

To: Scrutiny Committee
Date: 11 August 2026
Report of: Chair of the Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Recommendations from the Working Groups for endorsement at the Scrutiny Committee

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To endorse the recommendations from the Working Groups.
Key decision:	No
Lead Member:	Councillor Alex Powell, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Priority:	A Well-Run Council
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That the Scrutiny Committee resolves to:
1. Endorse the recommendations from the Climate and Environment, Housing and Homelessness, and Finance and Performance Working Groups.
2. Note the recommendations to the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group.

Information Exempt From Publication	
N/A	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Confidential summary of discussions by the Climate and Environment Working Group	Yes
Appendix 2	Recommendations relating to companies for the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group	Yes

Overview and Summary

1. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations from the following Working Groups held since the previous meeting:

Climate and Environment Working Group – 6 July 2026

- Heat Network Update [Scrutiny-commissioned report]
- Local Area Energy Planning Update [Scrutiny-commissioned report]
- Local EV Infrastructure Update [Scrutiny-commissioned report]
- Community Energy Interim Policy Update [Scrutiny-commissioned report]

Finance and Performance Working Group – 15 July 2026

- ODS Executive Pay Policy [SJVG]
- ODS Group Performance Report [SJVG]

2. Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 grants the power to the Scrutiny Committee to make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive; and on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.
3. The recommendations due at Shareholder and Joint Venture Group on 23 July 2026 were endorsed through delegated authority to the Committee and Member Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee. They have been included as an exempt appendix for the Committee to note.
4. Cabinet Members, in consultation with the relevant Officers, will either, agree, agree in-part, or disagree with the recommendations. The tables below detail the Working Groups' recommendations for endorsement by the Committee. No table was produced for items where no recommendations were suggested.

Summary of discussions

Heat Network Update

5. Discussions relating to this item contains confidential information defined under Schedule 12A paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of the Local Government Act 1972. The summary is therefore provided as an exempt appendix to this report.

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)

6. Members received an update on the delivery of the LEVI programme, and sought information on the development of community charging hubs. They noted that the 10 pilot community hubs managed by Oxfordshire County Council are all situated outside the city centre. There is good appetite in the city from a wide spread of communities, however, these sites can be complex owing to community groups not owning the land and so required further engagement with landowners and prioritisation work. In relation delivery timeframes, the Climate and Environment Working Group asked about previously reported milestones aimed for the end of 2027 and noted the delay in procurement due to requiring the LEVI contracts with 5 district councils to be signed prior to commencement. It was reassured that whilst the programme's delivery milestones have changed, the concessionaires' delivery KPI's remained in place.
7. Members expressed the need to do further work with landowners and welcomed the suggestion to review another update once the pilot phase is completed, including identification of sites that could be taken forward. There were no recommendations.

Local Area Energy Planning Update (LAEP)

8. The Climate and Environment Working Group highlighted the damages created by repeated excavation of newly resurfaced roads for utility works, stressing the need for greater coordination between infrastructure projects. Members noted that the work undertaken by the Oxford Growth Commission to ensure a strategic approach would help improve the planning and coordination of infrastructure works. There were no recommendations.

Community Energy Interim Policy Update

9. In seeking clarification on how the arrangements would operate where community-owned organisations were already established and how participation in governance structure would be secured, the Climate and Environment Working Group commented on the importance of transparent governance system. Members recognised the challenges of imposing diverse participation from community groups but that engagement with community organisations, food banks and other local groups would be used to build capacity and maximise participation.
10. It was recommended that capacity-building for community groups should be supported and that diverse representation within the governance structures should be encouraged to enable a broad range of community members to participate.
11. The Working Groups wish to thank Cabinet Members and Officers who contributed to the presentation of reports and discussions.

Financial implications

12. Financial implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Working Groups.

Legal issues

13. Legal implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Working Groups.

Level of risk

14. Risk Registers, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Working Groups.

Equalities impact

15. Equalities Impact Assessments, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Working Groups.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

16. Consideration for Carbon and Environmental impacts, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Working Groups.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

17. Implications of Local Government Reorganisation for the reports listed above were outlined within the report when presented at the Working Groups.
18. Where appropriate, any further implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations using the linked guidance from Government: [Financial decisions before local government reorganisation - GOV.UK](#)

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**Table 1 – Recommendations of the Climate and Environment Working Group –
Heat Network Update**

The table below sets out the recommendations made by the Climate and Environment Working Group on 6 July 2026 for endorsement by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 11 August 2026. The Cabinet will be asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That the Council advocates for the creation of a social value fund, acknowledging the previously agreed recommendation to explore and embed social value in the delivery of Heat Network.		
2) That Cabinet recommends highways disruption is minimised in the delivery of Heat Network, avoiding any potential impacts on the traffic filter trial where possible.		

**Table 2 – Recommendations of the Climate and Environment Working Group –
Community Energy Interim Policy**

The table below sets out the recommendations made by the Climate and Environment Working Group on 6 July 2026 for endorsement by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 11 August 2026. The Cabinet will be asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That Cabinet supports the capacity-building of community groups, and in setting up the governance structure for the scheme, encourages diversity within the governance structures to enable a broad range of community members to participate effectively.		