

## Briefing note and supplementary papers

Date: **Monday 17 July 2023**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber - Oxford Town Hall**

The Council agenda, reports, this briefing note, and any other supplementary papers should be considered together.

This briefing note forms part of the papers to be considered at the Council meeting. It contains additional information; councillors' questions, public addresses; and amendments to motions.

All papers for this meeting can be accessed through the council's website.

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# Briefing note

Information for councillors and additional papers to be considered.

		Pages
PART 1 - PUBLIC BUSINESS		
1	Apologies for absence	Main agenda pack
2	Declarations of interest	
3	Minutes  Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on 20 March 2023 and Annual Council meeting held on 17 May 2023. <b>Council is asked to approve the minutes as a correct record.</b>	
4	Appointment to Committees  See main agenda frontsheet.  Any proposed changes will be circulated with the briefing note or notified at the meeting.	
5	Announcements  See main agenda frontsheet.	
6	Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision at this meeting  None.	
CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS		
7	Ice Rink Future Car Parking Provision  The Head of Community Services submitted a report to Cabinet on 14 June 2023 seeking approval for the favoured on-site option for future car parking provision for users of the Oxford Ice Rink when the Oxpens car park is closed permanently for redevelopment.  The Cabinet minutes are available at item 11b.	Main agenda pack

Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks will present the report and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Cabinet recommends that Council resolves to:

1. Establish a budget of £580,000 within the Council's capital programme, profiled across 2024/25 and 2025/26, to fund the provision of new car parking at the front of the ice rink, subject to OXWED's programme for closing the Oxpens car park, and approve the payback of previously spent feasibility funding of £46,000 into the feasibility budget.

## 8 Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Policy 2023-26

The Executive Director (Communities and People) has submitted a report to Cabinet on 12 July 2023 reporting on progress made on Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Action Plan for 2022/23 and to present an updated Safeguarding Policy for 2023-26.

The Cabinet minutes are available at Item 11c of the briefing pack.

Councillor Shaista Aziz, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities will present the report and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendations:** Cabinet recommends that, subject to the decision of Cabinet on 12 July 2023, Council resolves to:

1. **Note** the key achievements of the Safeguarding work delivered through Oxford City Council during 2022/23;
2. **Approve** the Safeguarding Policy 2023-2026;
3. **Note** the Safeguarding Action Plan 2023/24; and
4. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Communities and People), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, to make minor changes to the approved policy in order to continue its alignment with the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

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## OFFICER REPORTS

### 9 Decisions taken under Part 17.9 of the Constitution

The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report to Council that asks Council to note the decision taken by the Executive Director (Development) under the provisions in Part 17.9 of the Constitution.

**Recommendation:** That Council resolves to:

1. **Note** the decision taken as set out in the report.

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<b>10</b>	<b>Urgent key decisions taken since October 2022</b>  <i>A revised version of the report is attached.</i>  The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report which updates Council on key decisions taken in cases of special urgency since October 2022.  <b>Recommendation: Council is recommended to:</b>  1. <b>Note</b> the urgent key decisions taken in cases of special urgency as set out in the report.	9 - 16
<b>QUESTIONS</b>		
<b>11</b>	<b>Questions on Cabinet minutes</b>  <i>This item has a time limit of 15 minutes.</i>  Councillors may ask the Cabinet Members questions about matters in these minutes:	
<b>11a</b>	<b>Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 April 2023</b>	<b>Main agenda pack</b>
<b>11b</b>	<b>Draft Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 June 2023</b>	<b>Main agenda pack</b>
<b>11c</b>	<b>Draft Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 July 2023</b>	17 - 26
<b>12</b>	<b>Questions on Notice from Members of Council</b>  40 questions on notice.  The questioner may ask one supplementary question of the Cabinet Member who submitted the response, or the Leader in their absence.	27 - 46
<b>PART 2 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCRUTINY</b>		
<b>13</b>	<b>Public addresses and questions that do not relate to matters for decision at this Council meeting</b>  <i>This item will be taken at or shortly after 7.00pm</i>  2 public addresses and 1 question not relating to matters for decision at this meeting.  Up to five minutes is available for each public address and up to three minutes for each question.	53 - 64

A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items.  
Responses are included within this limit.

## **14 Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions**

### **14a The Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership**

The Head of Corporate Strategy has submitted a report that notes the annual update on the Oxfordshire Resources & Waste Partnership.

**Recommendation:** That Council resolves to:

1. **Note** the annual update report on the work of the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership.

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### **14b Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2022/23**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has submitted a report which provides Council with a summary of Scrutiny activity during the 2022/23 municipal year.

**Recommendation:** That Council resolves to note the update report.

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### **14c Scrutiny Committee update report**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has submitted a report which updates Council on the activities of scrutiny and the implementation of recommendations since the last meeting of Council.

**Council is invited to comment on and note the report.**

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## **PART 3 - MOTIONS REPRESENTING THE CITY**

### **15 Motions on notice 17 July 2023**

**This item has a time limit of 60 minutes.**

Minor technical or limited wording amendments may be submitted during the meeting but must be written down and circulated.

**Council is asked to consider the following motions:**

- a) Support Oxford's Sudanese community – create safe pathways for Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here. (proposed by Cllr Shaista Aziz, seconded

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by Councillor Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini)

b) Use car parking sites for Solar Farms (proposed by Cllr Laurence Fouweather, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingworth]

c) Extending the Smoke Control Area (proposed by Cllr Emily Kerr, seconded by Cllr Lucy Pegg) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton]

d) Supporting a Community Right to Grow (proposed by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, seconded by Councillor Mark Lygo)

e) Housing Management System problems and resultant accounts issues at Oxford City Council and ODS (proposed by Cllr Christopher Smowton, seconded by Cllr Laurence Fouweather) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown]

## 16 Matters exempt from publication and exclusion of the public

See main agenda frontsheet.

### 16a East Oxford Community Centre

*Appendices 1-3 and 6-7 to this item include exempt information pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. If Council wishes to discuss matters relating to the information set out in Appendices 1-3 and 6-7 to the report, it will be necessary for the Council to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting (as set out at agenda item 16).*

The Executive Director (Communities and People) submitted a report to Cabinet on 14 June 2023 providing an update on progress of the project to deliver the development of The East Oxford Community Centre at Princes Street in upgrading the main building and providing a modern new build extension in a single place. The report also set out, for approval, options to address the unprecedented construction inflation.

The Cabinet minutes are available at Item 11b.

Councillor Ajaz Rehman, Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities, will present the report and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Cabinet recommends that Council resolves to:

1. Increase the project budget by £1.298m (from £5.496m to £6.794m).

### 16b Housing Management System Implementation

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*Appendices 1 and 4 to this item include exempt information pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. If Council wishes to discuss matters relating to the information set out in Appendices 1 and 4 to the report, it will be necessary for the Council to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting (as set out at agenda item 16).*

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The Executive Director (Communities and People) and the Head of Financial Services submitted a report to Cabinet on 14 June 2023 updating Members on the lessons learned from the implementation of the Housing Management System and the outcome of discussions with the supplier as to potential settlement; and to seek additional budget approval for further development of the product after the move to 'business as usual' which has now been secured.

The Cabinet minutes are available at Item 11b.

Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focussed Services and Council Companies will present the report and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Cabinet recommends that Council resolves to:

1. **Approve** the additional budget of £263k in 2022-23 as detailed in paragraph 8 of the report; and
2. **Include** an additional budgetary amount of £497k of capital and £97k of revenue over the next 4 year period for the further development of the system (paragraphs 9-11).

## **16c City Centre Land Regeneration Scheme**

*Appendices 1-4 to this item include exempt information pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. If Council wishes to discuss matters relating to the information set out in Appendices 1-4 to the report, it will be necessary for the Council to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting (as set out at agenda item 16).*

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The Executive Director (Development) will submit a report to Cabinet on 12 July 2023 updating Cabinet on progress of the procurement of a development partner to regenerate a council asset in the city centre; to recommend to Council to include additional budget for the scheme; and to seek approval to enter contracts with a preferred development partner and operator consortium to regenerate 38-40 George Street, Oxford.

The Cabinet minutes are available at 11c of the briefing note pack.

Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management will present the report and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Cabinet recommends, subject to the decision of Cabinet on 12 July 2023, Council resolves to:

1. Approve an additional capital budget of £12.1 million for delivery

of this regeneration scheme (see Confidential Appendix 1 for more details).

**This briefing note is published as a supplement to the agenda and should be considered along with the agenda; reports; and other supplementary papers.**



**To:** Council  
**Date:** 17 July 2023  
**Report of:** Head of Law and Governance  
**Title of Report:** Urgent Key Decisions

Summary and recommendations	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To update Council on key decisions taken in cases of special urgency since October 2022.
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council
<b>Recommendation(s): Council is recommended to:</b>	
1. <b>Note the urgent key decisions taken in cases of special urgency as set out in the report.</b>	

Appendices
None

## Introduction and background

1. The Leader of the Council is required by regulations to report to Council at least annually on executive decisions taken under special urgency procedures. Special urgency rules apply to key decisions that have not been notified on the Forward Plan for at least 5 clear days. Such decisions can only be taken where the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee (or if there is no chair the Lord Mayor) agrees that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred. This report updates Council on executive decisions taken in cases of special urgency since October 2022.

## Decisions taken in cases of special urgency

2. The following executive decisions were taken in cases of special urgency during the period since the previous report to Council on 3 October 2022.

<b>ITEM 1</b>	<b>Cost of Living Payment for Oxford City Council Staff</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve expenditure of c£400,000 to fund a one-off ex-gratia payment of £500 to Oxford City Council staff to reflect the cost of living crisis. The sum was not within the Council's existing approved budget, and was be met from reserves.</li> </ul>	
<b>Date of decision:</b>	25 October 2022
<b>Decision taker</b>	Caroline Green, Chief Executive
<b>Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?</b>	<p>Yes - Constitution Part 9.3(b):</p> <p>(b) The Head of Paid Service was authorised to take any urgent action necessary to protect the Council's interests and assets where time was of the essence, and it was impracticable to secure authority to act where such authority would otherwise be required.</p> <p>The Head of Paid Service, in so acting, was guided by budget and the policy framework, and consulted the other Statutory Officers before acting and reported, in writing, as soon as practicable to the body which would otherwise had been required to give the necessary authority to act.</p> <p>Key decision procedures and call in procedures (Parts 15 &amp; 17) applied to any key decisions taken under this authorisation.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	<p>The Council's staff resource is an asset of the Council. The one-off payment allowed the Council to provide support for its staff in the difficult financial climate. As the support was needed urgently, and to allow payment to be made in a timely way, the decision was been made by the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) using authority contained at Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution. The decision had been made in consultation with senior Council staff; the Leader of the Council; and other Group Leaders, and to be reported to Council in due course</p>
<b>Alternative options considered:</b>	Not to make a one-off ex-gratia payment. This option was rejected as it would not allow support to be provided to staff
<b>Wards significantly affected</b>	None

<b>ITEM 2</b>	<b>Award of a contract to ODS for the construction of Bullingdon Community Centre</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To confirm the award of a contract with a value of £1,396,495 to ODS for the construction of a replacement building at Bullingdon Community Centre.</li> </ul>	
<b>Date of decision:</b>	27 October 2022
<b>Decision taker</b>	Stephen Gabriel, Executive Director (Development)
<b>Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?</b>	<p>Yes – Cabinet, on 19 December 2019 (Agenda Item 15 - Bullingdon Community Centre - Project Approval and Award Of Contract) resolved to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delegate to the Executive Director Customer and Communities in consultation with the S151 officer and Head of Law and Governance the award of the contract to Oxford Direct Services Ltd [for the construction of a replacement building at Bullingdon Community Centre] subject to the full tender submission being within the agreed budget; and</li> <li>2. Recommend to Council to increase the total project budget by £200,000 to £1,403,000. This is included as part of the consultation budget.</li> </ol> <p>This delegation was within the remit of the Executive Director (Communities and People).</p> <p>On 17 February 2021, Council resolved to approve an increase in budget to a total of £1.506m as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 – 2024/25 and 2021/22 Budget.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	<p>ODS was appointed following an ‘open book’ basis to allow intervention and value engineering at each elemental stage of works. A contract sum agreed prior to commencement would have been the alternative, but would have seen the inclusion of a fluctuation clause or a high addition of risk sums included in the tender sum. A contract has been drafted and agreed by Legal Services and is now ready to be signed to confirm award</p>
<b>Alternative options considered:</b>	Alternative options were set out in the report to Cabinet on 19 December 2019 and were not preferred for the reasons given.
<b>Wards significantly affected</b>	Churchill; Lye Valley

<b>ITEM 3</b>	<b>Oxford City Council Staff Pay Increase</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve expenditure of c£1,000,000 per annum to fund an increase in salary of £500 per annum, to all staff employed directly by Oxford City Council from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023, other than Executive Directors and the Chief Executive. Such salary increase were pro-rata for part time staff, and not apply to contractors or those on day rates, but agency staff on equivalent Oxford City Council paypoints received the increase. The gross salary increase of £500 was consolidated with gross salary, and paid on a monthly basis with salary payments, and to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023.</li> <li>The cost of this additional payment of £500 to council employees including those within ODS was approximately £1 million per annum inclusive of employers national insurance and superannuation. There will be an unbudgeted cost of around £170k in 2022-23 but an ongoing cost of £1 million per annum from 2023-24. The Council has sufficient budgetary provision within its medium term financial plan (MTFP) for 2023-24 to fund the cost relating to council staff, with ODS having agreed to fund the amount relating to ODS staff. Given that this payment is consolidated the financial impact will be ongoing, affecting future years of the MTFP. This ongoing cost will need to be considered against the pay assumptions made for future years in the MTFP.</li> </ul>	
<b>Date of decision:</b>	9 March 2023
<b>Decision taker</b>	Caroline Green, Chief Executive
<b>Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?</b>	<p>Yes - Constitution Part 5.16: "Council sets collective terms and conditions ... other than pay which is delegated to the Chief Executive to implement in respect of all staff, other than that of any ... Executive Directors, in accordance with national or local pay award/review schemes".</p> <p>Key decision procedures and call in procedures (Parts 15 &amp; 17) applied to any key decisions taken under this authorisation.</p> <p>However, this decision is considered to be urgent and therefore Part 15.17 of the Constitution applied. Before taking the decision, the matter was included in the forward plan for less than 1 day. It was not practicable to include the matter on the forward plan any earlier, nor to wait 28 days before taking the decision, due to the urgency. The urgency had arisen as there was a need to pay the backdated pay in the financial year 22/23 and to achieve that, the additional pay must be processed by Human Resources and payroll officers on 14th March 2023 at the latest. The Chair of Scrutiny had given his permission for the decision to be made by the Chief Executive after less than one day's notice, due to the urgency of the matter.</p> <p>The decision was subject to call in, in accordance with Part</p>

	17 of the Constitution.
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	<p>The Council's staff resource is an asset of the Council. The increase to salary allowed the Council to provide support for its staff in the difficult financial climate.</p> <p>As the support was needed urgently, and to allow payment to be made in a timely way in the current financial year, the decision was made by the Chief Executive under delegated authority, and with the agreement of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to enable the decision to be made without 28 days' notice on the forward plan.</p> <p>The decision had been made in consultation with Statutory Officers, all Group Leaders, and the Unions.</p>
<b>Alternative options considered:</b>	<p>Not to make any increase to staff salaries.</p> <p>This option was rejected as it would not allow support to be provided to staff and could impact on recruitment and retention.</p>
<b>Wards significantly affected</b>	None

<b>ITEM 4</b>	<b>South &amp; Vale HIA Contract</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the submission of the bid for a South &amp; Vale Home Improvement Agency.</li> <li>• Delegate authority to the Director of Communities and People to submit the bid and enter into a contract up to a value of £1.8m in the event that the bid is successful.</li> <li>• Recommend to Council that the budget is amended to take into account the provision of the HIA service to deliver the contract.</li> <li>• Approve that the HIA assists South and Vale Council in reducing their backlog by carrying out 100 DFG cases and delegates approval to the Head of Regulatory Services &amp; Community Safety to enter into a contract up to a value of £200k.</li> </ul>	
<b>Date of decision:</b>	10 March 2023
<b>Decision taker</b>	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
<b>Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?</b>	Yes – Part 4.6 of the Constitution: the Leader may delegate executive responsibilities to a single Cabinet Member with or without consultation with officers or other Cabinet Members. The Leader agreed on 07 March 2023 to delegate the decision to the Cabinet Member for Housing.
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	If the bid is successful, Oxford City Council's delivery of the contract will bring income into the Council and enable the Council to provide support to Oxfordshire residents as specified in the terms of the contract. There will also be benefits to the NHS health system which will improve access for residents who live in Oxford.
<b>Alternative options considered:</b>	Not to bid for the South and Vale Home Improvement Agency contract or provision of assistance to deal with their Disabled Facilities Grant backlog. This option was rejected as the aim of additional income to the Council, if the bid is successful, would not be realised and it would not allow the Council to assist in the provision of vital support to Oxfordshire residents.
<b>Wards significantly affected</b>	None

<b>ITEM 5</b>	<b>Microsoft Licences</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following a regular procurement exercise, a successful bidder was identified. The outcome was the award of a three-year contract to the supplier Phoenix for the provision of all Microsoft software licences used across the Council and associated companies. The offer of a 3-year award with the associated discounts was only made during the week of 13th March 2023 - given the timescales for implementation, which must be by the 31st March 2023, which is what has generated the need for an urgent decision.</li> <li>In order to obtain a £40,000 discount on the pricing, the Council had to sign the agreement in the coming days. Otherwise, the Council would pay the full cost for an annual deal.</li> <li>The value of the contract amounted to £1,107,123.21 over a three-year period. This is in line with the existing capital (C3044) and revenue (CA70) budgets for the provision of the licences. No additional capital or revenue funding is required, nor is there a requirement to vire funds or to adjust annual budgets.</li> <li>Time was of the essence, to protect the Council's financial interests, by securing the discount of £120,000 over the three year period, and the discount was not available if the decision awaited the next scheduled Cabinet meeting. For this reason, the Chief Executive's delegated authority was used to take urgent action was appropriate and justified</li> </ul>	
<b>Date of decision:</b>	24 March 2023
<b>Decision taker</b>	Caroline Green, Chief Executive
<b>Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?</b>	<p>Yes – This is a decision reserved to Cabinet under Constitution Part 4.5(10) relating to project approval.</p> <p>However, in the circumstances, an urgent decision was made by the Chief Executive under her authority delegated by Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution which provides that the Chief Executive is authorised to take any urgent action necessary to protect the Council's interests and assets where time is of the essence and it was impracticable to secure authority to act where such authority would otherwise be required.</p> <p>In exercising such authority, the Chief Executive, was guided by budget and policy framework, and consulted the other Statutory Officers before acting and reported, in writing, as soon as practicable to the body which would otherwise have been required to give the necessary authority to act.</p> <p>Key decision procedures and call in procedures applied to any key decisions taken under this authorisation.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	If a decision was not taken with urgency, Microsoft would apply the April pricing, which was a 9% uplift on 2022/3 values. If an annual contract is taken out, the increase in

	cost would be in the region of £40,000 compared to the three-year cost, plus an uplift of 9%.
<b>Alternative options considered:</b>	<p>1. Follow the regular process – this would cost the Council upwards of £120,000 (circa 10% of the contract value) over three years.</p> <p>2. Approve an annual contract through the Head of Service (as the value would be below £500,000) – this would cost an additional £40,000 to the Council.</p>
<b>Wards significantly affected</b>	None

### Financial issues

3. There are no financial issues arising directly from this report.

### Legal issues

4. Regulation 19 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 requires that the executive Leader submits a report to the authority at least annually on executive decisions taken in cases of special urgency (Regulation 11), including the particulars of each decision.

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**Background Papers: None**



## **Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 12 July 2023**

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### **Cabinet members present:**

Councillor Brown	Councillor Turner
Councillor Aziz	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Hunt	Councillor Munkonge
Councillor Railton	Councillor Rehman
Councillor Linda Smith	Councillor Upton

### **Officers present for all or part of the meeting:**

Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement  
Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development)  
David Butler, Head of Planning Services  
Alan Chandler, Senior Refugee and Migrant Officer  
Emma Coles, Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Manager  
Rhian Davies, Interim Head of Law and Governance  
Vicki Galvin, Senior Programme Manager for Customer Experience  
Caroline Green, Chief Executive  
Emma Gubbins, Corporate Asset Lead  
Tom Hook, Executive Director (Corporate Resources)  
Laura Jones, Safeguarding Coordinator  
Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services  
Peter Matthew, Interim Executive Director of People and Communities  
Alex Miller, Transactions Manager  
Nerys Parry, Head of Housing  
Carolyn Ploszynski, Head of Regeneration and Economy  
Paul Reid, Rapid Rehousing Manager  
Elaine Swapp, Principal Regeneration Officer  
Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy  
Jane Winfield, Head of Corporate Property  
Richard Wood, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager  
Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety

### **Also present:**

Councillor Lucy Pegg, Chair of Scrutiny

### **Apologies:**

No apologies were received.

## **15. Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public**

None.

## **16. Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda**

None.

## **17. Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues**

None.

## **18. Items raised by Cabinet Members**

Councillor Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice, reported that it was the Council's intention to expand Oxford's smoke control area (SCA) to cover the entire city. The current SCA was a patchwork of areas which had been put in place over a period of some years: expanding it would enable air quality to be further improved, as well as remove confusion for residents about which areas were covered by the restrictions. A public consultation was planned, and it was hoped that the new arrangements would be in place in time for the burning season this winter. Councillor Railton highlighted that the aim was to improve air quality (rather than reduce carbon emissions), and drew attention to the significant dangers of particulate matter pollution and associated health risks.

Councillor Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities, reported that the Rail Delivery Group and the Department for Transport had announced a consultation on their proposal to close the majority of railway station ticket offices across England. Councillor Upton highlighted that closing station ticket offices would be likely to have a negative impact on many groups: in particular those who were hard of hearing, blind or partially sighted, and older people. Services were provided by ticket office staff which were not able to be provided by ticket machines, and whilst some stations would continue to be staffed it was evident from the consultation documents that many stations would lose ticket station staff altogether. This would result in no meaningful assistance being available for those who needed it. Cabinet agreed that Councillor Upton should write to Mark Harper MP, the Secretary of State for Transport, to voice the Council's concerns about the proposal and the short length of the consultation period (21 days).

## **19. Scrutiny reports**

The Climate and Environment Panel had met on 27 June, Scrutiny Committee had met on 4 July, and the Housing & Homelessness Panel had met on 5 July. Councillor Pegg, Chair of Scrutiny, presented the reports and recommendations from those meetings relating to:

- (i) Draft Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note;
- (ii) Biodiversity Update;
- (iii) Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26;
- (iv) Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Charter / Pledge;
- (v) Citizen Experience Strategy;

- (vi) Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families; and
- (vii) Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

Cabinet Member responses had been provided and were included in a separate published supplement.

In relation to the Draft Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note, there had been 7 recommendations of which 5 had been accepted. Councillor Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities, clarified that the work outlined in the remaining two recommendations (4 and 5) was expected to be undertaken in due course as part of other workstreams by the Planning Policy team; however a commitment to a definitive timescale could not be provided at the current time.

All of the recommendations relating to the Biodiversity Update had been accepted. Councillor Brown, Leader, reported that the suggestion to add a dedicated biodiversity workstream to the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Partnership's (ZCOP) existing workstreams had been made. However, ZCOP had considered that it would result in duplication of work being undertaken elsewhere. Instead, a meeting of biodiversity leads across the major institutions which formed ZCOP would be convened, to ascertain if there were ways to encourage or improve collaborative working.

A detailed discussion had taken place at the Scrutiny Committee on the Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26. This had covered: ensuring that the Safeguarding Policy was aligned with other Council policies; adult exploitation; Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation; and how the Council worked with the voluntary sector and community groups to ensure that they had adequate safeguarding policies in place. In response to the latter point Councillor Shaista Aziz, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, highlighted that the Council was not responsible for outside organisations' safeguarding policies. However, it was able to share its own policy in order to try to promote alignment.

Discussion at scrutiny on the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Charter / Pledge had included the rationale behind the pledges chosen. The recommendations had largely related to communication, and encouraging the Council to be as ambitious as possible in the pledges it was planning to meet. Councillor Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships, responded that the recommendations were accepted. However, with regard to the Council's ambitions, the partnership's emphasis was on participants signing up to acknowledge work which was already being done - and adding new pledges which could realistically be progressed during the year - rather than seeking to meet all the pledges at once. It was important that the pledges which the Council signed up to could be delivered. It was expected that further pledges would be added on an ongoing basis.

Discussion at scrutiny of the Citizen Experience Strategy had included language (and in particular use of the word 'citizen') and the wider context of the strategy. Two recommendations had been made, which were both accepted. In relation to the use of language, Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies clarified that the word 'citizen' was intended to denote those who lived, worked or visited Oxford - not to exclude any group - and emphasised that inclusivity was a pillar of the strategy.

All of the recommendations relating to Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families and the Tenant Satisfaction Survey had been accepted.

## 20. City Centre Land Regeneration Scheme

The Executive Director (Development) had submitted a report to update Cabinet on the progress of the procurement of a development partner to regenerate a Council asset in the city centre; to recommend to Council to include an additional budget for the scheme; and to seek approval to enter into contracts with a preferred development partner and operator consortium to regenerate 38-40 George Street, Oxford.

Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, presented the report and explained that the lease of the Odeon Cinema at Gloucester Green, which was one of the Council's important commercial assets, was due to expire shortly. Officers had therefore proactively explored the options for the site, noting that there was a need to focus on bringing in income for the Council as well as making the city the best place it could be. It was important to optimise the use of the asset, which was owned on behalf of the city of Oxford, to support services for its citizens.

The result was a scheme which was both financially viable, as well as benefitting the city and immediate locality. Councillor Turner commented that the proposal represented an exciting and important project for the Council and for the city, which would bring economic and cultural benefits in addition to the financial return for the Council.

The proposal included an aparthotel, and Councillor Turner outlined the benefits of this, which included offering a direct alternative to Airbnb (which was important as Airbnb depleted the supply of family accommodation within the local housing market), and the benefit to the city economy arising from people staying overnight in Oxford. The ground floor would be for community use: the focus for that element of the scheme would not be to drive value, and engagement would be needed with the local community with regard to the use of the space. The proposal would also offer the opportunity to improve and enhance the external appearance of the building, as well as social value commitments throughout the lease term.

Whilst it would result in the loss of the cinema facility, it was noted that alternative cinema provision was available within walking distance.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the appointment of the preferred developer and operator as set out in the report for the reasons provided;
2. **Recommend to Council** the approval of an additional capital budget of £12.1 million for delivery of this regeneration scheme (see Confidential Appendix 1 for more details);
3. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Development) in consultation with the Council's Head of Financial Services / Section 151 Officer; the Head of Law and Governance; and the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management to: (i) agree the final terms of, and enter into, the relevant contracts; (ii) agree the final scheme and submission of any planning application; and (iii) authorise any spending within the allocated budget (see Confidential Appendix 1 for more details).

## 21. City Centre Land Transaction: St Aldate's Chambers

The Executive Director (Development) had submitted a report to seek authority to let the whole or parts of St Aldate's Chambers.

Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management reported that a preferred offer for the lease of the building had been received. The consolidation of staff at the Town Hall had enabled the Council to reduce its costs and carbon footprint, and leasing the now vacant St Aldate's Chambers would provide a source of income to the Council which could be used to support the provision of services.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Development), in consultation with the Head of Financial Services / S151 Officer, the Head of Law and Governance and the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management to enter into lease(s) to let the whole or parts of St Aldate's Chambers to any tenant on terms which fulfil the requirements of S123 Local Government Act 1972.

## 22. Oxpens Road Car Park Lease Renewal

The Head of Corporate Property had submitted a report to seek approval to renew the lease of the car park at Oxpens Road.

Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, clarified that the car park was leased from OxWED and operated by the Council. It provided useful car parking for the city centre and an income stream to the Council, and authority was being sought to continue to lease it for that purpose.

A correction was provided that delegated authority was being sought for the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) to finalise terms and enter into the lease (not the Head of Corporate Property).

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** entering into a new lease with OxWED for the Car Park at Oxpens Road; and
2. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) in consultation with the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management, the Head of Financial Services, and the Head of Law and Governance to agree the final terms and enter into the lease.

## 23. Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families

The Head of Housing had submitted a report to seek approval for future commitments for resettling new refugee families into Oxford, and to seek approval to go to tender to commission the provision of person centred support.

Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing, reported that the resettlement of a minimum of 8 refugee families each year for the next five years was proposed. This would be fully-funded by government grant, and so involved no new pressure on Council budgets. The scheme would offer private rented accommodation for the families, and would use Home Office funding to provide support services to help ensure that they could successfully begin their new lives in Oxford. Based on previous

successful resettlement projects these services would comprise a holistic, person-centred trauma-informed support service to enable families to become fully independent in the community. This would include support and coaching to enable individuals to access education and employment.

Whilst the Council wished to provide sanctuary above the level set out in the report, there were limitations around the supply of affordable housing locally and the capacity of partner organisations to provide the support needed. Inclusion of more than 8 families per year in the scheme might be possible if the supply of suitable properties allowed. Additionally, participation in this scheme did not preclude the Council considering opportunities to participate in other refugee resettlement schemes.

Councillor Shaista Aziz, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, highlighted that the proposal was aligned with the Council's aim to become a City of Sanctuary.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the resettlement of a minimum of 8 refugee families per year from any of the resettlement schemes highlighted in the report for a period of 5 years from 2023 to 2028, on the condition that the requirements in paragraph 21 of the report are consistently met to ensure scheme viability;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Communities and People), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to agree the resettlement of additional refugees above this allocation (which will incur additional expenditure from Home Office grant funding for support provision) subject to sufficient grant funding;
3. **Approve** the use of Home Office grant funding of up to £1,313,840 (see Appendix 2) to procure the provision of 2 years of person centred support for each refugee family arriving in Oxford during the 5 year period between 2023 -2028;
4. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to approve the use of the Home Office grant funding to procure additional person centred support as required; and
5. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Housing in consultation with the Head of Financial Services/S151 Officer, the Head of Law and Governance and the Cabinet Member for Housing to allocate the approved budget and enter into contract(s) with a provider(s) for the provision of person centred support.

## **24. Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge**

The Executive Director (Development) had submitted a report to seek approval to participate in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter and endorsement of a series of Oxford City Council pledges.

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships, highlighted the value of the OIEP which aimed to create a more equal region with opportunities and benefits for all, principally by focusing on education, employment, social value and procurement, and place shaping. 120 employers had already signed up to the Partnership. By participating in the Partnership, the Council aimed to show its commitment and support towards making the city a better place to



be, including by being an inclusive employer and having employment policies which were as inclusive as possible (including flexible working); ensuring that all staff were paid the Oxford Living Wage; and maximising opportunities for apprentices. Participation in the Partnership and commitment to the pledges would also have benefits for the Council in terms of its ability to recruit and retain staff.

Subsequent to the publication of the agenda a staff consultation had been undertaken, and a number of helpful suggestions and ideas had emerged through that process. These had been included in a separate published addendum to the report.

It was expected that future reports would be brought back to Cabinet providing monitoring against the pledges and suggestions for additional new pledges.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** Oxford City Council's participation in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter; and
2. **Endorse** a series of Oxford City Council pledges that officers in respective service areas will deliver against, within existing committed budgets and for the duration of the current medium term financial strategy. Oxford City Council progress/performance against the pledges will be reported against annually and the results shared on Oxford City Council's website.

## **25. Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26**

The Executive Director (Communities and People) had submitted a report on progress made on Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Action Plan for 2022/23 and which sought approval for an updated Safeguarding Policy for 2023-26.

Councillor Shaista Aziz, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, presented the report and drew attention to the main change to the Safeguarding Policy. This related to an update to reflect a new governance structure. The Executive Director (Communities and People) now held responsibility for safeguarding at the Council, and the safeguarding function had moved from the Corporate Strategy area to the Regulatory Services and Community Safety area with effect from 1 April 2023, with the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety holding responsibility for the delivery of safeguarding. The remainder of the strategy was largely unchanged.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the key achievements of the Safeguarding work delivered through Oxford City Council during 2022/23;
2. **Approve** the Safeguarding Policy 2023-2026;
3. **Note** the Safeguarding Action Plan 2023/24; and
4. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Communities and People), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, to make minor changes to the approved policy in order to continue its alignment with the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

## 26. Review of the Street Naming and Numbering Policy

The Head of Planning Services had submitted a report to seek approval for a revised Street Naming and Numbering Policy.

Councillor Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities, explained that the purpose of the policy was to ensure that each property had a unique and unambiguous address. The policy set out how street naming and numbering would be done and how it would be consulted on. It had also been updated to ensure compliance with the latest best practice national guidelines.

Councillor Upton also highlighted that responsibility for maintaining the policy had now moved to Planning Services (from Law and Governance).

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the draft Street Naming and Numbering Policy (at Appendix 1); and
2. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Planning Services to make any amendments to the draft Policy as a result of Cabinet's consideration of it.

## 27. Bus Shelter Infrastructure and Advertising Concession Contract

The Executive Director (Development) had submitted a report to (i) seek approval for the tender of a contract to manage the bus shelter infrastructure; and (ii) seek delegated authority for the Head of Corporate Property to enter into a long-term contract with a selected supplier to maintain city bus shelters and manage advertising on the shelters.

Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, reported that the current contract for the cleaning and maintenance of bus shelters and management of advertising was due to expire and would require re-tendering. As part of this process, it was hoped that there would be an opportunity for the Council to acquire a new income stream by securing a proportion of the advertising profit from the bus shelters. There were a number of issues and options which would need to be considered during the procurement process, which were set out in the report, and so flexibility was sought to enable officers to finalise terms. Councillor Turner commented that the aim of the procurement will be to tender a contract which delivers for the city, but does so in a way which is compatible with the Council's values.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Grant project approval** to tender a contract to manage bus shelter infrastructure maintenance and advertising via a concession contract;
2. **Delegate authority** the Executive Director (Development) to finalise the tender documents; and
3. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Corporate Property in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance, the Head of Financial Services and the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management to agree the final terms and enter into a contract with the preferred supplier.



## **28. Citizen Experience Strategy**

The Head of Business Improvement had submitted a report to seek approval for a new Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25.

Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, highlighted that the strategy was more wide-ranging than the previous Customer Contact Strategy, and also built on lessons learned during the Covid pandemic in that it did not diminish the importance of face to face contact to resolve difficult issues. Councillor Chapman reported that the Council had recently signed a three year agreement with Oxfordshire County Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau to extend and enhance the Council's customer service presence at the Westgate Library. This was particularly welcome as the Council received high customer satisfaction ratings from users of the service.

Councillor Chapman commented that the pillars of the strategy, and the associated action plans, were around its focus on citizens; inclusion; and getting things right first time. Progress against the strategy would be monitored by a suite of measures, and included the potential for feedback using the residents' survey.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25 (at Appendix 1).

## **29. Future Oxfordshire Partnership Terms of Reference & Memorandum of Understanding**

The Head of Law and Governance had submitted a report to propose amendments to the Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships reported that the documents had been refreshed because the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (which was the period for which the body had been set up) was now entering its final phase. There was therefore a need for the Partnership to be re-constituted. The new Terms of Reference set out a way of working which continued to bring the councils in Oxfordshire together with the aim of working co-operatively on matters such as delivering housing, delivering infrastructure, and maximising investment from government to support these aims.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's revised Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding. These will take effect following approval by each of the six Oxfordshire councils.

## **30. Appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2023/24 Council Year**

The Head of Law and Governance had submitted a report to agree appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2023/24 Council year.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** appointments to charities, trusts, community associations and other organisations as shown in Appendices 1A – 1D and **note** the appointments to partnerships as detailed in Appendix 1E;
2. **Note** the guidance for appointees as detailed in Appendix 2; and
3. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and where appropriate with other group leaders, to make any changes to appointments to Outside Bodies as may be required during the course of the Council year 2023/24.

## 31. Minutes

**Cabinet resolved to approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023 as a true and accurate record.

## 32. Dates of Future Meetings

9 August 2023  
13 September 2023  
18 October 2023  
15 November 2023  
13 December 2023  
24 January 2024

All meetings start at 6pm.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.09 pm**

**Chair .....**

**Date: Wednesday 9 August 2023**

*When decisions take effect:*

*Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired*

*Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued*

*All other committees: immediately.*

*Details are in the Council's Constitution.*

**To:** Council  
**Date:** 17 July 2023  
**Report of:** Head of Law and Governance  
**Title of Report:** Questions on Notice from members of Council and responses from the Cabinet Members and Leader

## Introduction

1. Questions submitted by members of Council to the Cabinet members and Leader of the Council, by the deadline in the Constitution are listed below in the order they will be taken at the meeting.
2. Responses are included where available.
3. Questioners can ask one supplementary question of the Cllr answering the original question.
4. This report will be republished after the Council meeting to include supplementary questions and responses as part of the minutes pack.
5. Unfamiliar terms may be briefly explained in footnotes.

## Questions and responses

**Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships; Leader of the Council**

### SB1 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Brown – Tourist Buses

#### Question

What progress has been made since November 2022 on the city council's work to develop a coach drop-off and parking strategy for Oxford and restrict tourist coach drop off and parking on the residential streets?

#### Written Response

In January 2023 City and County Council officers met with local councillors, including Councillor Miles, to discuss options around tourist coach drop offs, parking and enforcement. As discussed in the meeting there are several challenges associated with

**SB1 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Brown – Tourist Buses**

stopping tourist coaches entering the city centre to drop off. Park and Rides are available but it has proved difficult to get coach companies to use them. Many of these challenges were set out in the previous Scrutiny Committee review on tourism. Several actions were taken to explore implementation of the previously discussed additional drop off options including in Speedwell Street and enforcement options by county officers. City officers continue to work with those officers to implement the additional drop off locations. The City Council also maintain the £20,000 capital allocation to engage with coach operators on a longer-term strategy. This is now to be progressed as part of the Movement and Place Framework that will be developed in partnership with the county council. The reason for this is the issue needs to be looked at strategically in the round with other movement considerations in the City Centre and nearby affected areas. This project will commence in 2023.

**SB2 From Cllr Kerr to Cllr Brown – Four Day Week Trial 1****Question**

Can the leader update members on what discussions she has had with the LEP and South Cambridgeshire Council about learnings from their four day week trials since the passing of the motion on the issue in March 2023?

**Written Response**

As previously reported I have had a number of discussions with both the LEP and with the leader of South Cambridgeshire on this topic. As councillors are aware, this is a very live topic with a ministerial intervention to try and stop South Cambridgeshire from continuing their trial – although on what basis it is unclear. It is hoped that the trial can continue so that we can learn from it. As members are probably also aware, the directly employed manual workforce in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Council are only now becoming part of this scheme.

**SB3 From Cllr Kerr to Cllr Brown – Four Day Week Trial 2****Question**

Does the leader agree that the Westminster government seeking to prevent South Cambridgeshire Council from continuing its four day week trial is a significant overreach

**Written Response**

Yes. Central Government has no business seeking to dictate employment policies to local authorities.

and local councils should be able to set their own employment practices in discussion with trade unions without government interference?	<p>The provisional results of the trial show there are benefits from the approach and the trial and accompanying research project should be allowed to run its course.</p> <p>As highlighted in much of the commentary to this action, there is a substantial risk of stifling innovation across the sector if government seeks to intervene in such matters.</p>
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#### **SB4 From Cllr Sandelson to Cllr Brown – Covered Market**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
When does the council plan to enable the return of the covered market into a place where people can do their weekly food shop from fresh food outlets, rather than it just supporting tourist souvenir outlets?	<p>I recommend that Cllr Sandelson reads the Covered Market Strategy documents. Incidentally, I haven't seen her in there when I do my weekly shopping at Bonners, David Johns, Cardews and the Oxford Cheese Shop and look forward to the return of a fishmongers and an additional butcher if we are able to find one. It is the case that many people shop in different ways now which is why the market needs to diversify and change but there is still room for traditional providers too. There are some excellent cafes and bars, a bookshop, several clothes shops, shops selling soap, handbags etc.</p>

#### **Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; Deputy Leader of the Council**

#### **ET1 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Turner – Gloucester Green Market 1**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Can you provide the details of the contracts of the Gloucester Green Market? How much is the council receiving & when is the contract due for renewal?	<p>The contract has recently been retendered and the new contract is close to completion. The annual income is anticipated to be in the region of £60k and is based on a share of revenue. There will be an annual reconciliation.</p> <p>The new contract is 5 years with an option to extend for an additional 5 years. We received one compliant bid through the tender process.</p>

## **ET2 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Turner – Gloucester Green Market 2**

### **Question**

Why have the council closed the kiosks at Gloucester Green? How much revenue has the taxpayer lost due to this closure? What were the rents and rates on the kiosks?

### **Written Response**

The kiosk leases expired earlier in 2023. The kiosks limit the longer-term enhancement of this site and wider area of Gloucester Green. The benefits arising from improvements to the visual appearance and openness of the southern side of Gloucester Green are considered to outweigh any short-term financial losses. This matter was the subject of agreement at Cabinet and has been through the proper process. The need to maximise the future potential of Gloucester Green is identified in the City Centre Action Plan. The previous rent of the kiosks totalled £76,250 per annum with rates payable of £15,000 per annum; there will be benefits to improvement to the public realm.

## **ET3 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Turner – City Council Personalised Vehicle Number Plate**

### **Question**

Why does the city council own a personalised number plate and what is its financial value?

### **Written Response**

The number plate is 'FC1'.

The registration plate is thought to have been given to the city by Lord Nuffield, who founded the former Morris car plant in Cowley and also the first number issued by Oxford as a licensing authority.

The value of the number plate is commercially sensitive and therefore not in the public domain.

## **ET4 From Cllr Smowton to Cllr Turner – Interest Rate Exposure**

### **Question**

Do we know how badly the council is exposed to recent significant swings in the bank of England base rate?

### **Written Response**

The bank base rate increased to 5% on 23rd June and it is widely thought to continue to rise before falling back gradually to lower levels from next year. The Council currently has around £200m of external debt which was taken out in 2012 all relating to HRA self-financing. This debt is at varying levels of fixed rates of interest maturing over a period of 50 years. This debt will increase over the coming years to a peak of £600 million to finance new capital spend. We will mitigate risk by taking out short term loans in

	<p>expectation that interest rates fall in the medium term. The Council's General Fund on the other hand has no external debt, preferring to make use of internal cash balances to finance its capital expenditure since the cost of doing so is less than the cost of taking external debt.</p> <p>Over the next few years the capital financing requirement, or underlying need to finance capital expenditure will increase to around £200 million. During this period the Council may be required to borrow externally since it will not have sufficient cash balances to fund such expenditure internally. Assumptions were made in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy agreed in February 2023 for rising interest rates. We are revising these assumptions to reflect the latest base rate rises, although our borrowing only occurs in later years of the MTFS. On a positive note, increased base rates leads to increases in investment interest earned on cash balances. In addition to the Council's position, one must also consider that of the Housing Company OXPlace, who currently finance their developments by loans from the council. Such loans must bear a subsidy control compliant interest rate comparable to the cost of external borrowing. The adverse impact of higher interest charges to finance developments affects the viability of such developments which in turn may affect the amount of dividend returns to the Council. Mitigations are being put in place by the Company to reduce the amount borrowed and hence borrowing costs, including the request for stage payments for social housing purchased by the HRA.</p> <p>In summary, the assumptions made in the Council's Business Plans in February 2023 are sufficient to ensure that there will be no significant adverse financial impact of the current base rate rises. However, should interest rates continue to rise and remain for a sustainable period then the Council may need to adjust its spending plans in a number of areas. These assumptions will be reviewed when the budget, MTFS and Business Plans are reset.</p>
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**Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks; Deputy Leader of the Council**

### **CM1 From Cllr Fouweather to Cllr Munkonge – Alexandra Park Car Parking and Consultation**

#### **Question**

Council officers have been in touch with residents and stakeholder groups about removing, replacing and/or refurbishing either or both of the buildings in Alexandra Park. This is welcome as the buildings are in a poor state of repair. However the initial proposal involves increasing the number of car parking spaces in the park, contrary to the policy in the adopted neighbourhood plan and the wider objectives to decrease travel into and within the city by car. This is of particular concern as Middle Way and South Parade are heavily used by children travelling to school who already face issues from heavy motor traffic. In addition the narrow shared access to the park, with limited visibility presents difficulties for park users including many families with small children having to share space with cars. There is also very limited room for cars to turn around. Adding more parking will not make these problems easier. How does the council align the current proposals with the need to reduce car use both overall and specifically in this location as required by the neighbourhood plan? Are there plans to offset any increase in car parking in Alexandra Park with a concomitant or greater reduction in parking provision elsewhere?

Does the council see these proposals as part of a wider vision for Alexandra Park?

Finally, although it is extremely welcome that officers have taken the trouble to engage fully with local groups, ward councillors were not included in the discussions and found out about the plans from those local groups and not from council officers or cabinet members. Can we assume this was an oversight and ask to be fully included going forward?

#### **Written Response**

Due to the initial discussions with Norham Garden Tennis Club for a lease to regularise their occupation, and the current condition of the buildings, Corporate Property have been working with the group towards a solution to satisfy both issues.

There has been an initial proposal submitted, and this has been developed with the tennis club with an awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan details a preferred reduction in parking, there are a number of conflicting priorities between the users of the park. Adding a small number of additional spaces to the existing car park would provide an opportunity to generate income towards the cost of the required works to support the tennis club. The intention has always been to support a local facility whilst minimising the financial impact to the Council, however the Neighbourhood Group's concerns are known and will be taken into consideration. As yet the plans are not finalised.

With regards to communication with ward councillors, ward councillors - Cllr Landell Mills & Cllr Miles were provided with a full briefing of the issues and possible way forwards on 13<sup>th</sup> February, along with a subsequent updates on 8<sup>th</sup> June and 4<sup>th</sup> July following a recent meeting with the tennis club.

### **CM2 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Munkonge – Fusion Gym Use at Spires Academy**

#### **Question**

Is it true Fusion has stopped public using the Gym at Spires academy? If true why?

#### **Written Response**

No, the gym is managed directly by the school.

The gym closed over the pandemic and is currently used by pupils. The School are



	keen to re-open to the public and are working on options as to how they can do so.
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### **CM3 From Cllr Kerr to Cllr Munkonge – Advertising on Plain Roundabout**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
What is the revenue the council has made from advertising on the Plain roundabout over the last three years?	The Council owns a very small section of the roundabout. The advertising boards are not within the Council's boundary.

### **CM4 From Cllr Morris to Cllr Munkonge – Allotments**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Does the portfolio holder agree that Oxford's allotments have an important role to play in building the city's resilience against the climate and ecological emergencies? Will the portfolio holder agree to prioritise providing support to the city's allotments?	Yes, allotments do play an important role in relation to building the city's resilience to climate and ecological emergencies. They also provide a source of healthy and nutritious food in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis – which links strongly to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy. While there is some limited officer time to support the allotment associations on key work strands, there isn't currently any additional budget available or officer resource to widen this.

### **CM5 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Munkonge – Oxford Ice Rink Parking Spend**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
There was a total of £580,000 spent on 25 parking places at the ice rink; How long it will take to recoup the money?	Currently spend on this project is just over £25,000, and we hope not to spend the full budget available. The parking proposed is required for the operational use of the ice rink and therefore it will form part of the lease and management of the ice rink. Separate cost recovery is therefore not proposed. The issue is that depending on future development in the area, without this expenditure there would be no parking available, which would pose a serious problem for users and staff of the ice rink

## **Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities and Culture**

### **AJ1 From Cllr Jarvis to Cllr Rehman – East Oxford 1**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Can the portfolio holder explain what communication the council had with residents occupying the East Oxford Games Hall prior to seeking an Interim Possession Order through the courts?	Both officers and members visited site to explain to occupiers of the East Oxford Games Hall that the facility has been closed since COVID, is in poor condition and previously had seen low user numbers. The demolition of the facility will enable affordable homes on the site and also significantly improved community facilities at Princes Street. This scheme has been widely consulted upon within the East Oxford community. The illegal occupation of the Games Hall site risks jeopardising those two objectives the Council has committed to delivering. Conversations with those occupying the site confirmed that a number of them were from London rather than being Oxford residents.

<b>AJ2 From Cllr Jarvis to Cllr Rehman – East Oxford 2</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Can the portfolio holder set out how they and the council intend to improve community relationships in East Oxford over community assets, particularly as the redevelopment of East Oxford Community Centre continues?	<p>The Council has been working with the community in East Oxford on this project for over 7 years. This has included regular 1-1 meetings, reference group meetings, consultation events, newsletters and focus groups. Over the years this has had the oversight and regular engagement different cabinet members, senior officers and a variety of different project team officers who have all been keen to work with the community. This has not been easy and whilst there have been positive elements of working together, there have also been some unrealistic expectations of the Council.</p> <p>We will shortly be looking to restart 1-1 meetings with the community tenants and will be continuing to send out regular newsletters.</p>

## Cabinet Member for Housing

<b>LS1 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Linda Smith – Housing Arrangements for Families 1</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Is it acceptable for the council to house a	Oxford has significant housing need and

**LS1 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Linda Smith – Housing Arrangements for Families 1**

family of five, a Mother and her four children, in one hotel room?

homelessness challenges, and as a result the Council often has to temporarily place homeless singles and families into hotels for short periods, ahead of moving to longer term temporary accommodation. This is common practice for most local authorities.

The Council only houses people in suitable accommodation which is in compliance with legislation and case law. Hotel placements are a nationally accepted option for homeless single people and families for short periods of time, while longer term accommodation is found. Before any placement in a hotel or other form of accommodation, officers review the offer to ensure compliance with suitability standards.

At present no family exceeds 6 weeks in a hotel, in line with government targets, unlike many of other authorities in London and the South East facing similar housing and homelessness pressures.

On occasion other statutory bodies, such as the County Council, house people in accommodation and transfer responsibility to us in line with the relevant legislation. When this happens, we take our own view on the accommodation's suitability, and if found not to be suitable, they are moved as soon as it is practically possible.

**LS2 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Linda Smith – Housing Arrangements for Families 2****Question**

Why did the council rehouse a family with small children into a house where the washing machine doesn't work, where the stove does not work, with additional issues with water taps and heaters and bed bugs?

**Written Response**

The Council only houses people in suitable accommodation which is in compliance with legislation and case law. Before any placement, officers review the offer to ensure compliance with suitability standards.

We ensure these standards are met in all our Temporary Accommodation through a property checklist that is completed by officers ahead of any placement, which gives confidence that the property is in good working order. When a household is placed information is passed on and explained to them on how to report any repairs or other issues.

As with any property, issues of repairs or animal/ insect infestation, can occur or be

	discovered once a household has moved in. If this occurs clients should contact the council immediately so they can be rectified as soon as possible.
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### **LS3 From Cllr R Smith to Cllr Linda Smith – HMO Saturation**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Which are the top 5 streets in Oxford, that either in whole or part, currently exceed the council's HMO saturation policy? What steps is the council taking to reduce the saturation of these streets?	<p>The HMO saturation policy (Policy H6 of the 2036 Local Plan) measures potential saturation along a 100m length from either side an application site, crossing into new roads wherever required to achieve the full length. This calculation is measured each time an application is made to ensure accuracy. As such we do not hold a list of saturation by street as this will not be relevant where application sites do not have 100m stretches of the same street either side of them.</p> <p>In order to control HMOs the Council enacted an Article 4, bringing small HMOs within the planning regime, thereby allowing the above policy to be applied. The citywide Additional Licensing we have had in place since 2011 has allowed us to ensure that all HMOs meet specific criteria, driving up the standard of accommodation and applying pressure to less reputable landlords, some of whom are likely to release properties back to family housing if the financial burden of improving properties is sufficient. There are no planning powers at our disposal to compel owners to convert existing HMOs into traditional housing stock.</p>

### **LS4 From Cllr R Smith to Cllr Linda Smith – Private Rented Sector and HMO Quality**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
In the last 12 months, how many civil penalties have been given out to the private rented sector and HMOs for non compliance, and how many landlords have had their HMO licence removed for contravening the housing act and not being fit and proper?	6 Financial Penalties have been served, 1 licence has been revoked for non-compliance.

## LS5 From Cllr Smowton to Cllr Linda Smith – Solar on Social Housing

### Question

The council's housing proposals have cut corners on solar PV -- Bertie Place houses had little per house, and Elizabeth Place had none at all. How will you avoid this happening in future?

### Written Response

OX Place has agreed a standard approach to meet or exceed the current Oxford Planning standard of 40% carbon reduction below 2021 Building Regulations. This is around 70% betterment to the pre-June 2022 building regulations. To set the context, our standard represents a considerable improvement from the carbon reduction standards across the country. Lanham, Bertie Place and Westlands exceed the Planning standard by 25%, 28% and 26% and national Building Regulations by 65%, 68% and 66% respectively. Clearly this is well beyond the minimum requirement so are worthy of celebration for the benefits they bring to both climate change as a serious global issue, and future residents of the homes.

Each site has to have an energy strategy based on individual layout and issues which meets that current design. For Westlands and Lanham for example, using air source heat pumps and a very efficient fabric, achieves considerably more than 40% betterment in terms of carbon saving. Solar PV panels are a very visual representation of energy savings for residents, but the bulk of the energy efficiency measures sit unseen in the fabric and heating systems of each home. The most important way to keep costs of heating down are to minimise the requirement for it in the first place, keeping heat in the home through good insulation and air tightness.

Any further ambitions of the energy strategy reflect the unfortunate but every present issue of the available financing to ensure the viability of the site. The cost of a building to achieve even a basic 40% betterment of building regulations is substantially more than a standard building regulations compliant building. At a time of ever increasing construction costs and the need to make an agreed financial return to the Council, this is a significant issue for OX Place as a company.

However, each site is required to be (as a minimum) to be 'Solar PV ready' so that the potential for solar PV, should budget or additional funding become available, remains

	<p>an option as design and construction progresses. This can be seen in both Bertie Place and Westlands as roof plans showing where all or additional PV would be situated have passed through the Planning system. This seems to be a sensible way of complying with the current already challenging energy performance targets, allowing for the future development of policy whilst delivering new homes within acceptable cost parameters.</p>
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## Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities

### LU1 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Upton – Town Hall Bike Parking

Question	Written Response
<p>A sum of money was budgeted for renovations of the bike parking in the town hall to be undertaken at the end of last year when officers were moved from st aldates into the building. Have any improvements been made with the allocated funding and if so, what changes were made and at what cost?</p>	<p>The SAC offices had two bike shelters with a total capacity of 80, as part of the leasing agreement, the new tenant will have sole access to one of them. To maintain a provision of 80 bike spaces for city council employees, the bike shelter that would stay with the council was removed, with a new one installed on the same footprint. This was a dual height bike shelter with a capacity of 80. A budget of £30, 000 was allocated for this and the total cost for removal of the old shelter and installation of the new one was £28,750.</p>

### LU2 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Upton – Use of Park and Rides for School Buses

Question	Written Response
<p>What is the city council's official position on the use of city council owned park and ride sites as a drop off/pick up location for school buses?</p>	<p>The Council has been contacted by a school and will be seeking to better understand the proposal. In principle, if the scheme resulted in fewer car trips into the city by parents driving children to school this could have many benefits in terms of congestion reduction and improved air quality. Coach pick-up and drop-off sites would need to be carefully considered and the council's priority must be ensuring that the Park and Ride service can run without disruption.</p>

### LU3 From Cllr Smowton to Cllr Upton – Airbnb Enforcement

#### Question

Will you ensure that sufficient resource is available for planning investigators to pursue full-time airbnbs?

#### Written Response

We have prioritised planning enforcement investigations into short term lets where there is clear evidence of a breach and a potential to take successful action. This has included proactively searching for properties in Oxford advertised as short term lets and has resulted in regular enforcement action. We are currently awaiting the result of two appeals against notices we have served.

### LU4 From Cllr Sandelson to Cllr Upton – Cycle and Pedestrian Bridge at Jackdaw Lane

#### Question

What plans does the City Council have for a new cycle and pedestrian bridge at Jackdaw Lane, to provide an alternative quiet route between East Oxford and the City Centre via the Thames Path (avoiding The Plain)?

#### Written Response

The City Council has no plans or funding for a pedestrian/cycle bridge in this location.

Oxfordshire County Council are the highway authority and in March 2020 adopted the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Oxford.

This includes a proposal for a bridge at Jackdaw Lane as a major scheme: *OCR19-30 Potential bridge over River Thames to link to East Oxford via Jackdaw Lane.*

Our understanding is that this is not funded at the present time.

### LU5 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Upton – New Build Cycle Infrastructure

#### Question

Why does Planning not require cycle paths on new estates to be built to 'Highways-adoptable' standards (e.g., Barton Park and Elizabeth Place)?

#### Written Response

The LPA seek comments from the Local Highways Authority who are the responsible authority for adopting such paths. We take their advice on such matters, and by and large they do seek adoptable standards. It is also necessary to consider what the impact of reaching adoptable standards will mean for the wider scheme and whether there are other impacts that need to be factored in. In some instances, for example, the width of a path may be curtailed in order to maintain mature trees, as was the case with the Elizabeth Place/Westlands Drive scheme. In instances where a deviation from standard practice is recommended the Officer Report details the case-specific

	rationale.
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<b>LU6 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Upton – Self-build Register</b>	
<b>Question</b> How many people are listed on the council's self- build register and how many self build plots have been a) offered and b) taken up by residents on the register over the last 3 years?	<b>Written Response</b> In total there are 135 people on our self-build register. In addition, there is 1 group on the register which is made up of 20 members. 73 of those are on part A of the register and have a 'local connection' to Oxford. 62 of those are on part B of the register and don't have a 'local connection' to Oxford. No plots have been offered or taken up in the last 3 years.

<b>LU7 From Cllr Landell Mills to Cllr Upton – Planning Appeal Costs</b>	
<b>Question</b> How many planning appeals has the city council lost in the last 12 months and at what cost to the council?	<b>Written Response</b> There have been 40 planning appeals decided in the last 12 months. The Council has lost only 6 of these, and in none of those cases were costs awarded against us. 24 others were dismissed and 10 withdrawn. Costs were not awarded against the council for any of these apart from one where, unusually, the appellant was awarded partial costs even though the case was won by the Council. However, the applicant has yet to lodge the proposed value of these costs We have, therefore, won 75% of the appeals heard by the Planning Inspectorate. By comparison the mean of cases dismissed for all local authority districts over the same period is 65%.

### **Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services**

<b>NC1 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Chapman – SAC Update</b>	
<b>Question</b> Can you provide an update on St Aldates Chambers?	<b>Written Response</b> In line with the recently published Cabinet papers for July, terms have been agreed with a new tenant at advantageous terms with a view to completing the letting in the late summer. The identity of the tenant and terms are



	currently confidential.
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## **NC2 From Cllr Fouweather to Cllr Chapman – Microsoft 365 Migration**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
By when will the city council have migrated to Microsoft 365 for all its staff and elected members? What have been the reasons for the significant delay of this migration?	<p>Migrations are underway to an agreed timetable and all relevant remaining City Council staff and Members should be migrated by September. Migrations are being undertaken on a team-by-team basis with training and support being provided in a bespoke manner to ensure effective adoption.</p> <p>Delays principally relate to our ability to recruit and retain the staff resource undertaking the technical migrations, the size and complexity of mailboxes, and legacy technical issues from different systems.</p>

## **NC3 From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Chapman – Roadworks Embargo**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Would the council support an exemption to the usual embargo on roadworks during the festive period, to enable the fixing of the water pipe on Osney bridge?	<p>The City Council would support the agreement of an overall programme of works on Botley Road, which minimises disruption for local residents and businesses and visitors. The County Council is the highway authority, so has overall responsibility for coordinating the Network Rail works to improve the Botley Road Bridge and the rail station, and the Thames Water works to fix the water pipe on Osney Bridge.</p> <p>We are not aware of a detailed proposed timetable for the Osney bridge works, but we understand that they will be required to happen over winter in order to minimise disruption to river journeys. If the settled proposal is for works to be undertaken over the festive period, then we would seek to understand the specific merits and demerits of the proposal before responding to it. The aim of expediting works will need to be balanced against the potential additional disruption of people making journeys on the Botley Road over the festive period.</p>

## **NC4 From Cllr Pegg to Cllr Chapman – Tree Removal Comms**

Question	Written Response
<p>Will the council consider implementing comms plans for communications with residents when trees are due to be removed, beyond those statutorily required to be notified?</p>	<p>Officers follow the approach that is set out in the Communicating with the Public and Members section of the <b><u>Oxford City Council Tree Management Policy</u></b>:</p> <p><i>The Council will inform Ward Councillors and appropriate 'Friends Groups' of any major tree works such as pollarding or felling before any works are carried out in their ward/park. If there are a large number of trees to fell in one location, the Council may also erect notices to inform the public of the proposed works.</i></p> <p><i>In the event of emergency safety work that must be carried out immediately (e.g. storm conditions), the Council will notify Ward Councillors retrospectively.</i></p> <p><i>Felling is the last resort and will only be carried out when deemed necessary by the Tree Team. However, public safety is paramount and for this reason the public will be informed of tree works, via Ward Councillors and notices, but will not be consulted for approval.</i></p> <p>Council Officers and Ward Councillors are sent details of works to communicate to residents and community groups. It is not practicable or appropriate to issue public communications on every piece of work involving each individual tree in the city.</p>

## Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice

AR1 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Railton – Grass Cutting	
Question	Written Response
<p>When city council will start cutting the grass? Especially the road side verges?</p>	<p>Verges will be cut in July / August.</p>

AR2 From Cllr Goddard to Cllr Railton – e-Vehicles	
Question	Written Response
<p>What plans does the City Council have in place to assist residents with transitioning to Electric Vehicles, and what is the role of the</p>	<p>In July 2022, Oxford adopted its Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (<b><u>OxEVIS</u></b>) which sets out clear targets for the city of</p>

<p>gul-e company in this?</p>	<p>Oxford to meet by 2026/27, 2030, 2035 and 2040, in terms of infrastructure deployment to meet expected EV uptake. The strategy is designed to seek a fair and equitable pathway to get those in Oxford that rely on a personal vehicle, ready to transition to EV. A following Delivery and Implementation Action Plan is on the forward plan for cabinet in September 2023. It covers a detailed action plan, risks and opportunities matrix, infrastructure procurement methodologies to deliver EV infrastructure, that stay ahead of the EV uptake trajectory and meet net zero targets; as well as associated council governance &amp; resources required to deliver this programme of work.</p> <p>These plans will include supporting measures to enable a simultaneous reduction of personal car ownership and car miles – such as increasing EV car club availability with EVI roll out.</p> <p>The Council is actively working to promote EVs and help answer many of the questions people have over affordability, second hand market, range and so on. An EVs for Everyone event was held in May, supporting local people with information and knowledge around EV adoption – the event included suppliers offering EV leasing, second hand EVs and EV car clubs, and information about other EV options available.</p> <p>The Council is currently working with Oxfordshire County Council and the District councils on plans to utilise £3.65m of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) grant funding that is expected to be awarded to Oxfordshire to pump prime the commercial implementation of EVI. This will be supplemented within the city with the remaining Go Ultra Low Oxford (GULO) funds the Council holds.</p> <p>ODS has developed the Gul-e, a product at the leading edge of cable channel charging innovation. The Gul-e provides an easy-to-use, convenient, and simplistic solution that enables residents to charge their EV from a home energy supply, but with their vehicle parked on the street. Delivering the cost and efficiency benefits of home charging. A significant uptake of GUL-e by residents will</p>
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	reduce the City need for on-street charging and associated targets. Trials are now underway in a number of authorities and ODS is ready to scale this solution as needed.
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### **AR3 From Cllr Gant to Cllr Railton – Green Roof Roll Out**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
What plans does the city council have for further roll out of green roofs on bus stops roofs building on pilot on Morrell Avenue?	<p>The Council are currently preparing to go out to the market to retender the bus shelter contract. Part of these discussions will also include how an operator can improve and introduce new technology and meet zero carbon objectives. There will be a balance to ensure a financial return to the Council.</p> <p>Officers are investigating alternative sources of funding to support any green initiatives around this.</p>

### **AR4 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Railton – Biodiversity Expert**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
Does the Council have Biodiversity expert?	Yes. Tristan Carlyle, Ecology Officer

### **AR5 From Cllr Pegg to Cllr Railton – Highway Trees**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Written Response</b>
How many highways trees have been removed in the past four years, and how many of these have been replaced?	<p>It is worth reminding councillors, once again, that responsibility for our highways, pavements, verges and roadside trees sits ultimately with Oxfordshire County Council. ODS undertakes assessment and work to ensure trees are safe and where necessary undertake pollarding or even complete removal where trees are diseased or dying.</p> <p>Between April 2019 and March 2023 75 trees roadside trees have been removed. Oxfordshire County Council may have replaced some of these trees but if so the work was not undertaken by ODS.</p> <p>However, last year Oxford City Council funded the planting of 11 roadside trees on Cricket Avenue as part of the Queen's Green Canopy celebrations.</p>

	We continue to discuss with Oxfordshire County Council opportunities to fund additional trees along our streets and are also exploring other sources of funding for this.
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## Cabinet Member for Culture and Events

### JH1 From Cllr Malik to Cllr Hunt – Cowley Road Carnival

Question	Written Response
Cowley road carnival has been incredibly successful over the years, especially when bringing the community together and boosting local businesses. After the Pandemic, the carnival this year would have tremendously helped the struggling businesses at Cowley Road. Why did the council fail to prioritise and fund £20k for the carnival?	Cowley Road Carnival successfully applied for 3 years of funding from Oxford City Council from April 2022-March 2025. As they confirmed they were not going to run a carnival event in 2022, and therefore would not have the associated costs, they were awarded a grant of £7K and advised, should things change, to apply for top up funding from the Oxford Community Impact Fund. Officers reached out to the carnival organisers on several occasions encouraging them to make an application and they did not do so. The Carnival did apply for Arts Council funding which they were not successful in bidding for and this was the critical factor in the carnival not happening. We are supportive of the Cowley Road Carnival and would encourage an early dialogue to start around planning for next year.

### JH2 From Cllr Miles to Cllr Hunt – Implementation of New Street Trading Policy

Question	Written Response
What steps have been taken to ensure that street traders are no longer using single use plastic in line with the updated street trading policy?	Face to face inspection visits have been carried out by the Business Regulation Team (including out of hours when necessary) with 90% of street traders visited to date.

### JH3 From Cllr Pegg to Cllr Hunt – Animal Welfare at Oxford Stadium 1

Question	Written Response
Has the Council spoken to the Oxford Stadium and owner Kevin Boothby following the incident of malfunctioning starting traps	Animal Welfare at the Stadium is not the responsibility of the council as it is governed by The Greyhound Board of Great Britain

on 14th April to discuss how animal welfare can be improved?	(GBGB) which is a self-regulating organisation that governs licensed greyhound racing in Great Britain.
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<b>JH4 From Cllr Pegg to Cllr Hunt – Animal Welfare at Oxford Stadium 2</b>	
<b>Question</b>  How is the Council ensuring that animal welfare standards are maintained at the Oxford Stadium, a venue licensed for gambling by the Council?	<b>Written Response</b>  Animal Welfare at the Stadium is not the responsibility of the council as it is governed by The Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) which is a self-regulating organisation that governs licensed greyhound racing in Great Britain. The Gambling Act 2005 contains no animal welfare provisions.

**To:** Council

**Date:** 17 July 2023

**Report of:** Head of Law and Governance

**Title of Report:** Public addresses and questions that do not relate to matters for decision – as submitted by the speakers and with written responses from Cabinet Members

## Introduction

1. Addresses made by members of the public to the Council, and questions put to the Cabinet members or Leader, registered by the deadline in the Constitution, are below. Any written responses available are also below.
2. The text reproduces that sent in the speakers and represents the views of the speakers. This is not to be taken as statements by or on behalf of the Council
3. This report will be republished after the Council meeting as part of the minutes pack. This will list the full text of speeches delivered as submitted, summaries of speeches delivered which differ significantly from those submitted, and any further responses.

Addresses and questions to be taken in Part 2 of the agenda

1. Address by Danny Yee – 20 mph in the City Centre
2. Address by – Kaddy Beck – Save Bertie Park
3. Question from Chaka Artwell – Councillors revealing their domicile during local elections

## Addresses and questions to be taken in Part 2 of the agenda

### 1. Address by Danny Yee – 20 mph in the City Centre

I am here to talk about 20mph speed limits and the traffic filters, and to urge you to push for the rapid introduction of 20mph speed limits on Oxford's main roads.

There are plenty of studies showing gains from 20mph speed limits -- reduced road danger, smoother traffic flows and lower emissions, less noise pollution, and so forth. And we can observe this firsthand on Iffley and Cowley Rds. Compliance with the 20mph speed limits there is not great, but speeds are significantly lower now than before the change, with hardly anyone driving faster than 30mph.

There are many gains from this. Pedestrians find zebra crossings easier to use, as they can assert themselves more easily, and driver compliance with signal crossings is

better. Cycling right-turns onto or off the main roads are much less stressful. It is easier to cross the road to get to or from bus stops. And so forth.

Lower speed limits are hugely important in making walking and cycling and public transport more accessible. They are also the cheapest big contribution to road danger reduction - making all of Oxford's main roads 20mph might avert three serious injuries a year and a fatality every decade. Both this, and the longer-term health gains from greater physical activity and social connectivity, are especially important for the more disadvantaged, who currently have the most limited mobility options and are worst affected by road violence.

Now the traffic filters. There are two reasons it is vitally important to have 20mph speed limits in place before the traffic filters go in.

Firstly, how well the traffic filters work will depend on modal shift, on people shifting from driving to walking, cycling, or catching the bus. Lower speeds will help make all of those easier and more accessible.

Secondly, without lower speed limits, the traffic filters will adversely affect road danger and walking and cycling safety.

The introduction of the congestion charge in London increased both collision rates and injury severities, because reduced congestion allowed for higher traffic speeds. If the traffic filters are successful in reducing congestion in Oxford, the same thing is likely to happen here.

What are the obstacles?

County decisions appear to be being made by officers concerned about the effects of lower speed limits on the bus companies.

But as the bus companies themselves realised in Abingdon when they sat down and looked at their data, the notional time gains from being able to do 30mph instead of 20mph are largely illusory on busy central roads with regular stops for passengers. (And it is the inner stretches of Oxford's main roads which have the largest numbers of people walking and cycling, so speed limit changes could start there rather than covering the whole city.)

And the other reason the county is lagging in Oxford is that their policy is to wait for requests from district and parish councils.

Of the eight million pounds the county has allocated to their 20mph programme, none has been spent so far in Oxford and it is possible that none will be. We are going to have the strange situation where there are 20mph speed limits on the Eynsham Rd in Botley -- as requested by the parish council there, and recently signed off on by the county -- but 30mph speed limits from there into Oxford, along the Botley Rd, despite the huge numbers of people walking and cycling there and its complex junctions.

So I urge you to ask the county council for 20mph speed limits in Oxford, with the aim of having those in place before the traffic filters go in next year. If it's not done within this round of county funding, it may never happen at all.

*"Children residing in the most deprived areas were nearly three times more likely to be KSI as pedestrians than their peers in the least deprived areas."*

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2214140518300756>

*The London Congestion Charge: "the marginal driver along congested roads decreases the risk and severity of traffic collisions for other road users by slowing others down"*

<https://academic.oup.com/joeg/article/22/3/547/6276552?login=true>



Transport for London is making all main roads in central London 20mph  
<https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/local-transport-today/news/70352/tfl-to-extend-20mph-across-main-roads-in-westminster/>

And that's reduced road danger: <https://tfl-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/tflpress-release-new-data-showsignificantimprovements-in-road-safety-inlondon-since-introduction-of20mphspeed-limits>

The county's £8 million 20mph project: <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/8-million-approved-to-roll-out-20mph-project-across-oxfordshire-in-next-threeyears/>

### **Councillor Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities:**

Thank you for your address. The core issue you highlight, that of road safety, is one I'm sure every member here views as important. While we are not the highways authority, we work closely with Oxfordshire County Council, which holds that responsibility, along with other stakeholders such as the bus companies and pedestrian and cycling groups to seek to ensure our streets are as safe as possible for all road users. We also want them to be as attractive as possible for cyclists, walkers and bus passengers.

So we support the County Council's Vision Zero ambition to end traffic fatalities in Oxford, we're signing up to the CLOCS (Construction Logistics and Community Safety) standard for construction vehicles to reduce collisions between HGVs and other road users, and we are supporting the County Council to introduce traffic filters which will reduce traffic levels and free up road-space for cyclists.

But we also need to get the buses moving as they are the lifeblood of our transport system and they are in crisis. Indeed at the moment the issue is not buses travelling too fast, it is the opposite. The average speed of buses on many routes in the city is now below 10 miles per hour throughout the day.

Slow journey times is impacting on passenger numbers and route viability. Together with the County Council - we have committed to the bus companies that we will work to improve journey times by at least 10%. That was the basis for them making the huge investment in a new fully electric bus fleet.

So, we would want to understand from the bus companies what the impact of a global change in speed limits to 20mph would have in terms of their operations. Clearly, in some places it would make very little difference, on say Thames Street, with all of its traffic intersections and bus stops where a 20mph limit would almost certainly be desirable. But would it make sense on Marston Ferry Road, which has a long stretch with no bus stops and a completely segregated cycle track?

Ultimately, I doubt we will be able to make such judgements until the traffic filters are in place. We will explore this in consultation with the bus companies, as more 20mph areas, in conjunction with the traffic filters That should help deliver what I think is a shared vision of a city with safe roads, fewer car journeys, more cyclists, and really good public transport running buses. A 20mph speed limit may be part of that vision, but whether it is appropriate everywhere needs more detailed consideration.

## **2. Address by – Kaddy Beck – Save Bertie Park**

I coordinate the campaign to save Bertie Park, a medium-sized recreation ground in South Oxford where young people can run around, shout, scream, and let off steam.

This is the planning notice you posted in May. It says: NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Who decided to ignore the local plan? Did you, the Council, make that decision, or did OX Place? And if a developer decides not to follow the agreed local plan, why would council officers and members bend over backwards to help them?

In November '22, OX Place described Bertie Park as well-used. Now, they say they aim "to upgrade a currently underused site". Your Green Spaces Strategy aims to *improve* access to green space; people should not have to walk more than 750m to their nearest medium park like Bertie. Who decided to scrap this policy?

You are turbo-charging the housing market across Oxford by creating more jobs than housing. Will you build on the rest of Oxford's 87 parks and recreation grounds or, just Bertie?

Oxford Civic Society usefully summarise the council's viewpoint: "while the recreation ground is going to be *reduced* to accommodate Oxford's urgent housing need, an element of it is being retained .... and partial loss (is) worth the sacrifice for much needed housing"

This is balderdash for 2 reasons

The first is that Bertie Park will not be reduced, but obliterated.

- OX Place want to replace the recreation ground itself with a nature trail. But we already have one. Kendall Copse is 10 minutes away.
- Their plans leave a small area of grass, sloping down to a stream. Not for kids to run around on, but for the required 10% biodiversity gain. It won't be mown, and you'll need to prevent high levels of access.
- Our current playground has 13 items of equipment for kids of all ages. The new play area will have 4. It is for kids aged 0-6 within a 1 minute's walk. Of course, we will still have access, but it's designed for toddlers. The new climbing frame has a critical fall height of 60 cm - so low, it won't need safety surface. You say families with kids over 6 will just have to walk 15 minutes to Hinksey Park.
- The *only* element to be retained is the Multi-Use-Games Area. Currently 40m away from housing, the new one will be 11. OX Place say they'll sink it by 30cm from street level to reduce noise problems. But, hidden in the Noise Assessment Report they suggest that, if there are complaints, the council should provide a simple way to report them, and consider restricting operational hours. The new MUGA also looks unusable. But that's another story.

Another reason the civic society statement is balderdash is that Government guidance (NPPF 8) recommends councils "support strong, vibrant and healthy communities" by BOTH providing "a sufficient number and range of homes" AND "accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being".

We have 2 community amenities, Bertie Park and Tesco's. Although your plans to build across this area will increase need, you want to destroy our park.

Lastly, whose responsibility it is to ensure that a scheme complies with the law?

Planning assures us that the OX Place report to the planning committee, which will be published for all to see in the run up to the committee, will "clearly outline the relevant issues": BUT:

1. Their planning statement does not even mention s123 of the 1972 Local Government Act concerning disposal of recreation grounds.
2. It neither identifies nor discusses the material considerations supporting its decision to depart from the local plan SP32.

3. It concludes that the Proposed Development accords with policies in the Oxford Local Plan, whereas the planning notice says it doesn't.
4. It says that the Proposed Development fully complies with the requirements of national and local planning policies without even discussing them.

If I had not spent weeks going through the documentation, who else would have done it?

Who is responsible for carrying out due diligence when a developer decides to ignore the local plan?

If this gets planning permission, there is a good case for judicial review, which will involve more expense. As rate payers, we think your determination to pursue building on our recreation ground is a huge waste of public money.

### **Councillor Linda Smith Cabinet Member for Housing response:**

The planning application for the proposed housing development at Bertie Place was submitted in May 2023 and has yet to be determined.

The application is likely to be brought to Planning Committee in the Autumn for a decision, and this matter will be considered in full at that time.

It would be premature to comment on the detail of that application at this time, other than to say that the Council seeks to balance many competing demands for space in the city.

Oxford needs more affordable housing, and has an insufficient supply of land within the city boundary to meet the assessed level of housing need, so difficult decisions often have to be made.

This site has been identified for housing development in successive Local Plans since 2013. Both the current and previous Local Plans were adopted after extensive public consultation and rigorous examination at a public inquiry.

The proposed development – to build 31 affordable homes on part of this site – seeks to do so sympathetically, and to provide high quality homes, in a sustainable, low carbon, car free scheme. Pedestrian and cyclist access will be retained, and the proposal is to re-provide both the multi-use games area (MUGA), and a children's play area for use by new and existing residents, as well as improving pedestrian access to the 'Site B' meadow area, whilst improving the biodiversity and habitats in this area.

The existing MUGA and play area have been designed in consultation with local residents. Access to sports and play spaces will promote physical activity for all ages. The play area will be designed as a garden-like space with play equipment to encourage active play, particularly among children below 5 years. Low railings and hedge boundary surrounding the play area will give the space character, while helping to ensure children's safety, with improved modern equipment like a rock 'n' bowl, cygnet with slide, pick up sticks and single bay Viking basket swing, all suggestions made by the young people when we consulted with them earlier in the year. There will be further opportunity in the future for the community to make additional suggestions on what play equipment they would like. Child safety is of high importance to the Council. Along with improved soft landscaping and seating areas for parents, the play area will have a permeable surface with a rubber bound safety surface.

A Cabinet report on the proposals is to be considered at Cabinet in August. That report will set out further considerations in relation to any appropriation of this land for a different purpose.

Should Cabinet agree to the recommendations in the report, a further Cabinet decision will be required in the Autumn, and Council will be asked to appropriate the land, as necessary, for housing, at a later date.

### **3. Question from Chaka Artwell – Councillors revealing their domicile**

Constituents contacting Elected Oxford City Councillors are required to identify themselves, and their domicile; whilst Oxford City Council, and the Political Parties, encourage their publicly Elected Councillors to ignore the transparency, and local accountable tradition of Elected Councillors by making their domicile known to their local constituents and voters.

The Oxford City Council supported policy of assisting Elected Councillors to conceal their domicile is discriminatory against Constituents who prefer to use the post to contact their Elected Councillors; and an unacceptable, and unequal disparity that favours men and women in Public Office; which also transgresses Oxford City Council's claim of being Politically Correct, and "progressive."

Will Oxford City Council correct this disparity by requiring all who place themselves as a candidate for public position in Local Elections, reveal and make available their domicile publicly available?

### **Written Response from the Councillor Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships**

Since a law change in 2019, all candidates for election have the right to ask that their home address is not published when standing as a candidate. This change follows the *Committee for Standards in Public Life's* review of intimidation in public life for elected politicians, following the attack on Stephen Timms MP in 2010, and the murder of Jo Cox MP in 2016. It is not a matter for Oxford City Council, or even any single political party. Each candidate will make their own decision and the Returning Officer would process their nomination paper as completed. I'm sorry to say that the intimidation and threats to politicians locally and nationally actively encourage candidates to protect themselves and their families in this way. Any constituent wishing to write to their elected councillor is still able to do so as for any councillor who does not publish their address, the council will pass on post addressed to them at the Town Hall. The full postal address of the Town Hall is given on the council website for all councillors who do not publish their home address.

**To:** Council  
**Date:** 17 July 2023  
**Report of:** Head of Law and Governance  
**Title of Report:** **Motions and amendments received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.18**

Councillors are asked to debate and reach conclusions on the motions and amendment listed below in accordance with the Council's rules for debate.

The Constitution permits an hour for debate of these motions.

## Introduction

This document sets out motions received by the Head of Law and Governance in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.18 by the deadline of 1.00pm on 5 July 2023, as amended by the proposers.

All substantive amendments sent by councillors to the Head of Law and Governance by publication of the briefing note are also included below.

Unfamiliar terms are explained in the glossary or in footnotes.

**Motions will be taken in turn from the, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, groups in that order.**

## Introduction

- a) Support Oxford's Sudanese community – create safe pathways for Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here. (Proposed by Cllr Shaista Aziz, seconded by Councillor Hosnieh Djafari Marbini)
- b) Use car parking sites for Solar Farms (proposed by Cllr Laurence Fouweather, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth]
- c) Extending the Smoke Control Area (proposed by Cllr Emily Kerr, seconded by Cllr Lucy Pegg). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton]
- d) Supporting a Community Right to Grow (proposed by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, seconded by Councillor Mark Lygo)
- e) Housing Management System problems and resultant accounts issues at Oxford City Council and ODS (proposed by Cllr Christopher Smowton, seconded by Cllr

Laurence Fouweather) [Amendment Proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown]

**a) Support Oxford's Sudanese community – create safe pathways for Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here. (Proposed by Cllr Shaista Aziz, seconded by Councillor Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini)**

Labour member motion

The war in Sudan is leading to the loss of life, displacement of hundreds and thousands of people inside and outside the country's borders, a hunger and health crisis, and reports of rape and sexual violence against women and girls.

This Council stands in solidarity with Oxford's Sudanese communities and calls for an immediate end to the conflict and violence, urging all parties to engage in negotiations to find a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis.

Sudanese families in our city have witnessed family members turned away from British Government run evacuation schemes, separating families and further traumatising desperate and vulnerable people.

We call on the government to urgently create safe pathways for all Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here.

This Council pledges to:

- Work with Oxford's Sudanese community and asylum support organisations to identify and support new arrivals;
- Advocate for support for those arriving with physical and psychological trauma;
- Ensure frontline Council staff can sign post people to appropriate services.

This Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader:

1. As a Council seeking to become a City of Sanctuary, we resolve to work with partner organisations across the city and our MPs to lobby the government to:
  - Expand safe, legal routes for extended family of British citizens and Sudanese asylum seekers;
  - Waive existing barriers to support
  - Establish a formal programme mirroring the Ukrainian settlement scheme to provide clarity and security for Sudanese nationals seeking sanctuary.

**b) Use car parking sites for Solar Farms (proposed by Cllr Laurence Fouweather, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth]**

Liberal Democrat member motion

Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council has made progress with the decarbonisation of Council owned social housing and leisure centres. The rise in costs of fossil fuel generated electricity over the past 12 months shows the need to push ahead with renewable energy projects.

This proposal is that the case for installing solar panels over the car parks in the city is examined.

The French government has announced plans to mandate that all car parks over 80 spaces in France must have solar farms installed. The Bentley Car Company recently announced the installation of a solar farm at their plant in Crewe which will cover 1378 car spaces and generate 2.7 MW of power. Leicester City Council has recently completed a similar but smaller scheme.

The benefit of this proposal is that it could make better use of otherwise non-productive land and further demonstrates that the City Council is fully behind the push for Green Energy and Net Zero. It could contribute to the targets for increased PV generation across the County as defined in the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy.

Two of the City owned P+R sites together total 2801 car spaces. This could generate at least 4.2 MW of power — enough for 600–800 average sized houses. If the other P+R sites are included then this rises to over 9MW which is nearly 10% of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy target.

There are other Council owned car parks which could be utilised in this way including those at leisure centres and public parks. Even a small car park could be a useful local source of PV energy and may be able to be implemented over a shorter timescale.

There would also be opportunities to extend the existing EV charging in sites using the power generated locally. The space for physical equipment needed for connection to the local electricity grid will need consideration and planning permission as would other potential uses such as power storage.

Therefore this Council requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy submits a written report to Cabinet by the end of March 2024 which:-

- Examines this proposal to assess the feasibility of installing solar panels in various Council owned car parking sites around Oxford including extending those in existing Park and Rides.
- Considers what alternative uses of existing sites will need consideration when assessing sites for use as a solar farm.
- Explores all possibilities for funding the installation costs.
- Considers the feasibility of the Council being the operator of the solar farm(s) and thus selling the electricity generated to energy companies.
- Assesses the potential income stream to the Council from the solar farms once installed.
- Reports on discussions with the relevant County Council officers about their P+R sites being included in this scheme.
- Reports on discussions with SSE about the capacity of the local electricity grid to accept a scheme of this size.

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**Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth**

Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council has made progress with the decarbonisation of Council owned social housing and leisure centres. The rise in costs of fossil fuel generated electricity over the past 12 months shows the need to push ahead with renewable energy projects. This proposal is that the case for installing solar panels over the car parks in the city is examined.

The French government has announced plans to mandate that all car parks over 80 spaces in France must have solar farms installed. The Bentley Car Company recently announced the installation of a solar farm at their plant in Crewe which will cover 1378 car spaces and generate 2.7 MW of power. Leicester City Council has recently completed a similar but smaller scheme. The benefit of this proposal is that it could make better use of otherwise ~~non-productive~~ **available** land and **could** further demonstrates that the City Council is fully behind the push for Green Energy and Net Zero. It could contribute to the targets for increased PV generation across the County as defined in the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy. Two of the City owned P+R sites together total 2801 car spaces.

This could generate at least 4.2 MW of power — enough for 600–800 average sized houses, **but at a cost of £1800-2800 per space (£900-£1400/kWp)<sup>13</sup>, compared to £450/kWp for field solar**. If the other P+R sites are included then this rises to over 9MW which is nearly 10% of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy target. **The strategy identifies a need for installed PV capacity in Oxfordshire to increase from 300MW to 1900MW. This Council therefore is supportive of exploring all possible opportunities for increasing that installed capacity, whether it is large strategic scale installations including Botley West Solar Farm, or smaller and more tactical projects like the existing installation at Redbridge Park and Ride and Leys Pool and Leisure Centre.**

There are other Council owned car parks which could be utilised in this way including those at leisure centres and public parks. Even a small car park could be a useful local source of PV energy and may be able to be implemented over a shorter timescale. There would also be opportunities to extend the existing EV charging in sites using the power generated locally. The space for physical equipment needed for connection to the local electricity grid will need consideration and planning permission as would other potential uses such as power storage.

Therefore this Council requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy ~~submits a written report to Cabinet by the end of March 2024 which:-~~ **continues to investigate the feasibility of extending solar installations on spaces in Oxford including Park and Rides, and that the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice provide a verbal update at a Council meeting before the end of 2023.**

- ~~Examines this proposal to assess the feasibility of installing solar panels in various Council owned car parking sites around Oxford including extending those in existing Park and Rides.~~
- ~~Considers what alternative uses of existing sites will need consideration when assessing sites for use as a solar farm.~~
- ~~Explores all possibilities for funding the installation costs.~~
- ~~Considers the feasibility of the Council being the operator of the solar farm(s) and thus selling the electricity generated to energy companies.~~
- ~~Assesses the potential income stream to the Council from the solar farms once installed.~~
- ~~Reports on discussions with the relevant County Council officers about their P+R sites being included in this scheme.~~
- ~~Reports on discussions with SSE about the capacity of the local electricity grid to accept a scheme of this size.~~



**If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:**

Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council has made progress with the decarbonisation of Council owned social housing and leisure centres. The rise in costs of fossil fuel generated electricity over the past 12 months shows the need to push ahead with renewable energy projects. This proposal is that the case for installing solar panels over the car parks in the city is examined.

The French government has announced plans to mandate that all car parks over 80 spaces in France must have solar farms installed. The Bentley Car Company recently announced the installation of a solar farm at their plant in Crewe which will cover 1378 car spaces and generate 2.7 MW of power. Leicester City Council has recently completed a similar but smaller scheme. The benefit of this proposal is that it could make better use of otherwise available land and could further demonstrate that the City Council is fully behind the push for Green Energy and Net Zero. It could contribute to the targets for increased PV generation across the County as defined in the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy. Two of the City owned P+R sites together total 2801 car spaces.

This could generate at least 4.2 MW of power — enough for 600–800 average sized houses, but at a cost of £1800-2800 per space (£900-£1400/kWp)<sup>13</sup>, compared to £450/kWp for field solar. If the other P+R sites are included then this rises to over 9MW which is nearly 10% of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy target. The strategy identifies a need for installed PV capacity in Oxfordshire to increase from 300MW to 1900MW. This Council therefore is supportive of exploring all possible opportunities for increasing that installed capacity, whether it is large strategic scale installations like Botley West Solar Farm, or smaller and more tactical projects like the existing installation at Redbridge Park and Ride and Leys Pool and Leisure Centre.

There are other Council owned car parks which could be utilised in this way including those at leisure centres and public parks. Even a small car park could be a useful local source of PV energy and may be able to be implemented over a shorter timescale. There would also be opportunities to extend the existing EV charging in sites using the power generated locally. The space for physical equipment needed for connection to the local electricity grid will need consideration and planning permission as would other potential uses such as power storage.

Therefore this Council requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy continues to investigate the feasibility of extending solar installations on spaces in Oxford including Park and Rides, and that the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice provide a verbal update at a Council meeting before the end of 2023.

**c) Extending the Smoke Control Area (proposed by Cllr Emily Kerr, seconded by Cllr Lucy Pegg). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton]**

**Green member motion**

This Council notes that

1. Wood-burning takes place in just 8% of UK homes, and yet is the second highest cause of particle pollution in the UK. It has grown by 35% in the last 10 years as more people install wood-burning stoves.

2. The chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, wrote his last report on air pollution.<sup>1</sup> He states that we need to focus on areas where people live – i.e. cities such as Oxford. The report highlights wood burning is dangerous at any level: DEFRA approved stoves produce more than 300 times as much PM 2.5 as gas fires; open fires ten times as much again. Particles accrue in the top of the home, often where people sleep and are exposed for a long time. This is especially an issue for children, who are more sensitive to wood burning.
3. National figures from a DEFRA survey<sup>2</sup> of 46,000 people show over 70% of people who use wood burners do so for purely aesthetic reasons. We also know people who use wood burners are twice as likely to be AB social grade than those who do not, and much more likely to own their own homes. The 8% of people who rely entirely or primarily on burning as a fuel source overwhelmingly live in rural areas.
4. Oxford has led the way on reducing air pollution resulting from traffic through restricting and electrifying motor traffic, with an 8.3% reduction across the city, or 24% reduction vs pre-pandemic levels.
5. The 2021-2025 AQAP mentions a focus on ‘reducing emissions from domestic heating’ and ‘reviewing smoke control zones’. This has focused on awareness raising campaigns such as last year’s ‘do you fuel good’. Pilot projects such as the ability for canal boats to charge on solar are useful, but the vast majority of burning is not linked to people who live on canal boats.
6. Current Smoke Control Areas (SCAs) or Smoke Control Zones (SCZs) cover some of the city, but miss out key areas such as North Oxford, which have higher home ownership rates and more ABC1 residents – the demographics more likely to be burners.

#### **Council believes:**

1. We should continue to take steps to improve air quality, given the devastating and unevenly distributed effects of pollution.
2. The Council has played a significant role in recent years by electrifying and restricting polluting motor traffic. Reducing emissions from domestic heating should continue to be a core area of focus.

This Council asks the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice:

1. To look at expanding our SCAs across the entire of Oxford City, giving us a standardised city-wide approach which does not exclude the most affluent parts of the city.
2. To build on last year’s awareness campaign and deliver a best-in-class example which leverages new data from the CMO’s report and shares an honest picture of the dangers of wood burning, including the implications for indoor air quality.

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>

<https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectID=20159&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=AQ1017&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

## **Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton**

This Council notes that

1. Wood-burning takes place in just 8% of UK homes, and yet is the second highest cause of particle pollution in the UK. It has grown by 35% in the last 10 years as more people install wood-burning stoves.
2. The chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, wrote his last report on air pollution.<sup>3</sup> He states that we need to focus on areas where people live – i.e. cities such as Oxford. The report highlights wood burning is dangerous at any level: DEFRA approved stoves produce more than 300 times as much PM 2.5 as gas fires; open fires ten times as much again. Particles accrue in the top of the home, often where people sleep and are exposed for a long time. This is especially an issue for children, who are more sensitive to wood burning.
3. National figures from a DEFRA survey<sup>4</sup> of 46,000 people show over 70% of people who use wood burners do so for purely aesthetic reasons. We also know people who use wood burners are twice as likely to be AB social grade than those who do not, and much more likely to own their own homes. The 8% of people who rely entirely or primarily on burning as a fuel source overwhelmingly live in rural areas.
4. Oxford has led the way on reducing air pollution resulting from traffic through restricting and electrifying motor traffic, with an 8.3% reduction across the city, or 24% reduction vs pre-pandemic levels.
5. The 2021-2025 AQAP mentions a focus on ‘reducing emissions from domestic heating’ and ‘reviewing smoke control zones’. This has focused on awareness raising campaigns such as last year’s ‘do you fuel good’. Pilot projects such as the ability for canal boats to charge on solar are useful, but the vast majority of burning is not linked to people who live on canal boats.
6. Current Smoke Control Areas (SCAs) or Smoke Control Zones (SCZs) cover some of the city, but miss out key areas such as North Oxford, which have higher home ownership rates and more ABC1 residents – the demographics more likely to be burners.

### **Council believes:**

1. We should continue to take steps to improve air quality, given the devastating and unevenly distributed effects of pollution.
2. The Council has played a significant role in recent years by electrifying and restricting polluting motor traffic. Reducing emissions from domestic heating should continue to be a core area of focus.

This Council asks the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice:

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<sup>3</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>

<https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectID=20159&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=AQ1017&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

1. ~~To look at expanding our SCAs across the entire of Oxford City, giving us a standardised city-wide approach which does not exclude the most affluent parts of the city~~ **We welcome the 13th July announcement to expand the existing SCA across the entire city of Oxford.**
2. To build on last year's awareness campaign and deliver a best-in-class example which leverages new data from the CMO's report and shares an honest picture of the dangers of wood burning, including the implications for indoor air quality.

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**If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:**

This Council notes that

1. Wood-burning takes place in just 8% of UK homes, and yet is the second highest cause of particle pollution in the UK. It has grown by 35% in the last 10 years as more people install wood-burning stoves.
2. The chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, wrote his last report on air pollution.<sup>5</sup> He states that we need to focus on areas where people live – i.e. cities such as Oxford. The report highlights wood burning is dangerous at any level: DEFRA approved stoves produce more than 300 times as much PM 2.5 as gas fires; open fires ten times as much again. Particles accrue in the top of the home, often where people sleep and are exposed for a long time. This is especially an issue for children, who are more sensitive to wood burning.
3. National figures from a DEFRA survey<sup>6</sup> of 46,000 people show over 70% of people who use wood burners do so for purely aesthetic reasons. We also know people who use wood burners are twice as likely to be AB social grade than those who do not, and much more likely to own their own homes. The 8% of people who rely entirely or primarily on burning as a fuel source overwhelmingly live in rural areas.
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**Council believes:**

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<sup>5</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>

<https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectID=20159&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=AQ1017&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

1. We should continue to take steps to improve air quality, given the devastating and unevenly distributed effects of pollution.
2. The Council has played a significant role in recent years by electrifying and restricting polluting motor traffic. Reducing emissions from domestic heating should continue to be a core area of focus.

This Council asks the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice:

1. We welcome the 13th July announcement to expand the existing SCA across the entire city of Oxford.
2. To build on last year's awareness campaign and deliver a best-in-class example which leverages new data from the CMO's report and shares an honest picture of the dangers of wood burning, including the implications for indoor air quality.

**d) Supporting a Community Right to Grow (proposed by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, seconded by Councillor Mark Lygo)**

Labour member motion

This Council notes:

- The importance of locally produced food to provide affordable and healthy options for local people
- The physical and mental health benefits of gardening, especially communally, backed by the RHS's gardening for health and well-being campaign
- The success of inclusive local community gardening groups like Greening Jericho, winners of the 2021 Oxford Preservation Trust's award for landscape and public realm
- The ongoing experience of the Edible Streets project in establishing food growing spaces in Barton
- The Community Right to Grow campaign launched by Incredible Edible, and the supported by a 10-Minute Rule Bill proposed by Mike Kane MP and proposed amendments to the Levelling Up Bill in the House of Lords
- The Oxfordshire Food Strategy, endorsed by the City Council in 2022, and the work of Good Food Oxfordshire

This Council believes that the benefits from public spaces which are cared for by local people and can be used to produce food, flowers or both are self evident, in terms of the positive impact on the well-being of local communities, the individuals that tend and use them and the broader environment and biodiversity of Oxford and beyond.

This Council therefore asks that:

- The Leader of the Council writes to the city's two MPs to ask them to show their support for the Community Right to Grow in Parliament and beyond
- The Council, learning the lessons from the Edible Streets and Greening Jericho projects, provides a clear register of unused public land that can be offered to community groups for cultivation and a robust but simple process for doing so.

**e) Housing Management System problems and resultant accounts issues at Oxford City Council and ODS (proposed by Cllr Christopher Smowton, seconded by Cllr Laurence Fouweather) [Amendment Proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown]**

Liberal Democrat member motion

Council notes that the report by external consultants into the tendering process, procurement and implementation of a new Housing Management System revealed serious issues in the delivery of that system.

Council notes that the budget for the project has had to be markedly increased to over £3 million.

Council also notes that two years after going live, the benefits of the system are still not fully realised.

Council further notes with concern that as a further consequence of these issues, Oxford Direct Services (ODS) has been unable to submit its accounts for financial year 2021/22 to Companies House, and that this also prevents the Council's auditors from approving the Council's own accounts for submission to Central Government.

Council notes that the more information about any adverse event relating to public procurement that can be published, the more third parties including other local authorities and public bodies can benefit from the lessons learned. Council resolves to:-

Ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of priority, to:-

1. Request the publication of a minimally redacted version of the lessons learned report, in contrast to the brief summary published in June 2023.
2. Ensure that action is taken as soon as possible to ensure the new Housing Management System is properly implemented in the Council and that the benefits promised are realised.
3. Ensure that the deadline (October 2023) for reporting the certified Council accounts to Central Government is met.

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**Amendment proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown**

Council notes that the report by external consultants into the tendering process, procurement and implementation of a new Housing Management System revealed serious issues in the delivery of that system.

Council notes that the budget for the project has had to be markedly increased to over £3 million.

Council also notes that two years after going live, **that whilst the** benefits of the system are still not fully realised, **there is an agreed and costed plan to do so. Officers and the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder are confident this plan can be successfully realised.**

Council further notes ~~with concern that as a further consequence of these issues that~~ **despite some delays attributable to the system implementation,** Oxford Direct Services (ODS) ~~has been unable~~ **will be in a position to** submit its accounts for financial year 2021/22 to Companies House in **early autumn** and that this also ~~prevents the Council's auditors from approving the Council's own accounts for submission to Central Government.~~ **The Council's auditors will also soon be in a**



**position to approve** Council's own accounts **for 21/22** for submission to Central Government.

Council notes that ~~the more information about any adverse event relating to public procurement that can be published, the more~~ **whilst the full lessons learned report must remain confidential, it has been reviewed by both the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Committees with senior officers and the relevant Cabinet member. The summary document is in the public domain, and captures all the key lessons which might interest** third parties including other local authorities and public bodies, **and can be shared with them.**

Council resolves to:- Ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of priority, to:-

1. ~~Request the publication of a minimally redacted version of the lessons learned report, in contrast to the brief summary published in June 2023.~~ **Make available the summary of the lessons learned review to interested parties.**
  2. Ensure that action is taken as soon as possible to ensure the new Housing Management System is properly implemented in the Council and that the benefits promised are realised.
  3. ~~Ensure that the deadline (October 2023)~~ **that the certified Council accounts for 22/23 are reported to Central Government as soon as is practicable.**
- 

**If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:**

Council notes that the report by external consultants into the tendering process, procurement and implementation of a new Housing Management System revealed serious issues in the delivery of that system.

Council notes that the budget for the project has had to be markedly increased to over £3 million.

Council also notes that two years after going live, that whilst the benefits of the system are still not fully realised, there is an agreed and costed plan to do so. Officers and the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder are confident this plan can be successfully realised.

Council further notes that despite some delays attributable to the system implementation, Oxford Direct Services (ODS) will be in a position to submit its accounts for financial year 2021/22 to Companies House in early autumn. The Council's auditors will also soon be in a position to approve Council's own accounts for 21/22 for submission to Central Government.

Council notes that whilst the full lessons learned report must remain confidential, it has been reviewed by both the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Committees with senior officers and the relevant Cabinet member. The summary document is in the public domain, and captures all the key lessons which might interest third parties including other local authorities and public bodies, and can be shared with them.

Council resolves to:- Ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of priority, to:- 1. Make available the summary of the lessons learned review to interested parties.

2. Ensure that action is taken as soon as possible to ensure the new Housing Management System is properly implemented in the Council and that the benefits promised are realised.

3. Ensure that the certified Council accounts for 22/23 are reported to Central Government as soon as is practicable.