Oxfordshire County Council

Action and Recommendation Tracker
Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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The action and recommendation tracker enables the Committee to monitor progress against agreed actions and recommendations. The tracker is updated with the actions and recommendations agreed at each meeting. Once an action or recommendation has been completed or fully implemented, it will be shaded green and reported into the next meeting of the Committee, after which it will be removed from the tracker.

KEY	No progress reported	In progress	Complete

Meeting date	Item	Action/recommendation	Lead	Time scale	Update/response
17/04/24	Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan	1) That the Council should arrange for improved communications, particularly about reuse, at Household Waste and Recycling Centres and in publicity about the same.	Paul Fermer; Rachel Burns; Teresa Kirkham; Roger Seed	13/11/2024	**Accepted** Oxfordshire has one of the highest recycling rates in England, and also one of the lowest residual waste arisings/head. This means residents are good at recycling, but also not producing waste in the first place. To support residents Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has an active presence on social media, providing regular hints, tips and information on how people can reduce, reuse and repair, run events with the district councils like Oxfordshire reuses, have a look up tool on our website – the waste wizard, that tells residents where an item can be repaired or donated before providing information on which bin it goes in.

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					OCC has also supported the Community Action Group network for over 20 years. That support has helped 4 libraries of things to be established across the county enabling people to borrow rather than buy items which they do not need that often, and in 2023/24 over 260 repair events were held enabling residents to source free or low cost repairs for electricals, textiles and bikes. At HWRCs charity permits are granted to those reusing household goods to enable them to easily and legally dispose of items that they cannot reuse, and reusable goods deposited at the HWRCs are taken to be sold by our contractor out of county. In response to this recommendation we will ensure that we do further promotion of the waste wizard on site, and advertise the repair café website near the electricals recycling bins at HWRC sites. Oxfordshire based reuse will form part of the next HWRC contract (to start in Oct 2027). Our sites are currently very space constrained and do not have the room required for onsite reuse (and associated parking), we will seek to incorporate onsite reuse as we deliver our HWRC infrastructure strategy and expand or replace sites, and investigate offsite, in county, reuse until that is possible.

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		2) That the Council should seek to ensure that the outworking of the strategy results in reduced costs.			**Partially Accepted** When fully embedded, the transition of OCC to a Circular Economy will support a fair economy, keeping resources local, driving economic resilience and generating jobs and skills for people within Oxfordshire, it will help to create healthier and more connected communities, supporting residents to be independent and healthier for longer, it will enable a more resilient council, less exposed to global market fluctuations, and it will help us meet our net zero goals, reducing the impact of a changing climate on our residents. A circular council helps us become a place shaper of choice and meet our doughnut economic aspirations, ensuring that the needs of residents are met within planetary limits. This transition will ultimately result in stronger, healthier and more resilient localities and OCC delivering both savings and cost avoidance outputs. However, it will take time and investment to reach this state. Full transition requires reframing our relationship with 'stuff' on a fundamental level; changing attitudes and approaches so that borrowing, repairing and second hand becomes the norm. This will require sustained national communications whilst competing against private sector organisations that will continue to be keen to get us to purchase more new items.

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					The transition to a Circular Economy will result in savings, however these may not all accrue to OCC, and not all the savings and benefits are currently able to be captured and audited. The metrics to fully measure the impact of the interplay between different interventions and polices are not yet fully developed and validated (for example how a repair café can help increase connectivity within communities, both avoiding waste, and reducing isolation and associated public health consequences) and OCC is aiming to link with think tanks and researchers in this space to enable better understanding and quantification of activities. In developing the strategy and action plan officers have been aware of the current state of Local Government finances. Action plan delivery will be based upon business cases so that OCC has visibility of the costs and benefits associated with change.
		3) That the Council should continue to explore how reciprocal arrangements could be introduced with neighbouring authorities for the ease of residents.			**Partially Accepted** All of Oxfordshire's neighbouring local authorities have introduced restrictions on cross border usage of their HWRCs in recent years as part of their own financial planning process. OCC has investigated the opportunities around joint working to allow our residents to continue to use sites outside of Oxfordshire for free, but this has not been financially possible to achieve at the current time. We

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					remain open to discussions and are happy to explore ideas to achieve sustainable and best value services for Oxfordshire residents, while being mindful of both our financial situation, and that of other parties. Any changes will be subject to an EQIA and CIA and a full business case to demonstrate benefits and costs.
		4) That the Council should make explicit its role in the strategy as a lead partner and set out how it will build partnerships both within the county and across county borders.			**Accepted** OCC has already attended a Future Oxfordshire Partnership meeting to discuss the development of a countywide strategy and are working with the Local Enterprise Partnership to determine how both Doughnut Economics and the Circular Economy can be embedded into their programme. As part of the Pan-regional Partnership we have worked to update the environmental principles including those that underpin a Circular Economy approach. As a county authority OCC is one of the leaders in this sphere and is keen to keep innovating as we transition. Through the ORWP and our role on several national working groups we will continue to promote the circular agenda, and the role that Oxfordshire, and other Local Authorities can have in shaping the narrative.
17/04/24	Infrastructure Funding and s.106 Contributions	1) That the Council should ensure that the conditions attached to future s106 contributions are sufficiently flexible to ensure that they can be used to meet the actual needs of residents whilst ensuring that flexibility does not	Robin Rogers; Nicholas Perrins; Teresa Kirkham	13/11/ 2024	This recommendation is accepted and new S106 agreements are being drafted in this way wherever possible and agreed with applicants. Please note there is a legacy issue whereby older agreements do not have flexibility clauses meaning that there will be a period of time where these older agreements will be closed out

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		enable them to be spent in differing localities.			before more flexibly arrangements become the standard operating approach.
		2) That the Cabinet should accept and acknowledge the frustrations and dismay of members and residents at the sheer scale of the funding received and yet to be spent and should commit to that money being used for the infrastructure projects for which it has been provided as speedily as practicable.			This is accepted. In response a Corporate S106 review is underway that will address the issues with delivery with new process and use of technology. An update on progress will be provided during Autumn 2024.
		3) That the Council should explore whether it would be better to enter s278 agreements which could ensure that physical infrastructure is provided by developers at the early stages of development rather than relying on s106 contributions being earmarked for such infrastructure at a later date.			A key recommendation of the S106 review is to place the onus on the developer to deliver infrastructure as opposed to passing monies to the Council.
		4) That the Council should ensure that information makes clear where unspent moneys have already been earmarked for future expenditure.			This information will be set out in the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement
		5) That the Council should ensure that local members are informed about, involved in, and engaged with regarding any and all new developments from the beginning of proposals being discussed.			The S106 dashboard, which is pending release of the Corporate Microsoft BI licence, will significantly improve Members' oversight of held monies and plans for delivery.
		6) That the Council should explore whether it would be appropriate for Cabinet members to sit on the			The Board is an officer delivery board, with democratic accountability regular updates to the Cabinet Member for Finance and formal reporting to Cabinet, with

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		Strategic Capital Board to ensure democratic responsibility.			oversight from the relevant Scrutiny Committees. These arrangements are tested by the Audit and Governance Committee.
		7) That the Council should, when its dashboard goes live, ensure that contact details for appropriate officers are attached to each infrastructure project.			To be picked up when the dashboard goes live.
		8) That the Council should avoid silo working and consider whether each Locality should have a s106 officer attached to it.			The ongoing Corporate transformation will help address this by improved integration of teams.