Cherwell District Council - February 2026

Overview and Scrutiny

The O&S Committee heard from our Police and Crime commissionaire and the Chief Constable who were detailing the welcome improvements in 101 response time, force priorities and the significant increase in staffing.
He also announced the launch of the new AI chat bot called…. "Bobbi"
The importance of Scrutiny as we head towards Local Government Reform should not be underestimated.

Thames Valley Police Rural Forum

Met in Broughton on the 13th January and will next meet in either Bloxham or Hook Norton in the spring.
The local teams' priorities are set at these meetings and are well worth attending to have your say on what the police should be focusing on.

Local Plan

The initial hearings start week commencing 16th February and I'd welcome any progress to get the Local Plan made as soon as possible.
The current 5-year housing land supply position is 3.1.

Local Government Association – Councillors Forum

I attended the most recent forum in order to ask Georgia Gould the Minister of State for School Standards questions posed by the Governors of one of our Primary Schools.
The approach was timely as the White Paper on education and SEND is due soon and I hope this helps Primary Schools everywhere.

Oxfordshire Rural and Community-Led Housing Steering Group

Community First Oxfordshire invited me to their most recent meeting to talk about the loss of affordable housing from a development in Deddington. What was interesting about this was the use of the mortgagee in possession clause in the Section 106 agreement. This is a rarely used section of the document which was invoked by the administrator to protect the creditors after the developer went into liquidation.
What we hope to do is explore whether an addition clause can be added into Section 106 agreements to allow the community to step in should a registered housing provider not be available to manage the affordable house.
CDC are currently exploring the possibility of modifying the mortgagee in possession clauses and the Government have also just published a review into S106.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/policy-statement-a-roadmap-for-section-106-delivery-in-england/policy-statement-a-roadmap-for-section-106-delivery-in-england

Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place Plan

This was discussed and challenged over a number of issues including the feedback process and why the plan was so quiet on improving life in the villages.
I've also lobbied to have the area covered increased to include Deddington inc Clifton, Marsh Gibbon and Tackley.
Objective BSV11 was much discussed and challenged on why it was Bicester focused and ignored the impact related to development this area faces. A push for ANPR protection for the rural hinterland is very much in my mind and I'm delighted that the officers at OCC have expressed a willingness to make this policy. Should this document be modified and adopted it can be used as evidence for developer contribution needs.

LGA/ADPH Annual Public Health Conference

I've been to this conference asking questions on the expansion of primary Care.
It's been interesting to hear that the situation here is fairly common.

You may also have heard the Wes Streeting has taken a personal interest in the development of a health Centre in Didcot. The Western Park surgery has been in planning for a decade.

Directly to Ansaf Anzar
In your intro you noted the role of public health and planning.

How are we going to get the ICB's to play their part in Local Plan development?
How are we going to get the ICB's to create a plan for the expansion of Primary Care (GP services?)
How are we going to get the ICB's to regularly request developer contributions to fund their (often no-existent) plan for primary care expansion?
How are we going to encourage the Government to encourage the ICB's to be involved in this planning role?
How are we going to get the District Valuation Service to set rents that make primary care expansion more likely?

Without solutions to these issues, we are unlikely to see a significant expansion in Primary Care services.

And to you Ansaf, what is being done to ensure that the recommended new Town at Heyford Park is going to have any Primary Care services?

Cllr David Rogers
Cherwell District Council