

Council

Briefing note and supplementary papers

Date: **Monday 6 October 2025**

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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All public papers are available from the calendar link to this meeting once published

Briefing note

Information for councillors and additional papers to be considered.

	Pages
13 Questions on Notice from Members of Council Questions on notice from councillors received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.11(c). Questions on notice may be asked of the Lord Mayor, a Member of the Cabinet or a Chair of a Committee. One supplementary question may be asked at the meeting. The full text of questions must have been received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by no later than 1.00pm on Wednesday, 24 September 2025. These, and written responses where available, will be published in the briefing note.	7 - 30
14 Public addresses that do not relate to matters for decision at this Council meeting Public addresses to the Leader or other Cabinet member received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution and <u>not</u> relating to matters for decision in Part 1 of this agenda. Up to five minutes is available for each public address. The request to speak accompanied by the full text of the address must be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by 5.00 pm on Tuesday, 30 September 2025. The briefing note will contain the text of addresses and questions submitted by the deadline, and written responses where available. <i>A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items.</i> <i>Responses</i>	31 - 34
15 Outside Organisation Report: Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) Annual Update 2025-26	35 - 46

The Community Safety Service Manager has submitted a report for the annual update for 2025-2026 for the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership.

Recommendation: That Council resolves to:

1. **Note** the annual update report of Oxford Safer Communities Partnership.

17 Motions on Notice October 2025

47 - 54

This item has a time limit of 60 minutes.

Motions received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy in accordance with the rules in Section 11 of the Constitution by the deadline of 1.00pm on Wednesday, 24 September 2025 are listed below.

Cross party motions are taken first. Motions will then be taken in turn from the *Liberal Democrat Group, Green Group, Independent Oxford Alliance Group, Oxford Community Independents Group, Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent Group, Labour Group* in that order.

Substantive amendments to these motions must be sent by councillors to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by no later than 10.00am on Friday, 3 October 2025 so that they may be circulated with the briefing note.

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) Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Smowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather)
- b) Oxford stands for diversity, for fairer migration policy and against the far right (Proposed by Councillor Powell, Seconded by Councillor Jarvis)
- c) Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Councillor Mundy, Seconded by Councillor Djafari-Marbini)
- d) Keep Oxford Open (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, Seconded by Councillor Smowton)
- e) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Councillor Jupp, Seconded by Councillor Miles)

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: 6 October 2025

Report of: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy

Title of Report: Questions on Notice from members of Council and responses from the Cabinet Members and Leader

Introduction

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.

Responses are included where available.

Questioners can ask one supplementary question of the Cllr answering the original question.

This report will be republished after the Council meeting to include supplementary questions and responses as part of the minutes pack.

Unfamiliar terms may be briefly explained in footnotes.

Questions and responses

Cabinet Member for Partnership Working and Inclusive Economic Growth; Leader of the Council

SB1: From Cllr Malik to Cllr Brown

Question

Council has passed the motion opposing the congestion charge. Does this mean the Administration also opposes the bus filters?

Written Response

We support the important principle of reducing congestion and emissions. It is abundantly clear that the current administration at the county council have undermined public confidence and consent to traffic measures and that a new approach of engagement will be necessary. We need solutions that meet Oxford's unique local needs, address equity concerns and fill critical gaps in infrastructure and accessibility. We also need far more homes nearer to Oxford to reduce the need for car travel into Oxford. Importantly we believe that better communication and engagement with local communities would not only improve outcomes but also strengthen public confidence and support for any future measures.

SB2: From Cllr Malik to Cllr Brown

<p>Question</p> <p>Val Smith was our former councillor who done lot for the people of oxford especially for the people of Blackbird Leys where she served on Parish, City and County Council same time the office manager for former MP Andrew Smith where she helped thousands of residents. Can you Confirm the new Community Centre in Blackbird Leys will be named after her and any new development take place on Blackbird Leys Road will be named after her?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>As you would expect, we have consulted with Andrew and Val's family as we very much wanted to take this opportunity to honour her memory in the community she loved and served so well for so long. With their consent, we will name a road at the Knights Road site after her. The developer, Peabody trust, has already listed the addresses of new housing with the new name. Val's family expressed their preference for a road to be named after her, and community engagement for the new community centre demonstrated support for maintaining the centre's current name.</p>
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<p>SB3: From Cllr Malik to Cllr Brown</p>	
<p>Question</p> <p>It was great to see the letter sent by the leader of the council to our twin city Ramallah in Palestine.</p> <p>Can we fly the flag of Palestine at the town hall to show solidarity to our twin city?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>We have invited the Mayor of Ramallah to visit us in December when he hopes to be over in the UK. If that happens, then we would fly the Palestinian flag to welcome him.</p>

<p>SB4: From Cllr Goddard to Cllr Brown</p>	
<p>Question</p> <p>What proportion of Members' Enquiry Forms are receiving responses within the target period?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>Since the system went live 1304 enquiries have been received. 56% of OCC enquiries received a response within five days. Any feedback on the system can be sent to OCCCustomerRelations@oxford.gov.uk</p>

<p>SB5: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Brown</p>	
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Question	Written Response
Following the resignation of the UK government minister for local government, can the responsible member please confirm that this council has not received any indication of changes to the planned reorganisation of local government?	The new MHCLG Secretary of State wrote almost immediately on his appointment to confirm his commitment to take forward swiftly and effectively both the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation programmes initiated by his predecessor and set out in the English Devolution White Paper.

SB6: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Brown

Question	Written Response
Recent reports have outlined that the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance has now been delivered to the minister for women and equalities, and it is likely that implementation will follow in the near future. Given the fundamental implications that this guidance may have on the human rights of many Oxford citizens, will the portfolio holder ensure that any changes of policy following the guidance is subject to a decision of cabinet and is subjected to cross-party scrutiny?	Yes. Any substantive policy changes will follow the usual decision-making process.

CB7: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Brown

Question	Written Response
In light of the overturning of the first instance judgment regarding the Bell Hotel in Epping, will the portfolio holder take this opportunity to rule out any court proceedings aimed at ending the housing of asylum seekers in the Kassam Hotel within Oxford City?	We have not explored legal proceedings to challenge the use of the Kassam hotel. It has been the view of this council since the previous Conservative government first housed people there that hotels are not suitable accommodation. We are pleased to see the Labour Government is taking action to reduce the use of hotels and we hope this will soon result in the Home Office no longer needing the hotel they use in Oxford.

Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; Deputy Leader of the Council (Statutory)

ET1: From Cllr Miles to Turner

Question

What steps has the city council taken to identify business rate payer locations where phoenix shops suspect to be operating and take coordinated action with relevant partner agencies to prevent the loss of business rates income from these businesses?

Written Response

From the business rates perspective, we do act where cases are identified, and they are sent to the Investigation Team and to Local Law Enforcement if action is required. Rate avoidance in this manner is not as prevalent in Oxford as in other areas such as central London.

6

ET2: From Cllr Mundy to Turner

Question

For how many different Council Tax (CT) debts were Civil Enforcement Agents (CEAs) used in 2024-2025?

Written Response

1025 were sent to our Enforcement Agents for Collection

ET3: From Cllr Mundy to Turner

Question

OCC CT recovery policy states that CEAs may be used even in cases where the debtor is identified as

Written Response.

The Recovery Team do not send people who are flagged as vulnerable to our Enforcement Agents, Vulnerable cases are dealt with in-house. We use

vulnerable. How many CEA visits were carried out in 2024-2025, following the identification of the debtor as being vulnerable?	two firms of Enforcement Agents, both firms have their own Vulnerability specialists, we will return cases to the Council where vulnerability is identified.
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ET4: From Cllr Mundy to Turner

Question Does OCC use multiple CEA contractors and were any contractors taken out of use in 2024-2025 due to their agents not following Professional Standards?	Written Response Our Contracts were renewed in 2024; no agents have been removed due to not following professional standards. All customer encounters are recorded using body worn cameras.
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ET5: From Cllr Mundy to Turner

Question Has OCC identified instances where the recovery of a CT debt was made harder due to the added burden on the debtor of the CEA fee(s)?	Written Response Enforcement Agents fees are prescribed by law and can be found In the Taking Control of Goods Act 2013.To date we have received no complaints concerning the level of fees.
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ET6: From Cllr Mundy to Turner

Question What was the gross financial cost to OCC, both operationally and through any fees incurred, of using CEAs in 2024-2025?	Written Response- There is no cost to the Council fees are collected from the debtor in accordance with the above Act.
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ET7: From Cllr Mundy to Turner

Question

Have our CT Recovery Team undertaken any impact assessments, specifically regarding the use of CEAs and particularly in regard to debtors who may be vulnerable, since 2019-2020?

Written Response

The have been no such impact assessments carried out as when vulnerability is identified, as the cases are dealt with in-house.

ET8: From Cllr Muddiman to Turner

Question

Can you explain how the awarding of the pre-construction contract for Oxpens River Bridge to Balfour Beatty, a notorious company whose negligence led to the death of a construction worker and serious injuries to another in 2020, who were fined £49million for fraud for systematically falsifying data in 2021, and who are currently being sued for £34m after substandard building work required the evacuation of an entire student block this year, meets the Council's own ethical procurement policies and procurement strategy?

Written Response

All procurement has to comply with both the laws governing local authority procurement and the Council's own constitution and requirements in relation to procurement.

Balfour Beatty were procured through SCAPE, a local authority procurement framework <https://scape.co.uk/our-frameworks>.

In the light of cost increases the construction of the bridge is to be tendered through another framework, Pagabo, to enable a competitive process.

ET9: From Cllr Powell to Turner

Question

In light of the appearance of flags on council property in towns and cities across the UK, will the portfolio holder please outline the City Council's policy

Written Response

If anyone reports an issue where a flag is causing a problem, then the City Council can remove it. Most flags that have been displayed in the city are

regarding flags which have been affixed to City Council property without consent?	attached to structures owned by Oxfordshire County Council, such as bridges and streetlights
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Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford; Deputy Leader of the Council

AR1: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Railton

Question

Luke Marion, MD of Oxford Bus Company has said that Oxford is trapped "in a vicious cycle of people driving private cars because public transport is too slow, which adds more vehicles onto the roads and in turn worsens the situation". He believes that the Congestion charge "will help reduce traffic, make bus journey times faster and more reliable, enable the delivery of new and improved bus routes, and reduce pollution." Does the portfolio holder agree with him?

Written Response

Although we feel the temporary congestion charge for cars could have been designed better for residents it is acknowledged that the scheme is likely to reduce the number of cars in the city centre and so lessen congestion for buses.

AR2: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Railton

Question

What discussions have the council had with Network Rail about the need for the Beckett Street car park to become a transport hub/bus station?

Written Response

We continue to work closely with Network Rail on long-term plans to redevelop Oxford station and I welcome the news that they are currently procuring a new design team to take forward a new masterplan and planning application for the station redevelopment.

The need for an improved bus interchange at the station is critical and will need to be explored through this work, in collaboration with both the City

and County Councils, and the bus companies. Initial work undertaken demonstrates that it should be possible to provide necessary bus capacity on the station forecourt and on-street, which would enable Beckett Street car park to be considered for enabling development to help pay for the scheme.

However, this will be explored in detail through the upcoming design process, including through the pre-application planning process.

Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford

LA1: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Arshad

Question

The Kassam Hotel, which is currently home to a number of people seeking asylum in the UK, has recently been a location targeted by far-right activists. Will the portfolio holder please undertake to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure that the geographic remoteness of the hotel has been considered and that proper plans have been formulated to ensure that violence of the kind that swept the UK last summer can be effectively contained should it arise?

Written Response

There is a national policing response to the protests outside hotels being used to house people seeking asylum. Thames Valley Police are part of that response and I have had assurances from senior police officers in Oxfordshire that an appropriate level of policing is allocated, ensuring there is not a breach of the peace and to facilitate peaceful protest.

LA2: From Cllr Robinson to Cllr Arshad

Question

Written Response

Hope Not Hate have made a range of excellent recommendations about how local people can promote community cohesion, safety and wellbeing through grassroots sports events and in community centres. Could the portfolio holder assure us that she is working with both the portfolio Cabinet Member for a Healthy, Fairer Oxford and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities to invest in community led projects in the most economically deprived areas?

The Council is working with communities under its Thriving Communities strategy to deliver significant impact within these areas. This includes the Council's grants schemes such as the Oxford Community Impact fund that helps support many of our community groups in these areas.

In addition, the Council has worked with our leisure provider to provide a variety of different activities including kids free swimming, concessionary access and in-kind funding which has helped provide free or reduced fee access to groups in our most deprived areas.

We have also been working closely with our communities and partners on various programmes which include Move Together, You Move and Park Play aimed at getting individuals and families to move more.

Recently the Council has, in collaboration with young people on the Leys, developed the Leys Youth Hub bringing in approximately £1.7 million in external funding and enabling a programme of youth developed activities at the Leys Leisure Centre.

The Council has invested heavily in its community facilities and new replacement community centre is being delivered in Blackbird Leys and a modernised community Centre in East Oxford, both were shaped by significant community engagement.

Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies

NC1: From Cllr Malik to Cllr Chapman

Question

How much revenue has been generated year by year to-date since the council have introduced the Bulky items charge?

Written Response

at 30/09/2026	£
financial year	net income
2014/15	-1,125.00
2015/16	-1,575.00
2016/17	-2,548.00
2017/18	-1,950.00
2018/19	-1,500.00
2019/20	-2,125.00
2020/21	-3,625.00
2021/22	-102,340.00
2022/23	-87,825.51
2023/24	-76,442.10
2024/25	-80,699.00
2025/26 (YTD)	-55,269.55
	-417,304.16

Local authority pricing for a single bulky waste item varies significantly. A review of pricing across all LAs in 2021 shows the average cost for a single item was £28.

Oxford's 25/26 pricing is £23.50 (£10) per household item and £34.50 (£15) for large electrical/white goods. Large white/electrical item collections incur higher operational costs. The prices in brackets are for discounted rates for residents on benefits (Oxford provides greater than 50% discount).

NC2: From Cllr Goddard to Cllr Chapman**Question**

How can recent issues with widespread uncollected waste in north Oxford and elsewhere be prevented from recurring?

Written Response

The Waste & Recycling service has experienced difficulties throughout the summer. Predominantly, this is due to a particular issue with agency staff's availability and unfortunately some vehicle breakdowns over the summer. The Council & ODS are treating this as a high priority. A focused recruitment drive is underway to employ more drivers and loaders directly whilst reducing our reliance on freelance agency staff and four new refuse vehicles should arrive in the next few months. This will allow for better management and scheduling of rotas and help reduce the likelihood of issues arising in the future. The last four weeks have seen a considerable improvement with no incomplete rounds.

NC3: From Cllr Goddard to Cllr Chapman**Question**

What is the service level agreement the city council has with its fully owned company ODS for the frequency and intensity of street cleaning of the central city centre zone streets of Cornmarket, Queen's Street, George Street, High Street and Broad Street?

Written Response

Street cleaning in the city centre is carried out in accordance with our Service Standards. Cornmarket, Queen Street, George Street, High Street and Broad Street receive high intensity cleaning from 5am daily. This includes mechanical sweeping, litter picking, litter bin emptying and detritus removal. These areas are maintained throughout the course of the day, seven days per week. This high intensity is based on the volume of pedestrians who use these streets on a daily basis.

Mechanical sweeping is carried out once/twice per day in these areas. Litter picking and bin emptying has a constant daily presence. When it's very busy, areas such as Bonn Square can have up to 10 visits per day for a combination of litter picking, manual sweeping and bin emptying.

NC4: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Chapman**Question**

Which herbicides does Oxford City Council and ODS use and where?

Written Response

ODS uses a glyphosate-based herbicide on a spot application basis to hard paved areas including car parks, pavements, kerb-side areas and council garage forecourts across the city. There are three applications per year. It is 'spot applied' and not a blanket treatment to reduce chemical use. It is *not* routinely used in parks and open spaces (other than around the perimeter of tennis courts) – and hasn't been used in this way for at least 10 years in Oxford

NC5: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Chapman**Question**

In response to a survey by Pesticide Action Network in 2024, the council said that it used herbicides in the following spaces: parks and green spaces, cemeteries, playing fields, road Verges and roundabouts, hard surfaces (eg. pavements) and housing estates. In the same survey, Labour run Cambridge City Council said they did not use herbicides in any of those spaces. Why is Oxford not as committed as Cambridge to the protection of our biodiversity, water, soil and air?

Written Response

A paper was submitted to OCC in 2023, which outlined the approach to weed killing in numerous local authorities, using information from APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence). It was commissioned by me as the Cabinet Member for Citizen-Focused Services. This summarised outcomes as well as costs in most of these examples.

The review found that significant care was taken in the way Glyphosate is used by ODS in Oxford to minimise negative impacts on wider biodiversity. It also found that all the alternative weed treatments had a higher cost, and none had demonstrated the level of effectiveness of Glyphosate. The use of acetic acid, for instance, created new risks to the insect population and to humans. Relying on more manual human intervention was prohibitively expensive and hard to find staff to undertake this work.

The continued tightly controlled application of Glyphosate to tackle weed penetration of paved surfaces and invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed was approved by the City Council. This is in line with current DEFRA and Environment Agency guidance, and is entirely legal, in the UK, the USA and large parts of the EU.

AH1: From Cllr Miles to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Has the city council undertaken any economic analysis of the proportion of city jobs related to different economic sectors and vocational groups, such as education (teachers), and healthcare (nurses, doctors)? What steps had the council taken to match the housing categories it is investing in with the categories of jobs and related wage brackets of the economic sectors that drive the city's economy?

Written Response

The City Council assesses housing need in line with the regulations governing planning and in partnership with relevant statutory bodies and partner organisations.

The requirement for new affordable rented homes, identified in the Local Plan, and developed in partnership with Registered Providers, is informed by a household's housing need on the Housing Register, for example overcrowding and the number of bedrooms required, or adaptations for needs. The Council does not match housing categories to specific jobs or wage brackets of specific economic sectors.

To meet wider housing needs, the Local Plan also recognises the need for intermediate housing to be provided, including for example shared ownership. Many homes being delivered in the affordable housing supply programme provide for this low-cost route into home ownership and this offer has been taken up by a number of key workers.

Furthermore, the Local Plan identifies some sites in the city as being appropriate for delivery as Employer-Led housing schemes (especially on health and education sites) to assist in further housing delivery on sites that may otherwise be unsuitable for general needs affordable homes.

The Council cannot and does not assess housing need based on different economic sectors and vocational groups.

AH2: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

How does the Council intend to floodproof the route between Osney Mead and Grandpont Nature Park, to ensure the planned Oxpens River Bridge is accessible from Osney Mead and Osney Island in times of flood?

Written Response

The bridge and the connecting paths that would be improved are designed not to flood or are situated outside the floodplain. There are no current proposals to make the towpath under the railway bridge at the western end of Grandpont Nature Park floodproof.

We will work with the University and other landowners on Osney Mead to explore options to provide a safe means of refuge through the masterplanning for that area. This may or may not involve work to the path under the rail bridge as part of proposals to address flooding in the locality.

The purpose of the Oxpens River Bridge is, as was made clear in the many reports on the principle, the proposed bridge, the planning application and reports considered at different stages by the City Council, is to provide connectivity between a range of different locations to the south and west of the bridge and the city centre to the north. It is not primarily a safe means escape route from Osney Mead at times of flooding.

AH3: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

How much of the additional £3.7m required for the Oxpens River Bridge has so far been pledged by Oxford University, Homes England and/or any other external sources?

Written Response

We currently have an in-principal agreement with the University of Oxford to cover £1m of the additional costs. Conversations are on-going with other parties.

AH4: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question****Written Response**

Can the portfolio holder confirm that, should the full £3.7m for the Oxpens River Bridge not be raised from external sources, the decision to spend any City Council funds from the budgets allocated for that purpose at the Cabinet meeting on 13th August 2025 will need to be approved by a future meeting of Cabinet?	As I made clear at the Cabinet meeting on 13 th August 2025, should the external funding not be found then the decision would need to be reviewed. The purpose of the Cabinet decision was to allow the project to proceed if the funding is secured, rather than incur still further delay with the increased cost consequences of that delay, to add to the costs already incurred because of delays such as the unsuccessful legal challenges.
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AH5: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question Can the portfolio holder clarify who owns the land between East St and the River Thames?	Written Response No, as I do not possess information from the Land Registry about land ownership. I would suggest a Member Enquiry to identify the ownership of the land in question, defining exactly on a map which land is being referred to in case there are multiple owners.
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20

AH6: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question Since the last Full Council meeting, what specific actions has the council taken to resolve the Jericho Boatyard situation?	Written Response In September the City Council facilitated a meeting between the landowner and the Jericho Wharf Trust to discuss their plans for the site. Another meeting is planned in November, where we will see if the landowner will demonstrate progress on bringing forward a scheme for the site. We will continue to work with all parties to look at the full range of options to bring forward development on the site.
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AH7: From Cllr Miles to Cllr Clarkson

Question	Written Response
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What is the planning status of the two locations being used for hand carwash businesses operating a) on Wash and Go car wash business on the Abingdon Road next to Tesco and b) behind the derelict buildings at 21 and 22 South Parade, and the history and current status of any planning enforcement taken around the alignment of usage of these sites with planning status?

This is a general question which would be better put to officers in the Planning Service directly so that they can provide you with a fuller response on the planning history for both sites including the status of any enforcement history.

In brief terms the car wash on the Abingdon Road was the subject of a two unsuccessful prosecutions for an unauthorised use in 2014. Further consideration was being given at that time as to how to proceed with the enforcement notice but it does not appear to have been pursued.

In relation to the derelict buildings to the rear of 21 and 22 South Parade, our enforcement officers have undertaken a quick inspection following this question and could not see any evidence of a car wash. If the member would like to send details of the alleged unauthorised use to the enforcement team they will investigate.

21

AH8: From Cllr Smowton to Cllr Clarkson

Question

People submitting comments on planning applications presently have their names and addresses published. This can on occasion be a vector for abuse, and is not in general required; rather, different councils take different views as to how and when details associated with comments are published. Will you consider revising the City's approach to this?

Written Response

The council's procedures with respect to the handling of comments on planning applications are long-standing and accord with the GDPR regulations. The council's privacy statement makes clear to residents how their data will be handled.

The manner in which we handle this data is consistent with a number of our neighbouring authorities. The LPA consider it is important for the public to see who has commented on a planning application as it ensures that there is an open and transparent process and that sufficient weight can be given to the representation. There are no plans to make changes to our approach at this stage.

AH9: From Cllr Miles to Cllr Clarkson

Question	Written Response
Is planning permission needed for community notice boards to be installed on a) council owned land and b) land owned through housing management companies on housing estates in our city? Of the new community notice boards installed in the city in the last 5 years, how many received planning permission and who has paid for the planning permission fees?	<p>Permission is not needed for a notice board on council owner land if it is installed by the council. It would be required on land owned by housing management companies on housing estates in our city.</p> <p>We have not refused any notice boards as far as I am aware.</p> <p>The planning fee is paid for by the applicants.</p>

Cabinet Member for a Healthy, Fairer Oxford and Small Business Champion

CM1: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Munkonge

Question	Written Response
How much money was spent to provide free leisure experience for non-Oxford residents and did MHCLG approve this as a legitimate use of these funds?	<p>If the question is referring to the recent campaign around a Greater Oxford under Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) then I can confirm that no money was spent on providing free leisure experiences to non-Oxford residents. We're proud of Oxford's excellent leisure service provision, which should provide a template for a Greater Oxford Council.</p>

CM2: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Munkonge

Question	Written Response
The women only swimming sessions at the OCC leisure centres often have male lifeguards which make	<p>There have been some challenges across the country around recruitment of lifeguards in general and Oxford has had similar challenges. Working</p>

them less accessible. What steps are being taken to address this?	<p>with our leisure operator we have taken steps to try and address this such as regular free training and lifeguard qualifications and better promotion and engagement with our communities. We are also working on a longer-term basis to improve access, skills and education into the industry with partners such as CIMSPA (Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity) on the trail blazer Local Skills Advisory Board Oxfordshire - CIMSPA.</p> <p>I am pleased to confirm that an additional four female lifeguards have been recruited which should help to address this.</p>
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Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

LS1: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Smith

Question	Written Response
<p>Could the portfolio holder provide the list of community centres that currently stock free period products and how it monitors and ensures there is a continued supply of these products? If there are community centres that do not have these in supply, could the cabinet member provide an explanation for this and the plan for implementation?</p>	<p>The Council consulted with the Federation of Community Centres in relation to the best way to work with them to deliver this. The Federation worked with its member community centres funding each a one-off sum of £150 to purchase and stock period products.</p> <p>We can only guarantee stock at the Community Centres we manage (currently Rose Hill Community Centre). There is an annual review of this at the Community Associations meeting which the Council and Community Associations attend. This is scheduled for the 6 November.</p> <p>The Community Centres within the scheme include Barton Neighbourhood Centre, Rose Hill Community Centre, Cutteslowe Community Centre, Donnington Community Centre, Florence Park Community Centre, Risinghurst Community Centre, Headington Community Centre, South</p>

	<p>Oxford Community Centre, Jubilee Hall, Bullingdon Community Centre, Northway Community Centre, Asian Cultural Centre, Littlemore Community Centre, West Oxford Community Centre and Regal Community Centre.</p> <p>If any of the centres are running low or are out of stock we would recommend that they contact the Federation of Community Associations or contact the Council.</p>
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LS2: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith

Question

OCC aims to make cycling safer and more accessible. One of our residents in an A2 housing association block has been asking for a safe place to keep their bike for three years. The bike is not allowed in the communal areas or the garden, leaving the residents of these one bedroom flats with nowhere to store bikes. What actions are being taken to act on partners such as housing associations not engaging with OCC aims?

Written Response

While we have no regulatory powers over Housing Associations and their management activities, if the member could provide me with the location of this block, we will make formal enquiries regarding the possibility of a bike store being installed.

LS3: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith

Question

Huge screens have appeared in the tower blocks in The Leys that are meant to be fire safety notices but are often blank. What was the cost of this instalment to the council and why was more traditional method of communications such as newsletters not used?

Written Response

Digital noticeboards have been installed in each of the five tower blocks to cover a range of real time information about the building, activities, Council news, services and other important safety information. They have not been installed in place of fire safety notices. The noticeboards have not been commissioned yet and are expected to be switched on in October. The budget for the noticeboards and their installation was approved by Cabinet

in February 2024. Hard copy Newsletters will still be provided where appropriate.

LS4: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith

Question

Residents at Knights Road have been unable to access their rear gate for many months meaning they cannot for examples use their bicycles. They have raised this with Hill numerous times to no effect and now residents' fences have been damaged and a fence has been erected on the other side which means residents cannot access the alleyway. How will the cabinet member ensure that the blocking off of rear gates, and damage to fences is addressed in a timely manner?

Written Response

Hill has been liaising with local residents during construction to tackle issues with fences and access through the back of residences of Knights Road. Damaged fences or ones that are in incorrect locations will be fixed or relocated by the contractor. Access to the alleyway may have to be restricted or blocked during construction works but this is temporary and will be reinstated by the developer once works are completed. Hill are addressing residents' concerns and issues as they arise and based on individual resident needs.

The Council meets with Peabody once a week to monitor and escalate resident concerns when needed.

LS5: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith

Question

This Council was awarded City of Sanctuary status in Dec 2024. Cities of Sanctuary promote positive narratives that highlight the contributions of people seeking refuge and challenge negative stereotypes often perpetuated by media, fostering a broader sense of solidarity and welcome within the community. Despite this and numerous anti asylum protests at the asylum seeker hotel in the city in recent weeks, there has not been a media strategy from the

Written Response

Our commitment to being a council of sanctuary is underpinned by our Council of Sanctuary Framework and three-year action plan. This includes the creation of opportunities and space for people seeking sanctuary to have their voices heard and their stories told. I am working with our communities' team and communications team on a media strategy for publicising the great work supported by our Community Impact Fund and this will feature migrant voices.

council communications team, humanising the asylum seeker residents at the hotel. This is despite the fact that many asylum seekers have fled unimaginable situations, are volunteers inc in food banks (they are not permitted to work), and a valued part of local sports teams (supported by the great work of the communities team). When will this Council of Sanctuary humanise our neighbours at the hotels in its media output via a thought through strategy and help our communities heal?

LS6: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Smith

Question

Recent reports have suggested that the new Home Secretary is planning to move people seeking asylum out of hotels and into large scale facilities such as military bases. This echoes actions which under the previous government resulted in vulnerable people's health being seriously undermined, including through the spreading of diseases such as dysentery which had otherwise been eradicated from the UK. The Oxford Mail has reported that the proposed moves will include Asylum Seekers housed in Oxfordshire, including those in Oxford City. As an accredited City of Sanctuary, will the portfolio holder undertake to write to the Home Secretary to publicly state this council's opposition to having the vulnerable people housed in our city removed and placed into facilities which, as many experts have outlined, can be considered to be unfit for human habitation?

Written Response

The Home Secretary is working to fix the asylum system after the Tories failed to manage it effectively. Tory failure to process asylum claims led to the ballooning use of hotels for accommodation. The Labour Government is taking action to reduce the use of hotels, and we hope this will soon result in the Home Office no longer needing the hotel they use in Oxford. We need to see asylum claims being processed swiftly with asylum seekers being accommodated in decent conditions which provide for their welfare for the necessary duration. If we were to become aware of sub-standard conditions in Home Office provided accommodation within our area then of course we would take action.

LS7: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Smith**Question**

Will the portfolio holder take this opportunity to re-affirm the commitment of this council to the principles of the City of Sanctuary Scheme and offer a condemnation of the anti-migrant organising taking place within our city?

Written Response

Yes. Oxford City Council is proud to have been awarded Council of Sanctuary status. Migration has a positive impact on our community, and we are proud to welcome people from around the world to our city including those in search of a place of safety. The use of hotels to accommodate asylum seekers by the Home Office is not something supported by either this Council or the public, and the far-right should be condemned for exploiting the situation created by the Tory Government's failure to stop small boat crossings and competently manage the asylum system.

LS8: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith**Question**

The highways delays around Blackbird Leys Road and Knights Road are causing untold misery to our residents who are struggling to access their local amenities. Residents are describing that "a big hole has been made and left". Regarding the disruption and unacceptable delay: What engagement, if any, is the cabinet member having with the responsible authority Oxfordshire CC?

Written Response

The highways works have been delayed because Thames Water works took longer than anticipated, and now Hill have had to replace their roadworks subcontractor. The latest update from Peabody and Hill is that an appointment is imminent and they are doing what they can to resume works as soon as possible. The Council has weekly meetings with Peabody to monitor progress, and understand what is being done to mitigate impacts, and I receive regular updates from our project manager.

LS9: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith**Question**

Has the cabinet member been informed as to why a new subcontractor is involved in the works and will this delay the reopening of the road even further?

Written Response

The works are instructed by Peabody and being delivered by Hill. They have advised of the need for a new subcontractor but that the details are confidential. Hill are currently working to procure an alternative subcontractor to resume and complete works. We are told they are doing

	<p>everything they can to expedite the process, but this will cause delays to both Highways works in the District Centre and groundworks at Knights Road. The extent of delay is currently unknown, but the Council meets with the developer weekly for updates and we will continue to push for the work to progress as soon as possible with minimum further disruption to residents.</p>
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<p>LS10: From Cllr Djafari-Marbini to Cllr Smith</p>	
<p>Question There is a huge need in The Leys for community space. What is the current timetable for opening of the community centre?</p>	<p>Written Response The new community centre is scheduled for completion by late 2027. Stakeholders and local residents will be kept updated if this needs to be reviewed as a result of the current delays to the associated highways works.</p>



To: Council

Date: 6 October 2025

Report of: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy

Title of Report: Public addresses that do not relate to matters for decision – as submitted by the speakers

Introduction

1. Addresses made by members of the public to the Council put to the Cabinet members or Leader, registered by the deadline in the Constitution, are 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 to be taken in Part 2 of the agenda

1. Address from Dan Glazebrook

Addresses to be taken in Part 2 of the agenda

1. Address from Dan Glazebrook

Almost 2000 people, the vast majority of them local residents, have now signed the petition against Oxpens River Bridge and its connecting paths. There are many reasons people are up in arms - the ecological destruction involved, the lack of democratic consultation, the fact that there are already two excellent pedestrian and cycle bridges within quarter of a mile of the site, the misuse of £10million of public money intended to facilitate affordable housing - but what I want to focus on today is how the bridge singularly fails to meet its own intended purpose - to provide a floodproof connection from Osney Mead to Oxpens.

The local plan specifies the need for both a new bridge linking Osney Mead to the other side of the river, and a floodproof route out of Osney Mead. These two things have subsequently been combined into plans for a single floodproof connection reaching all the way from Osney Mead across the river, as is made clear in several official documents.

The problem is, to reach the bridge from Osney Mead, users would have to go across a stream and under a railway bridge along a section of the towpath that frequently floods.

To solve this problem, the City Council commissioned Stantec to develop a project called Osney Pathworks, to create a new floodproof path linking Osney Mead to the planned new bridge. The preferred plan was to erect floodwalls under the railway bridge. But the Environment Agency vetoed this proposal in 2021, as it would cause further flooding elsewhere. Stantec's report admitted there is no solution available which adequately addresses the flooding issue whilst also meeting current safety standards for cycling and walking.

This remains the case today. There is still no solution to the issue of flooding on the path between Osney Mead and the proposed new bridge.

This makes the bridge completely redundant, as it utterly fails to provide the new floodproof connection from Osney Mead across the river without which housing cannot be built on the site and which was the whole point of the project in the first place. Indeed, the diversion of £1.5million Homes England funding for precisely such a floodproof route out of Osney Mead to instead build connecting paths for the bridge in Grandpont Nature Park means the Council now stands in breach of the terms of that grant and the criteria under which it was allocated, a matter we are pursuing with Homes England themselves.

The City Council is now right on the verge of committing up to £14million of public money, and causing irrevocable damage to a cherished piece of countryside on our doorstep, for a bridge that singularly fails to meet its basic purpose. We urge you - please do not be a party to this shocking waste of money and biodiversity. Surely no further funds should be committed so long as there remains no viable plan to floodproof the connection between Osney Mead and the new bridge.

I would also like to address the issue of the University's funding commitments to the scheme. A spokesman for the University told the Oxford Mail back in January that, the University, quote, "last year agreed to make a contribution of around 10 per cent of the cost of the new bridge after learning that cost increases had put its viability at risk."

10% at that time equated to more than £1 million of the project's projected costs. If the University had already committed more than a million pounds last year, why is this financial commitment not appearing in the figures before us today? Why is the public purse being asked to guarantee the full £3.7million in increased costs, and not, say, £2.7 million, given that a million from the University is already in the bag? Have the University now reneged on this commitment? And if the Council is willing to commit the entirety of the increased costs from the public purse, what incentive is there for the University to contribute any money at all?

Finally I would also like to address the issue of Balfour Beatty's position in the delivery of the scheme. If all goes according to plan, Balfour Beatty are set to be awarded the construction contract next month. Balfour Beatty are a notorious company. They are involved in the imposition of near-slavery conditions on their migrant workforce in Qatar; just four years ago they were fined £49 million for massive fraud against the US government after it was revealed they had been systematically falsifying data in order to get bonus payments - and in this country their failure to comply with statutory safety requirements led in 2020 to the death of one construction worker and serious injuries to another, according to a [ruling](#) by the Health and Safety Executive last year.

But as well as being criminally unethical, they are also just not very good builders. On trustpilot, they are rated 'bad' with just 1.7 stars out of 5 and student residents have had to be moved out of their accommodation in Bethnal Green recently due to significant defects which have been blamed on the contractor, and which have cost its owner over £34million to address.

Why is the Council so keen to work with these incompetent criminals that it is prepared to set aside its usual tendering process and guarantee the contract to Balfour Beatty

without any tendering at all? And is it's willingness to do so the reason why the company feels confident enough to hike its bill by over 35%, from £10 to £14 million in just a few months?

After all, the company do have form here - in 2016, one of their employees [revealed](#) how they had been extorting the taxpayer by systematically inflating their costs. The company responded by sacking the whistleblower, for which they were later forced to pay £137,000.

I will end there but if you would like to be in touch about this, or to see any of the documentation I have referred to today, please do not hesitate to be in touch with Friends of Grandpont Nature Park at gnptrees@gmail.com

More information is also available at our website - savegnp.org

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ROLLING PLAN 2025-26

Oxford Safer Communities Partnership

Email address: saferoxford@oxford.gov.uk



INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Safer Communities Partnership's (OSCP) 2025-26 Rolling Plan sets out the partnership's priorities for the year based on an analysis of community safety data contained in the Oxfordshire Community Safety Strategic Needs Assessment. It provides an overview of the work undertaken by the partnership during the previous year and planned activities for the year ahead.

OSCP's Executive Group brings organisations together to work in partnership to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Oxford. It comprises Responsible Authorities, as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and other local partners including Oxford University Hospitals, Oxford Brookes University, the University of Oxford, Turning Point, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

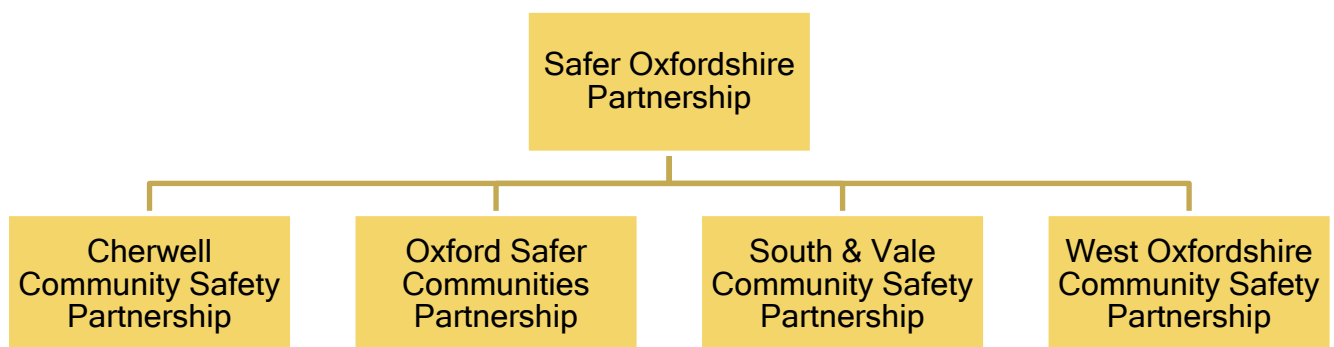
Funding supporting some of the delivery of OSCP's priorities is provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner. OSCP's priorities compliment the priorities of the PCC's crime plan, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2024-29.

OSCP work with the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership (SOP) to address community safety priorities including modern slavery, serious violence and domestic abuse. SOP provide the strategic leadership and development, with OSCP delivering local plans and projects in Oxford.

To view the full Joint Strategic Needs Assessment or TVP's Police & Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, please click on the hyperlinks below.

<https://data.oxfordshire.gov.uk/jsna/>

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/police-and-crime-plan/>



OSCP PRIORITIES 2025/26

Continuing the successful work undertaken last year, OSCP's new priorities are, as follows:

- **Anti-Social Behaviour and neighbourhood crime**
 - Develop and implement problem-solving plans for ASB hotspot areas, including undertaking crime prevention surveys with our communities.
 - Address environmental crime such as littering, fly-tipping and waste in gardens that can blight our neighbourhoods.
 - Continue to improve CCTV across Oxford by working in partnership with other local authorities and TVP.
 - Oversee ASB Reviews that enable victims of anti-social behaviour to request a review of how agencies addressed persistent ASB complaints.
 - Tackle retail crime by supporting TVP's Operation Purchase, the police-led retail crime reduction initiative.
- **Reduce Serious Violence**
 - Work with the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership to deliver the statutory Serious Violence Duty requirements set out in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. These are:
 - to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence.
 - identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area and the causes of that violence.
 - prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area.
 - To address drug dealing in open spaces through a problem-solving approach.
 - Support the work of the multi-agency Serious and Organised Crime group to identify and disrupt organised criminal groups.
 - Work with young people who are at risk of offending or socially isolated by providing diversionary activities and becoming more inclusive within our communities.
 - Work with partners and housing providers to identify, support and protect vulnerable people whose property has been taken over (cuckooing).
 - Continue the successful NightSafe partnership that aims to improve safety in Oxford's nighttime economy areas.
- **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**
 - Commission Domestic Homicide Reviews and implement recommendations.
 - Support Oxford City Council to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA), ensuring the council maintains the accreditation for future years.
 - Support the delivery of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy.
 - Increase the safety of women and girls in the night-time economy through our NightSafe programme that works with licensees, Higher Education partners, student bodies and our communities.

- **Modern Slavery and Exploitation**
 - Develop multi-agency plans to support victims and disrupt perpetrators of modern slavery and exploitation.
 - Continue the work of the Thames Valley Anti-Slavery Network to increase awareness and cooperation in prevention, communications and disruption of activities, preventing victims becoming exploited.
 - Identify trends in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and pathway referrals to identify emerging themes.
- **Preventing Extremism**
 - Work with partners to implement the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 for publicly accessible locations.
 - Support the Oxfordshire Prevent Strategy in its actions to deter people from extremist ideology.

ADDRESSING CRIME IN OXFORD 2024

The Oxfordshire Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) is an assessment of crime and other community safety data for Oxfordshire. The following pages provide extracts from the SNA for the year 2024 with summaries of the work OSCP undertook to address its priorities.

All Crime

There were 17,002 valid crimes in 2024. A valid crime has adhered to Home Office counting rules and recorded on Thames Valley Police's crime recording system. Information during an investigation may lead to a reassessment of a crime classification.

Table 1 shows the number of valid crimes per population in Oxfordshire. Oxford has the highest rate of valid crime per capita due to its urban character.

Table 1: Comparison valid crimes across Oxfordshire districts for the year 2024

	Valid Crimes	Population (ONS census 2021)	Valid Crimes per Capita
Oxford	17,002	162,100	0.10
Cherwell	10,994	161,837	0.07
South Oxfordshire	4,478	150,024	0.03
Vale of White Horse	8,446	139,487	0.06
West Oxfordshire	4,725	115,161	0.04
Oxfordshire	45,465	726,530	0.06

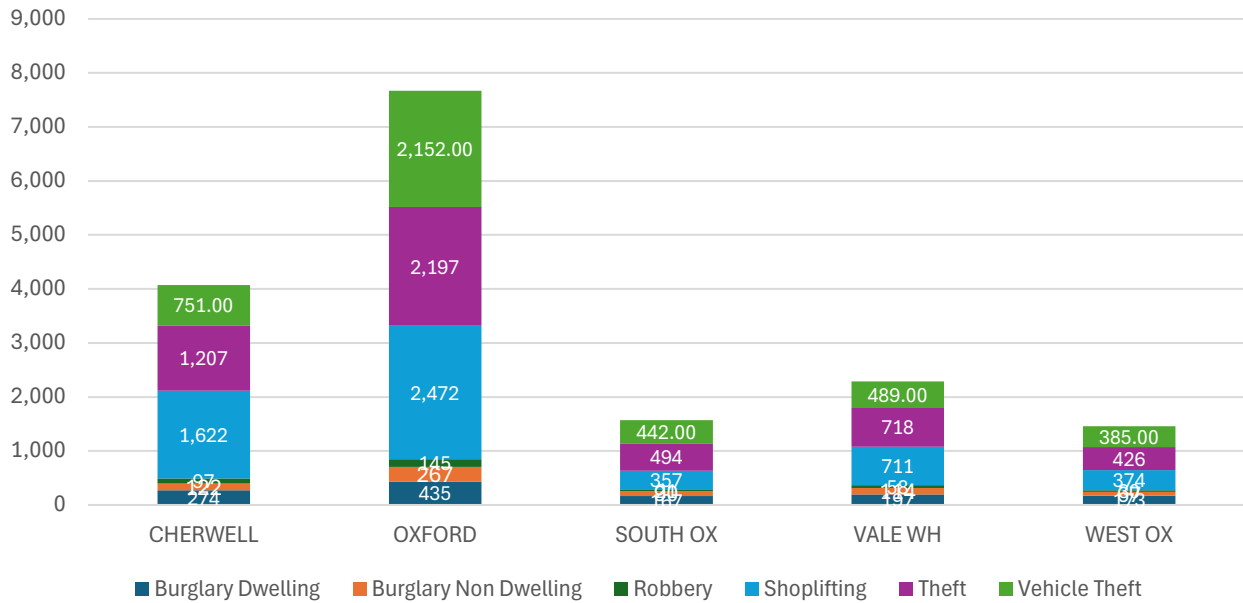
Neighbourhood Crime

Acquisitive Crime

Acquisitive crime is where the offender derives material gain from the crime. Common examples include theft, burglary, robbery, shoplifting, fraud, and certain types of vehicle crime. Chart 1 provides a breakdown of these crimes by district. Vehicle thefts and shoplifting in Oxford are more than double that of neighbouring councils.

TVP launched Operation Purchase that tackled retail crime. Officers undertook a robust operation to address shoplifting within our neighbourhoods and city centre. Over the 12 months from February 2024 to January 2025, there were 2,534 reported crimes, an increase of 39.9% compared to the same period the previous year. This resulted with an increase in the solved crime rate of 35.6%.

Chart 1: Aquisitive Crime Across Districts for the year 2024

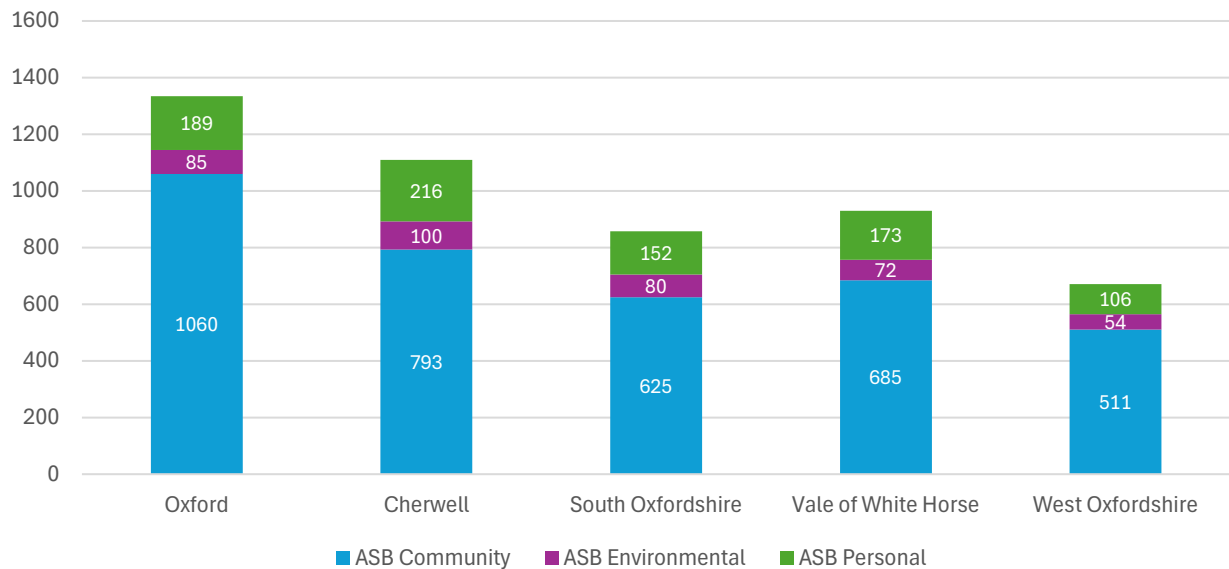


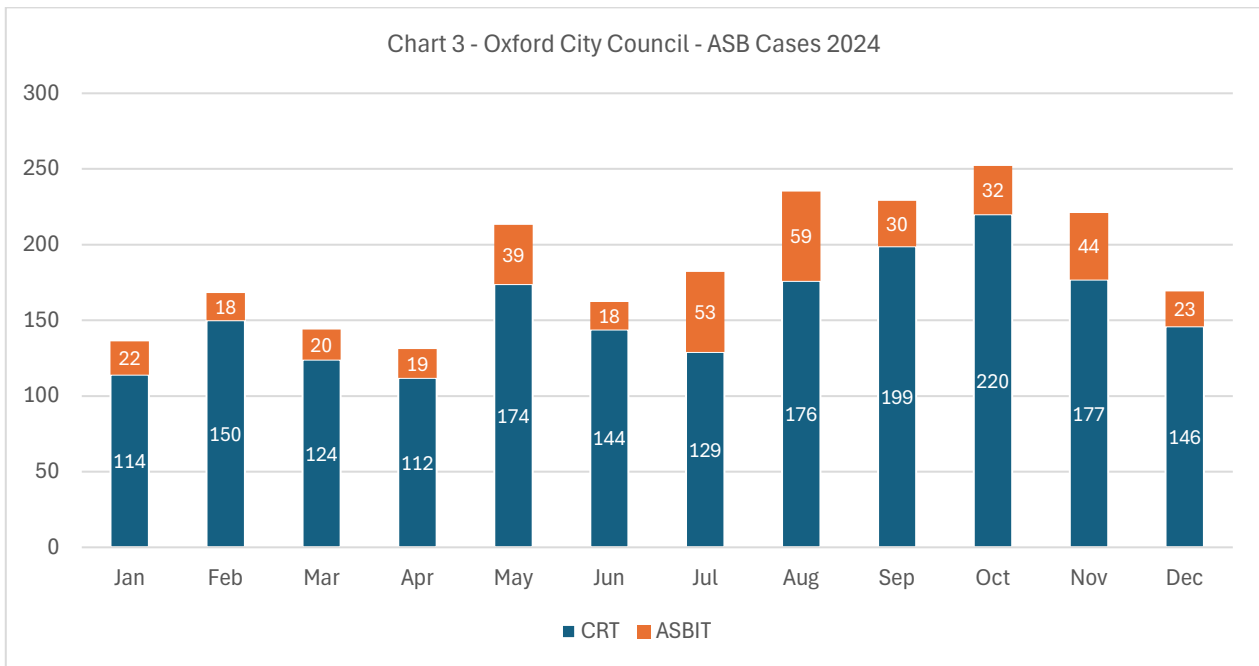
Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour takes many forms, from aggressive, noisy, or abusive behaviour to neighbourhood disturbances, abandoned cars, littering and fly-tipping.

There were 1,344 anti-social behaviour reports to the police in 2024. The number received by Oxford City Council for the year was 2,242. Charts 2 and 3 provide a breakdown of these reports to Thames Valley Police and Oxford City Council.

Chart 2: TVP - District ASB breakdown





The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Service is comprised of two teams. The majority of Community Response Team (CRT) investigations are into domestic noise nuisance and environmental ASB, such as fly-tipping and littering. In 2024 the team investigated 1,865 cases.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team investigates neighbour disputes, sometimes involving violence, threats or other criminal activity.

In 2024, Oxford City Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team successfully rescued fourteen animals found in a flat. The tenant had been using the flat to keep unsupervised animals including twelve dogs, a chameleon and a rabbit. Neighbours raised concerns due to the smell and welfare of the animals. After obtaining a warrant from court, the Council coordinated the rescue of the animals that involved the police, RSPCA, Housing Officers, and the Council's dog warden.

SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Chart 4 shows that nearly two-thirds of serious violence crimes occurred in Cherwell and Oxford, the most urban districts in Oxfordshire.

Serious violence has been falling in Oxford for the last 6 years with Oxford experiencing the largest percentage reduction in serious violent offences. Chart 5 illustrates the reduction in serious violence in Oxford of 28.7 per cent from 2018 to 2024.

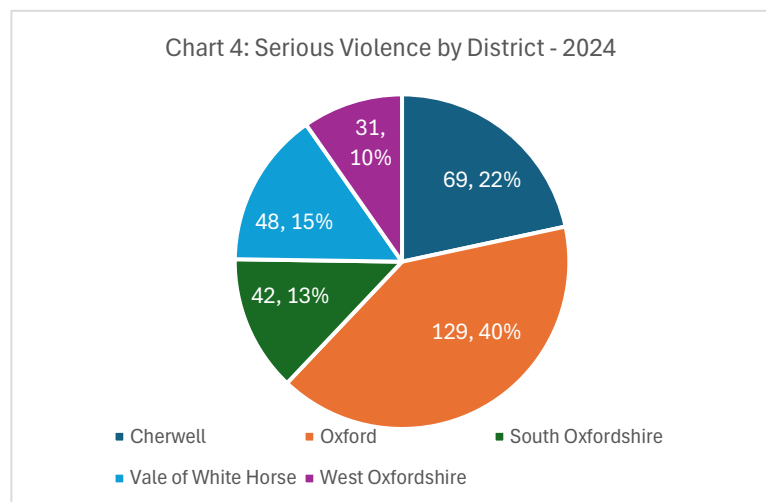
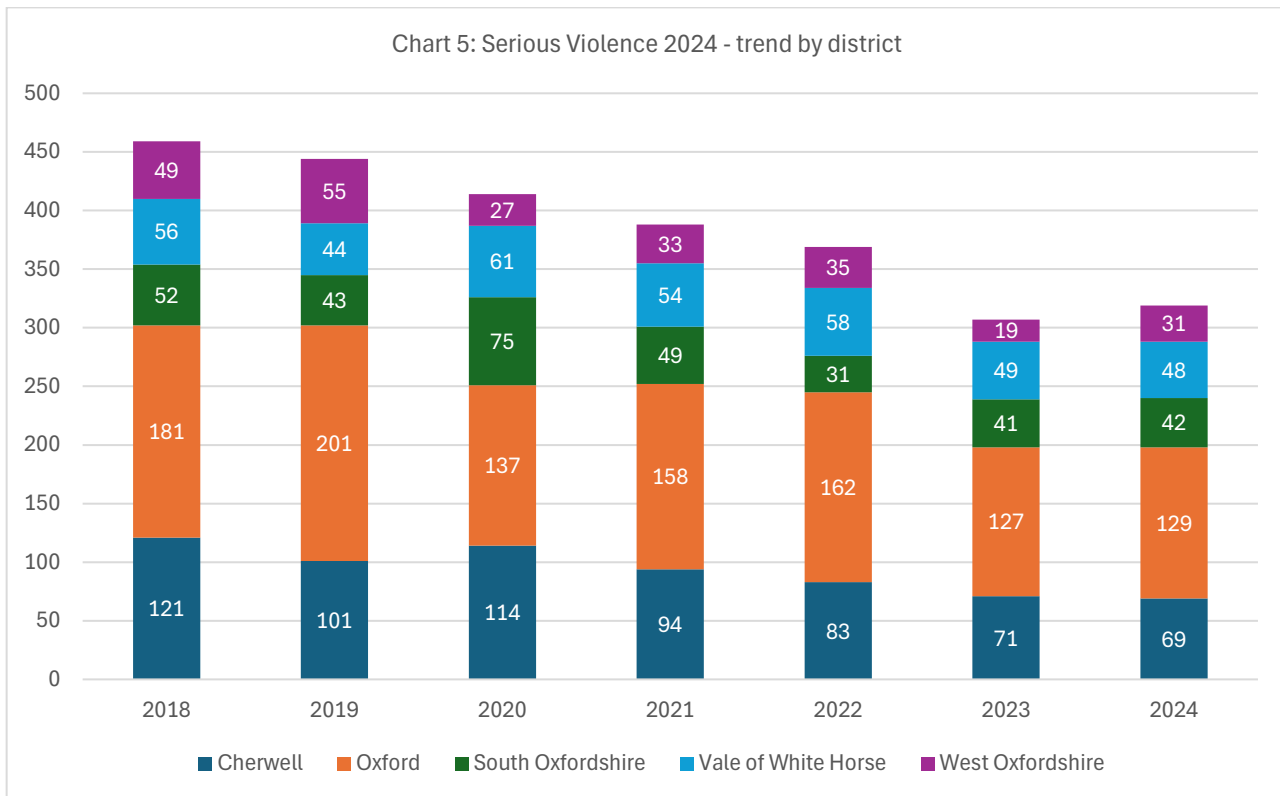


Chart 5: Serious Violence 2024 - trend by district

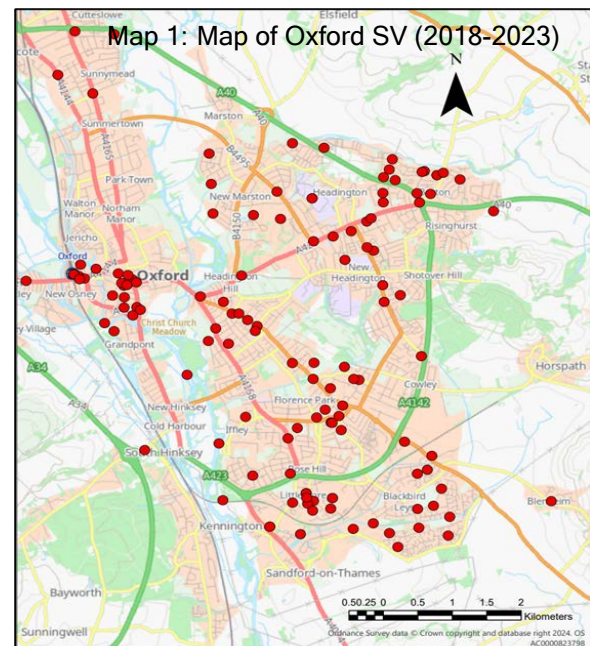


Map 1 illustrates where these crimes occurred over the last 5 years.

Clusters of offences in the city centre and East Oxford suggest these offences are linked to the night-time economy.

Chart 6 provides an overview of the age profile of suspects of violence crime across Oxfordshire.

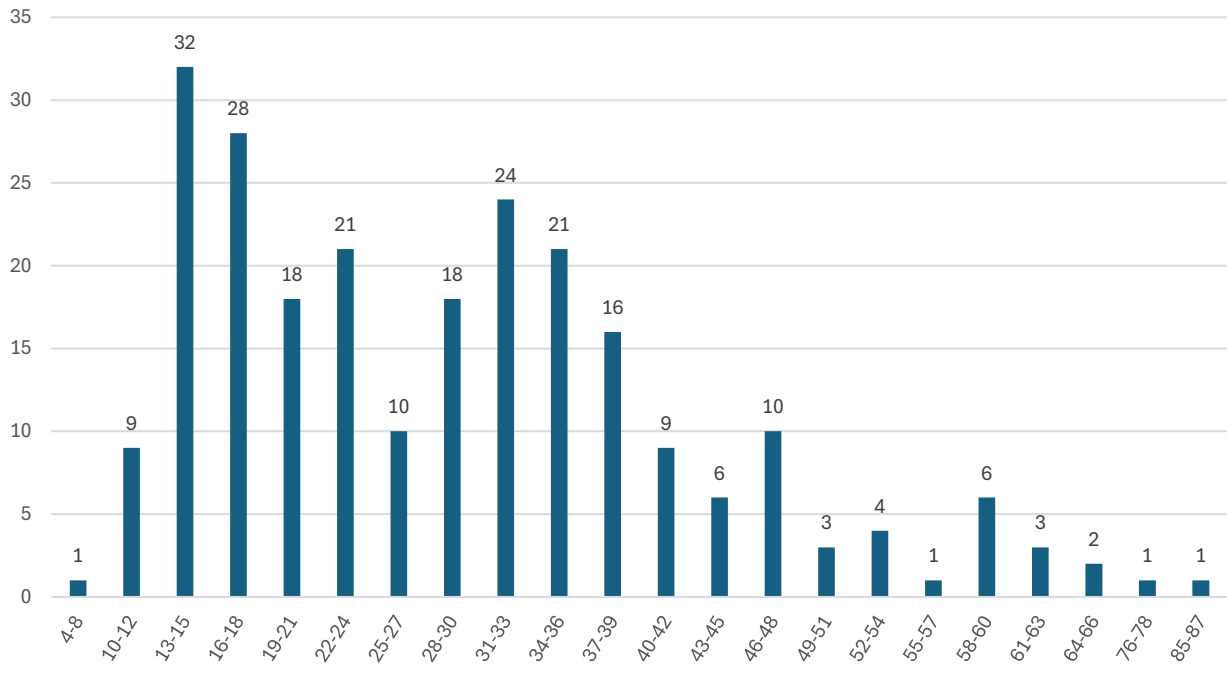
The two largest groups were aged 13-15 and 16-18 years of age. 16 per cent of those suspects were female and 84 per cent were males.



In 2024, Oxford's Problem-Solving Officer collaborated closely with residents by undertaking environmental visual audits, consulting with residents and implementing projects that improve the community.

Several mobile CCTV cameras were deployed across Oxford to support intelligence gathering for TVP's Stronghold cases that address drug dealing, abuse, and anti-social behaviour. Introduced and trained staff from Oxford City Council on the use of Body Worn Cameras to enhance opportunities for evidence capture and assist in the detection and prevention of crime and ASB.

Chart 6: Serious Violence - Suspects' age profile (2024)



In September 2024, OSCP organised a summit dedicated to the issue of serious violence and knife crime, with a particular focus on supporting young people. Several partner agencies attended, along with county and city councillors. The Police and Crime Commissioner, TVP, Oxfordshire Youth Justice Service, and Youth Groups funded by the PCC gave presentations on their work to combat serious violence.



Sexual Violence

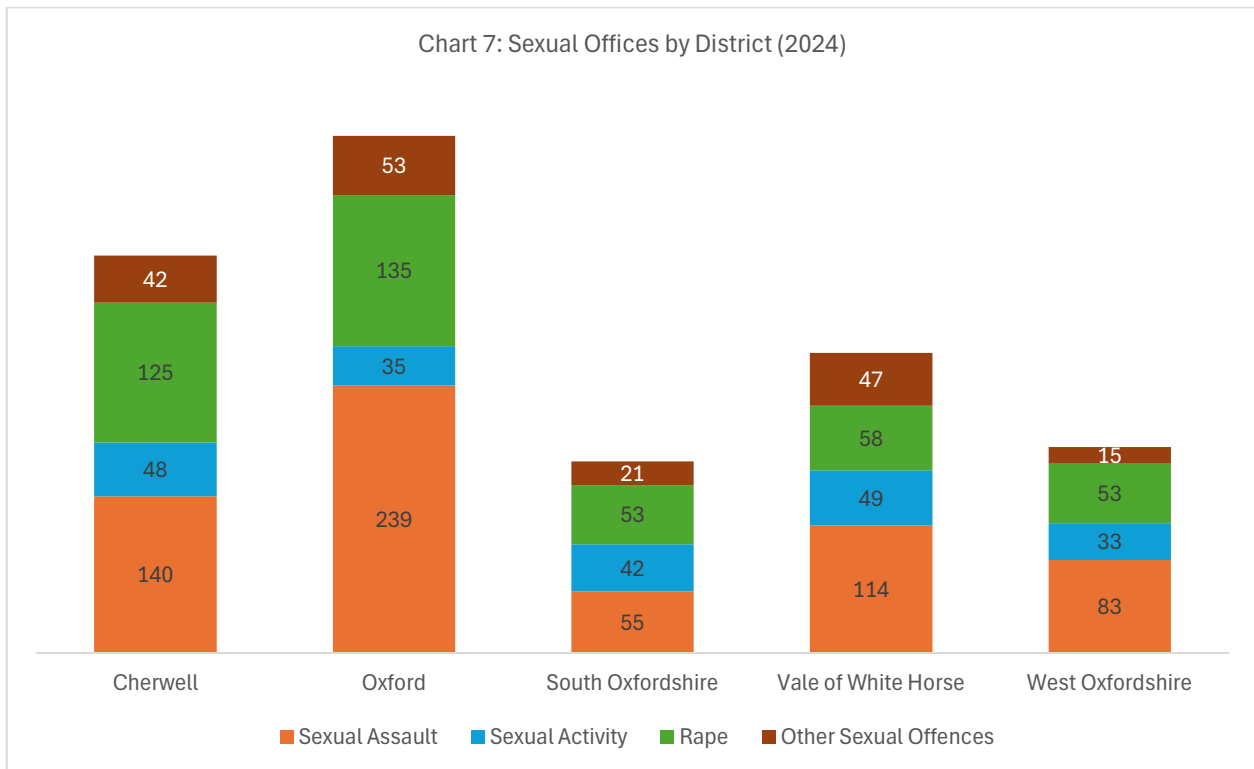
Over the last six years, Oxford has recorded the highest number of sexual offences in Oxfordshire.

Chart 7 shows that in 2024, Oxford accounted for nearly 50 per cent of all sexual offences in the county. Sexual assault accounted for 48 per cent of all sexual offences in Oxford.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
CHERWELL	260	277	279	354	392	356	355
OXFORD	382	466	346	483	485	474	462
SOUTH OX	221	138	131	135	121	185	171
VALE WH	234	208	259	241	328	289	308
WEST OX	114	136	122	186	214	179	184

Table 2: Sexual offences heat-map - districts (2018-2024)

Chart 7: Sexual Offences by District (2024)



MODERN DAY SLAVERY

Several agencies including Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority, HMRC, Adult Social Services, Quality Improvement Team and Home Office were involved with a Care provider that were identified as exploiting their workers. Thirty-two workers, who worked across Oxfordshire were identified as being exploited and were supported by Victims First Specialist Services or Anti-Slavery Initiative Oxford (ASIO) who OSCP commissioned. As a result, twenty-nine people found other employment.

Modern Slavery can take many forms including the trafficking of people, forced labour, domestic servitude and slavery. Oxfordshire's Modern Slavery Coordinator develops plans to partners to identify, protect and support victims, and disrupt perpetrators of these offences.

Table 3 highlights the types of exploitation identified in Oxfordshire in 2024.

Table 3: Exploitation type (2024)		
	Number of reports	Percentage
Labour Exploitation	68	40.0%
Criminal Exploitation	39	22.9%
Sexual Exploitation	35	20.6%
Financial Exploitation	19	11.2%
Domestic Servitude	5	2.9%
Unknown	2	1.6
Cultural Exploitation	1	0.6%

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To: Council
Date: 6 October 2025
Report of: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy
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 Director of Law, Governance and Strategy in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.18 by the deadline of 1.00pm on 24 September 2025, as amended by the proposers.

All substantive amendments sent by councillors to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy 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 Liberal Democrat, Green, Independent Oxford Alliance, Oxford Community Independents, Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent, Labour, groups in that order.

Introduction

- a) Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Smowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather)
- b) Oxford stands for diversity, for fairer migration policy and against the far right (Proposed by Councillor Powell, Seconded by Councillor Jarvis)
- c) Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Councillor Mundy, Seconded by Councillor Djafari-Marbini)
- d) Keep Oxford Open (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, Seconded by Councillor Smowton)
- e) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Councillor Jupp, Seconded by Councillor Miles)

a) Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Snowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather)

Liberal Democrat Group Motion

Council notes that the Planning and Infrastructure Bill¹ will, if passed, significantly change the way this council makes planning decisions. Council believes these changes will curtail local democratic oversight and reduce environmental protections.

Clause 51 gives the Secretary of State powers to decide which applications are heard at committee, and to dictate the size and composition of planning committees. This would remove opportunities for councillors to judge whether the harm and benefits of applications are appropriately balanced.

Part 3 would permit environmental obligations in relation to development to be discharged, disapplied or otherwise modified if a developer pays the nature restoration levy (called “cash to trash”² by the RSPB). This fund would be used according to a plan prepared by Natural England, not the local authority.

This council believes these measures go entirely against the spirit of effective local decision-making and evidence-based environmental protection.

Council agrees with the Office for Environmental Protection:

In our considered view, the bill would have the effect of reducing the level of environmental protection provided for by existing environmental law. As drafted, the provisions are a regression.³

Council also agrees with the 32 environmental organisations⁴ and 81 environmentalists and academics who publicly criticised the bill, calling for a “Pause to bad law”.⁵

Council also agrees with Labour MP Chris Hinchcliff, who pointed out that “profit maximisation” is the biggest barrier to development, not “clear processes that uphold democracy and nature”.⁶

Council calls for the preservation of planning committees’ current powers, and for a strong presumption towards environmental mitigation on-site or close by in preference to levy payment.

Council asks the Leader to write to Oxford’s MPs communicating these concerns with the bill.

¹ <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/61396/documents/6667>

² As quoted by Carla Denyer MP, HoC, 9 June 2025, see HC Hansard, col 689: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-09/debates/3B8E0A89-3756-49FB-8C07-CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill>

³ 1 May 2025: <https://www.theoep.org.uk/report/oep-gives-advice-government-planning-and-infrastructure-bill>

⁴ Wildlife and Countryside Link, ‘Letter to Steve Reed MP, secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs, ref Planning and Infrastructure Bill’, 8 April 2025: <https://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/2025/20250408WCLJointPlanningLetter.pdf>

⁵ Justin Adams et al, ‘Joint statement: Pause to bad law- a call for meaningful consultation on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill’, 22 May 2025: see House of Lords briefing, 19 June 2025, page 53: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2025-0025/LLN-2025-0025.pdf>

⁶ Report stage, 10-11 June 2025, backbench amendment no. 69, see HC Hansard, 9 June 2025, col 678 and 729: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-09/debates/3B8E0A89-3756-49FB-8C07-CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill>

b) Oxford stands for diversity, for fairer migration policy and against the far right (Proposed by Councillor Powell, Seconded by Councillor Jarvis)

Green Group Motion

Council notes:

1. Throughout the summer and into September, protests have taken place outside hotels housing asylum seekers across the UK, many directly organised by far-right groups.⁷
2. Over 100,000 people marched in London at a demonstration addressed by a number of far right figures.⁸
3. These demonstrations have also taken place on numerous occasions in Oxford outside the Kassam Stadium Holiday Inn.⁹
4. Alongside this, this summer also saw a racist attack on Central Oxford Mosque.¹⁰
5. Oxford City Council has consistently made clear that it wants to see a fairer migration system, that refugees are welcome in our city, and that policies like immigration detention and removal are harmful.¹¹ This was most recently and clearly illustrated through our obtaining of City of Sanctuary status.¹²
6. The government has recently announced new policies designed to create a more restrictive migration and asylum system, most notably through the suspension of family reunion.¹³

Council believes:

1. Oxford is a city proud of its diversity and its history of solidarity with people from all across the world.
2. The protests and attacks seen this summer are deeply worrying, and are designed to intimidate and divide our communities.
3. Attempts by politicians, media outlets and commentators to whip up hate and to blame migrants and refugees for the problems in our society should be condemned.
4. Hostile attitudes towards migrants are in part driven by central government policies which seek to create a more hostile environment for migrants and refugees.
5. Neither hotel accommodation, nor detention centres are fair, humane or suitable accommodation for people seeking asylum, and a drawn-out, lengthy process for reviewing asylum applications is harmful for those enduring it.
6. People seeking asylum should not be prevented from working while their claims are being processed.
7. Enabling family reunion is a basic cornerstone of a humane and fair asylum system and suspending it risks putting people who would otherwise be allowed to enter the UK in significant danger.

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/aug/23/members-of-far-right-party-organising-asylum-hotel-protests-across-uk-facebook-posts-show>

⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwydezxl0xlo>

⁹ <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25482399.oxford-asylum-protest-man-taken-away-police/>

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c70xnzp0ej4o>

¹¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yj5j072ero>

¹² <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1612/oxford-city-council-awarded-local-authority-of-sanctuary-accreditation>

¹³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c626p66d6jxo>

8. Hostile rhetoric and policies directed at migrants and people seeking asylum make many Oxford residents less safe by fueling xenophobia and racism.

Council resolves:

1. To request the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Safer Oxford:
 1. Reiterate the council's commitment to stand with and support all of Oxford's diverse communities and to oppose attempts to divide and intimidate.
 2. Write to the Home Secretary reiterating this council's opposition to the re-opening of Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre and to the decision to suspend family reunion applications.
 3. To publicly support and campaign for people seeking asylum to be permitted to work and accommodated within communities

c) Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Councillor Mundy, Seconded by Councillor Djafari-Marbini)

Oxford Community Independent Group Motion

Thames Water has become a by-word for incompetence in utilities management. Having managed to discharge raw sewage into the region's waterways for almost 300,000 hours in 2024¹⁴, the company faced record breaking fines from Ofwat this year. In an ironic twist, Thames Water pleaded poverty when negotiating the fine downwards- committing to paying less than 20% of the £122.7 million fine within the next four and a half years. A fine made larger and of course less affordable by the £170 million in dividends paid out over the last two years.¹⁵ The failure of water companies across the country is being rewarded with huge executive salaries: The average pay for water company CEOs in 2022 was £1.7 million.¹⁶

People of Oxford are fed up of polluted waterways that used to be fit for leisure activities, fed up of aging burst water pipes flooding our streets¹⁷, and dismayed at the daft plans for an enormous reservoir which tears up local landscape and is costly and un-necessary.¹⁸

Yes, we have been here before, our Council passed a motion pushing for the nationalisation of Thames Water back in January 2023. But the government still chooses not to take bold action to take back control of our water supply, deciding

¹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/mar/18/thames-water-data-reveals-raw-sewage-discharges-rivers-2024> Thames Water data reveals raw sewage discharges in rivers rose 50% in 2024. The Guardian 18/03/2025

¹⁵ <https://www.itv.com/news/meridian/2025-08-27/thames-water-negotiates-payment-plan-following-record-fine> Thames Water negotiates payment plan following record £122.7 million fine. ITV Meridian 27/08/2025

¹⁶ <https://www.mirror.co.uk/money/fat-cat-water-firm-bosses-26229950> EXCLUSIVE: 'Fat cat' water firm bosses earn £15m as amount of raw sewage dumped in rivers rockets. Daily Mirror 15/02/2022

¹⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c79qr333jv4o> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwyj7ldw14eo> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr5v223epnlo> and <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/news/video-2750371/Video-Oxford-City-Centre-suffers-water-pipe-burst-UK-hosepipe-ban.html> BBC and Daily Mail Summer 2025

¹⁸ <https://theconversation.com/the-uk-is-surprisingly-short-of-water-but-more-reservoirs-arent-the-answer-243440> The UK is surprisingly short of water – but more reservoirs aren't the answer. The Conversation 01/13/2025

instead that a new regulator will solve the problems. Our Council has the opportunity to push for a rethink, to urge the government to renationalise Thames Water.

This Council resolves to:

- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council writes to Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Emma Reynolds, with Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Water and Flooding Emma Hardy, stating that water privatisation has failed the people of Oxford and that our water supplier needs to be brought in to public hands.
- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council writes to Thames Water CEO Chris Weston, seeking an explanation for the deplorable state of our water infrastructure. Asking, why our city suffered so much disruption from burst water mains this summer, and what is being done to ensure that the same won't be repeated again.
- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council writes to Chris Weston seeking a resolution of when we will see an end to routine (outside of recognised extreme wet weather conditions) dumping of raw sewerage overflow in to Oxford's local waterways.
- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council engages with local groups such as Windrush Against Sewage Pollution and Boycott Thames Water, to establish what more the Council can do to support their campaigns and to push for better standards from our water supplier.

d) Keep Oxford Open (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, Seconded by Councillor Smowton)

Liberal Democrat Group Motion

This Council—

- Reaffirms that asylum seekers, refugees and migrants more generally remain welcome in Oxford, and that the City stands by its Local Authority of Sanctuary status.
- Believes that demonstrations outside asylum seeker accommodation are likely to convey the opposite impression.
- Calls for the asylum backlog to be addressed through increased resources and processing efficiency, not through relocation that would cause needless disruption to individuals' living circumstances.
- Believes that negative assumptions concerning an individual, and particularly regarding risk of crime, must never be based on their asylum seeker or refugee status, national origin, religion, cultural background, age, gender or any other protected characteristic, but rather must always be based on hard evidence relating to specific individuals.
- Believes that tightening eligibility for refugee status would inevitably harm people who are fleeing war and conflict, as well as triggering a race to the bottom with other countries receiving refugees, and therefore this course should not be pursued.
- Backs granting a temporary work permit to asylum seekers who face a long wait outside their control, thereby enabling them to support themselves through earnings rather than requiring public support throughout their wait.

- Believes that Brexit has substantially harmed this country's ability to handle asylum cases by weakening cooperation between different European countries' immigration services.
- Calls on the Government to recommit to the United Kingdom as an open, diverse and welcoming place, and desist from hostile rhetoric such as suggesting housing asylum applicants in unsuitable accommodation such as warehouses¹⁹, or overzealously pursuing hotel closures and backlog reduction in a manner that tonally matches those overtly hostile to asylum seekers and refugees, thereby legitimising such views.

e) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Councillor Jupp, Seconded by Councillor Miles)

Liberal Democrat Group Motion

Council notes:

- The cost of the Oxpens bridge has substantially increased since its original approval, and is running considerably behind other Growth Deal projects.
- That government has the option to repurpose the money for use in other active travel schemes and entrust the County Council to manage this.
- Government can and does vary the rules of the Deal from time to time. Thus far, government has rightly prioritised the spirit and objectives of the Deal above the letter of the agreement.
- Doubt remains that the Oxpens bridge will be able to provide a dry route to Osney Island and thereby unlock housing, due to the low-lying railway underpass in-between.
- The Growth Board (now Future Oxfordshire Partnership) was strongly urged against pursuing the Oxpens bridge project to begin with.

Council therefore believes it would be sensible to examine alternatives, and open a conversation with the County and/or the Ministry on options that deliver greater benefits for the residents of Oxford.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader to write to the relevant Minister, in full consultation with the accountable body for the Growth Deal funds, requesting that in the event of the bridge not going ahead:

- That the Growth Deal be varied as necessary to permit the funds to be used for other specified purposes in Oxford;
- That other options be explored to better employ the funds, including but not limited to:
 - Resurrecting the substantive scheme for Woodstock Road improvements to mitigate the effect of housing development to the north;
 - Revisiting the pedestrian bridge across the A40 at Barton Park which was dropped at planning stage, resulting in very real and significant safety concerns for residents;

¹⁹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrant-hotels-asylum-yvette-cooper-warehouses-b2818433.html>

- Resurrecting the long-discussed plan for a foot/cycle bridge across the Thames at Jackdaw Lane, providing a safe and convenient alternative to the challenging Plain roundabout for residents of south and east Oxford.

Council notes that each of these schemes has been worked up in detail, and are thus available to re-visit, making any one of them attractive to a government which has the best interests of Oxford's residents at heart.

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