

To: Council
Date: Monday 7 October 2019
Report of: Jo Colwell, Environmental Sustainability
Title of Report: Oxfordshire Environment Partnership

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To provide Members with an update on the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP) which convenes the City, District and County Councils in Oxfordshire to share best practice and propose actions.
Key decision:	No
Executive Board Member with responsibility:	Councillor Tom Hayes, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford
Corporate Priority:	Clean and Green Oxford
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan
Recommendation: That Council notes the content of the report.	

Introduction and background

1. This paper is to provide an update on the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP) and notes the proposal to reform Oxfordshire's Resources and Waste Strategy, and reinstate a full-time Partnership Officer post to resource the work of the Partnership.

The detail is set out in the accompanying Cabinet Paper agreed on 11 September 2019.

2. This forms part of the City Council's response to the Climate Emergency, in close alignment with our neighboring councils within the county. Waste and recycling issues are central to the circular economy. To enable the required step change to achieve the national strategy and the city's own ambitious net zero aspiration, national policy change is needed.
3. Under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, local authorities in two tier areas have a duty to create and update a shared waste strategy. From 2007, this duty was formally exercised by the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP), the forerunner of today's Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP), which includes all five

district councils responsible for the collection and disposal of recycling and waste in Oxfordshire (including Oxford City Council, Vale of the White Horse, South Oxfordshire, West Oxfordshire, Cherwell) and Oxfordshire County Council.

4. Oxfordshire Environment Partnership is a meeting of Cabinet Members and officers of the six local authorities in Oxfordshire, with other groups, that have responsibility for the environment to share best practice, review performance and discuss policy. It has no decision making powers but can make recommendations.
5. Waste and recycling issues were incorporated into the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership as the result of the dissolution of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) in April 2015 due to a cut in funding from Oxfordshire County Council. Oxford City Council was strongly opposed to this move. The dissolution of the OWP was a move away from a formal, binding and funded partnership to an informal model based on collaboration and cooperation. The partnership currently meets three times a year at locations across the County. Cherwell District Council currently has the leadership and secretariat functions.
6. As set out in the Cabinet Paper on Oxfordshire’s Resource and Waste Strategy 2018-2020 which was decided on at Cabinet on 11 September, Oxford City Council has supported the Resource and Waste Strategy and confirmed support for the reintroduction of joint working including a shared officer post in Oxfordshire.

Terms of Reference and Work Programme

7. Revised term of reference will be agreed between partnership authorities in light of the new arrangements. Membership is an elected representative from each authority and the Chair rotates with three meetings a year. The forward programme for the shared officer post will be determined by the Partnership.

Legal issues

8. The partnership has no formal decision making powers. Any implementation actions are determined by individual authorities.

Financial issues

9. Reforming the partnership, along with a full time partnership officer assumes a contribution from all districts, the County Council will provide £50k per annum and districts will provide £10K per annum which would come from the anticipated increase in recycling credits which would offset the cost. This is subject to City Council budget approval.

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Background Papers: None	