

Executive response to recommendations on from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – February 2026

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 February 2026 considered reports it had requested from officers titled “West Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Plan” and “Supporting Mental Health Initiatives”. The Committee agreed to submit the following recommendations to the Executive.

West Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Plan

Recommendation	Agreed Y / N?	Comment	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
1. That the Council sets out a clear policy and timeline for ceasing the use of glyphosate.	Yes	The target in the Council’s Nature Recovery Plan is to phase out use of glyphosate completely. It has been reduced, as agreed at Executive on 23 rd April 2025 West Oxfordshire District Council - Agenda for Executive on Wednesday, 23rd April, 2025, 2.00 pm Following this, it was agreed with both Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead and Ubico to stop using glyphosate at the WODC offices in Woodgreen. Alternative methods are being trialled at Woodgreen with a view to using this elsewhere (only 1 growing season so far and it was a drought year). There needs to be an agreement on a timeline to phase out glyphosate use entirely.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Mel Dodd, Principal Ecologist
2. That the Council’s nature recovery reporting is focused on a more limited number of work streams, with clear Key Performance Indicators.	Yes	It would be relatively simple to add an Annex to the committee report next year to provide a summary of action towards the KPIs in the Nature Recovery Plan. This would be based on an existing project tracker that the team use to monitor progress (highlighting progress using red-amber-green colour coding). The report itself could then be simplified to focus on key areas of work and/or success stories. <i>Headlines from the Local Plan Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report (produced by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, TVERC) could be added to the report next year to provide additional context relating to regional trends.</i>		

Supporting Mental Health Initiatives

Recommendation	Agreed Y / N?	Comment	Executive Member	Lead Officer
1. That the Council allocates resources to replicate the Community Health Insight Profile (CHIP) undertaken in Central Witney, in other parts of the district.	N	Funding of £60k is provided by OCC Public Health to undertake CHIP work. The format has 3 parts – 1. Commission new research 2. Appoint a Community Health Dev Officer and 3. Distribute grant funding of around £25k. Other councils have done them independently (South Ox for Didcot). Areas are selected based on areas of greatest need based on the National Indices of Multiple Deprivation data. Whilst there would be value in this an alternative could be to link additional resources, should they be available, to the current Marmot Place health research taking place to enable interventions to be delivered based on the data emerging from those 4 rural locations – Chipping Norton, Charlbury, Long Hanborough and Freeland. Officers could also offer to provide more of a deep dive into the workings of the CHIP. A further report will be brought forward for consideration once the outcomes of the Marmot Place Health Research are known.	Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger Healthier Communities	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager Madhu Richards, Director of Finance
2. That the Council increases the funding for the mental health projects from £10k to £20k.	Y	Across the service funding is being directed at interventions which are known to positively support mental wellbeing – and this is linked to the data. The additional £10k provided to accompany the MH Champion role has not yet been allocated although Cllr Crouch has some options and ideas around funding hire of spaces and transport. No-one would argue that funds for MH is a positive step but more clarity of purpose might be helpful. One option to consider could be the question of space which seems to be an acute issue especially in Witney – Keystone Hubs / CAMHS both urgently looking for space. A further £10k will be allocated from the new initiatives funding once need has been identified.	Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger Healthier Communities	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager Madhu Richards, Director of Finance
3. That the Council reviews the reception arrangements at Woodgreen.	Y	Following the refurbishment of areas of the Woodgreen Offices as part of the overall Agile project, the reception area was moved and was re-established as a customer point rather than being the Council's primary reception area which is now in the Welch Way Office in the Town Centre, due to it being a more convenient location for the majority of residents due to access to public transport and car parking. Officers are looking at how this function is resourced more effectively, the ICT arrangements and seating arrangements for visitors, many of which have appointments with the registrars.	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader	Phil Martin, Director of Place