Interim Programme Director Andrew.Pollard@publicagroup.uk
Strategic Outcomes Planning Model	No	Open	Executive	10 Jul 2024	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles – Strategic Leisure Lead rachel.biles@publicagroup.uk

Public Convenience Contract	Yes	Fully Exempt	Executive	10 Jul 2024	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@publicagroup.uk
Annual Monitoring Report	No	Open	Executive	13 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development - Charlie Maynard	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager chris.hargraves@publicagroup.uk
Key Decisions Delegated to Officers						
Standing Delegation: Settlement of Legal Claims	Yes	Open	Interim Head of Legal Services - Helen Blundell	Before 31 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith, Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Helen Blundell, Interim Head of Legal Services helen.blundell@fdean.gov.uk
Review and Repurpose Earmarked Reserves to Mitigate against Four Main Financial Risks	No	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	31 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocation of New Initiatives Funding	Yes	Open	Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service - Giles Hughes	Before 31 Mar 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocate Funding from the Project Contingency Earmarked Reserve	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk

Other Business for Council Meetings						
Return of the Returning Officer following the 2 May 2024 local elections	No	Open	Council	22 May 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Sharon Ellison, Electoral Services Manager sharon.ellison@westoxon.gov.uk
Appointment of Members to the Council's Committees, including substitute members	No	Open	Council	22 May 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Appointment of a Temporary Parish Councillor to Fulbrook Parish Council	No	Open	Council	22 May 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrea McCaskie, Director of Governance andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk
Polling District and Places Review	No	Open	Council	25 Sep 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Sharon Ellison, Electoral Services Manager sharon.ellison@westoxon.gov.uk
District Boundary Review – Council Size Proposal	No	Open	Council	27 Nov 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Review of Members' Allowances Scheme.	No	Open	Council	29 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk

This page is intentionally left blank