

Supplement for Council

On **Monday 23 March 2026** At **5.00 pm**

Briefing Note and Supplementary Papers

Contents

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| 12. | Questions on Notice from Members of Council

Questions on notice from councillors received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.11(b).

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, 11 March 2026.

These, and written responses where available, will be published in the briefing note. | 5 - 42 |
| 13. | 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, 17 March 2026. | 43 - 46 |

The briefing note will contain the text of addresses and questions submitted by the deadline, and written responses where available.

*A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items.
Responses*

14. **Petition submitted in accordance with Council procedure rules - Save Our Museum** 47 - 48

The petition organiser may address Council upon the petition for up to 5 minutes at the start of this item.

Council is asked to consider a petition meeting the criteria for debate under the Council's petitions scheme.

The full text of the petition is contained in the accompanying report.

If a member wishes to propose a substantive motion/recommendation on the petition they must let the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy have that motion or recommendation by 5pm on Tuesday, 17 March 2026 (three working days before the Council meeting). These are then published in the Council briefing note. Any amendments to these must be submitted by 11am on the day of the meeting (Monday 23 March 2026).

If no substantive motion is agreed, Council is asked to note the petition.

17. **Scrutiny Committee update report** 49 - 74

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.

The report will be published within a supplement ahead of the meeting.

18. **Motions on notice March 2026** 75 - 100

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, 11 March 2026 are listed below.

As Council deferred the business, including the motions submitted by the Liberal Democrat and Green Groups, at the meeting on 26 January 2026, these will be taken first.

Cross party motions are taken first. Motions will then be taken in turn from the *Liberal Democrat Group (resubmitting their motion from January Council)*, *Green Group (resubmitting their motion from January*

Council), Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent Group, Labour Group, Green Group, Oxford Independent Alliance 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, 20 March 2026 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) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Cllr Jupp, Seconded by Cllr Miles)
- b) Prisoners for Palestine hunger strikes (Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, Seconded by Cllr Mundy)
- c) Support for Mini Plant Oxford (Proposed by Cllr Linda Smith, Seconded by Cllr Ottino)
- d) Condemnation of Attempted Election Postponement (Proposed by Cllr Smowton, Seconded by Cllr Miles)
- e) Stop the War in Iran (Proposed by Cllr Powell, Seconded by Cllr Djafari-Marbini)

The agenda, reports and any additional supplements can be found together with this supplement on the [committee meeting webpage](#).

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To: Council
Date: 23 March 2026
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 Stares to Cllr Brown

Question

Will the leader of the City Council confirm the length of service of each current councillor, and will the Council publish a list showing all councillors and the number of years they have served representing residents of Oxford?

Written Response

This information is already provided and can be found on the Council's website for all current Councillors, including details of their terms of office: [Your Councillors | Oxford City Council](#).

SB2: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Brown

Question

The council co-owns OxWed, the company developing the Oxpens area. Given Oxford's housing crisis, can the portfolio holder explain why OxWed is only proposing 117 affordable and 117 open market, one and two bedroom flats, on this large site which they co-own?

Written Response

The Oxpens site is allocated for mixed use development under Policy SP1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and is a key element of Oxford City Council's vision and objectives for the West End, as set out in the West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document. The Oxpens site as a whole, which includes land and buildings not owned by OXWED, plays an important role in bringing forward a

	<p>vibrant extension to the city centre.</p> <p>The site owned by the joint venture between the council and Nuffield college called OXWED LLP secured planning permission in 2025 for a mixed-use development in accordance with the policy.</p> <p>This is a complex brownfield site, which has required land assembly over several years and has very high costs to make it developable, including multi-million pound flood mitigation works that include changing the level of the site. In working up the planning application the joint venture has had to balance land use, infrastructure requirements and viability very carefully. The Council is not the single decision maker in respect of the land.</p> <p>As a city centre site adjacent to multiple different public transport hubs it is also ideal for employment as well as housing, so mixed-use is the best use of this important site.</p>
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<p>SB3: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown</p>	
<p>Question</p> <p>The Leader of the Council has recently said in public: "...[we have] never supported the Congestion Charge, nor do we support the Workplace Parking Levy".</p> <p>The City Council Cabinet considered a paper on Connecting Oxford plan, which "...includes a workplace parking levy and traffic restrictions" [para 4]. Speaking in support of the recommendation to endorse the plan at that cabinet meeting, Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, then Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Transport, described these policies as "significant and far-reaching proposals, prepared and</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>Cllr Gant introduced the Congestion Charge, with no consultation with the City Council, with city residents or with city businesses. Ever since on behalf of city residents and businesses the Labour City Council has opposed the Congestion Charge.</p> <p>In terms of the Workplace Parking levy, we have always opposed extending it beyond the ring road to include BMW - and his administration on the county are now proposing to do that.</p>

<p>co-produced with the County Council. The need for them could be well summed up by the point that ‘doing nothing [i]s not an option.’ The Council had been faced with difficult choices in the past about traffic management in the City and must do so again now... [it has] become clear that a significant number of people who would otherwise ride bicycles in the City were deterred by the fear of having to share the road with motor vehicles... [and]... One consequence of congestion in the City was that... Some bus services had already been lost and there was a risk that others might follow... The introduction of bus gates should reduce car traffic by about 40%, so lessening congestion, increasing the rate of flow and removing the need for bus lanes, provide an opportunity to improve the quality of dedicated cycle lanes and the pedestrian environment. The other important element of the proposal would be the introduction of the Workplace Parking Levy.” The City Council Cabinet accepted his recommendation and endorsed the paper.</p> <p>How do you reconcile the apparent contradiction between those statements and actions by your cabinet and your own recent statement?</p>	<p>It is also the case that this could only work with the engagement with employers and their buy-in, which his administration has failed to deliver. So no, we do not support what we now feel is an unworkable policy.</p>
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SB4: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

The Leader also said “...we made it 100% clear that we disagreed fundamentally with the [County Council’s] approach. We think that the policies are neither the right ones nor do we believe they are likely

Written Response

Since the time that the City Council worked with a previous administration at the County Council on transport proposals, including working on measures to promote bus travel, Cllr Gant and his county colleagues have

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to be successful. We made that clear...we are of the opinion that if the bus filters are introduced in Oxford, then all local city residents should be exempt...Our views...have been continually ignored by the County Council for years.”

Speaking officially on behalf of the cabinet of this city council, then-Cabinet member for Health and Transport Cllr Louise Upton said: “For a long time, Oxford City Council has advocated the need for measures to alleviate the impact of traffic...that is the problem these traffic filters are designed to solve...The City Council has worked with you [the County Council] ...to shape these proposals...with exemptions and permits that balance the absolute need to reduce traffic, with allowing business vehicles to operate and residents who can’t switch to other means to drive...[these measures are] important for our environment, our health, and our economy. But most importantly we believe they are necessary to SAVE OUR BUS NETWORK [*Cllr Upton’s capitalisation*]. So please support them.”

So, far from ignoring the City Council, the County Council did exactly what the City Council robustly urged it to do. How do you reconcile these two apparently contradictory positions taken by this council?

chosen to implement multiple new transport policies, all with slightly different exemptions.

We have also had a chance to see how the Congestion Charge is working – or rather not working – for many local people.

Therefore, it is now our view that if the County are still minded to introduce the traffic filters in the autumn this year, then they should exempt all Oxford residents.

LGR will give the new authority – which we hope will be Greater Oxford – a chance to shape new more consistent public transport policies, working WITH local communities and businesses rather than doing TO them.

We absolutely do support measures to promote bus travel – that means looking at fares, routes and frequency, not just restriction of car movements.

SB5: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

Written Response

As Cllr Upton acknowledged, Cabinet members of this council were a key part of the working group which designed the traffic filters scheme, alongside their counterparts from the county council. The scheme was designed and approved jointly, including the detail of permits and exemptions. Nobody mentioned the idea of giving exemptions to all Oxford residents. Why not?

We have now had time to see the scheme in action and the impact on local residents. As well as the interaction with the various other schemes that the county council has introduced.

SB6: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

As Cllr Upton also acknowledged, the traffic filters scheme is closely aligned with the recommendations of Oxford City Council's own Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. It, and its interim version the congestion charge, are equally closely aligned with the very clear recommendations of the County Council's Citizens' Assembly on transport. Does the Leader think the County Council should take note of the recommendations from these two assemblies in making and delivering policy?

Written Response

Unlike Cllr Gant, I attended every session of the Oxford Citizens Assembly on Climate Change, the first for a city in the UK.

So I am aware that transport was not the biggest focus of that Assembly and it focused on outcomes rather than the measures to get there.

An incredibly important recommendation of the Assembly was the need to communicate clearly about climate change and engage with communities. It was particularly in relation to transport policy that this was raised. The county council has singularly failed to do this in recent years.

SB7: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

As mentioned above, Cllr Brown stated in respect of County Council transport policies "We think that the policies are neither the right ones nor do we believe they are likely to be successful. We made that clear." Published modelling suggests that they are "likely to be successful", and indeed they are being successful right now. What evidence does she have for her belief to the

Written Response

We are not 5 months into the County Council's experiment with the Congestion Charge yet, but residents and businesses across the city have expressed their unhappiness about how this is working for them. Increased journey times and huge increases in the distances people are forced to travel, are not going down well, particularly with the current increases in fuel prices.

contrary? What modelling did she use to base that statement on?

SB7: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

Does the city council welcome the projected reduction in casualties by 28 per year as a direct result of the congestion charge and traffic filters?

Written Response

I'm aware of the report that Cllr Gant refers to, and I am also aware that considerable doubt has been expressed about the robustness of the projected data within it. I will personally wait until we have heard about real reductions, which will only be measurable over time, rather than projections based on very little.

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SB8: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

Modelling which has been publicly available for a number of years clearly shows that over 95% of the projected reduction in congestion delivered by the congestion charge and traffic filters comes from journeys undertaken entirely within the city. What account did the Leader take of this data in proposing that "all local city residents should be exempt"? Was that proposal modelled or tested? What did the modelling say?

Written Response

I would suggest that if the modelling is showing that nearly 100% of the journeys that Cllr Gant is trying to stop are city residents moving about their city, rather than commuters coming into it, then the congestion charge is not the right measure.

SB9: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

Written Response

Does the Leader believe that giving full exemptions from the traffic filters to all Oxford residents will continue to deliver the gains in bus productivity already realised from the congestion charge, including new routes, faster timetables and free Park and Ride travel? Has this aspect been tested with those responsible for delivering bus services in our city? What did they say?

As Cllr Gant will be aware, the City Council is not the transport authority. But we have encouraged you to use the considerable sums raised by the Congestion Charge to subsidise bus fares for people in the city, not just residents of the rest of Oxfordshire through subsidising the park and ride.

SB10: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

As mentioned above, Cllr Brown stated that “all local city residents should be exempt” from the traffic filters. Who exactly is meant by this? Where is the map? What modelling underpins it?

Written Response

I’m surprised that Cllr Gant is not aware of the boundaries of the City Council but they can be found here:
<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/304/oxford-city-council-boundary-map>

SB11: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

Cllr Brown’s new policy on the traffic filters is not the same as the policy of the Labour group on the County Council (even though several councillors are members of both and are thus openly supporting two different policies). How do you reconcile this contradiction?

Written Response

I speak for the City Council on behalf of residents of Oxford.

SB12: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

Written Response

Why has the Labour group on the County Council, which is the transport authority, not publicly endorsed the City Council's new policy on traffic filters? What advice did the County Labour group give you about the implications of your new policy?

I cannot answer questions on behalf of another authority, although it seems that Cllr Gant has the ability to take his role on another authority to ask questions in this council chamber.

SB13: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Brown

Question

When the administration of this council chose to oppose the congestion charge, what account did you take of the well-publicised synergies between congestion reduction and the deployment of 172 zero-emission buses, as set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan's accompanying delivery plan?

Written Response

When Cllr Gant's administration on the county council chose to impose the congestion charge on the City of Oxford, what account did they take of the views of the City Council, residents or businesses in Oxford? None.

SB14: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Brown

Question

Between 2-3 weeks ago, residents in Donnington estate reported a burst or leaking pipe in the centre of Donnington Bridge Road, in front of no. 41, to Thames Water. Thames Water says this report is still being investigated. Another report of a leak further down the road reported on 5 March has the status "planning for a repair", and notes that the company may need to work with local authorities which may take a little longer. Will the portfolio holder urge Thames Water to investigate the leak outside no. 41 urgently, act quickly on both reports if there is a risk that a leak to a pipe beneath this road could result in much greater damage to the area, and also ensure the council acts swiftly to support the repair however is necessary?

Written Response

I am happy to write to Thames Water on behalf of local residents.

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

ET1: From Cllr Roz Smith to Turner

Question

How much money did the council receive from the sale of Grenoble Road strategic site to Magdalen college and what does it intend to do with the proceeds?

Written Response

The total money the council has and will receive from the sale is confidential in line with the commercial agreement with the purchaser. However, just over 40% was received on completion in 2025 with the remainder to be paid on time milestones across a 15-year period. The proceeds form part of the councils' resources to fund the capital programme and reduce the need to borrow. Such resources are not allocated to specific projects.

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ET2: From Cllr Fouweather to Turner

Question

The "Greater Oxford" Proposal for Local Government Reorganisation has been prepared by the administration and Council Officers. Further to my question at an earlier Council, can the Cabinet Member update the Council:

1. Has any additional funding been provided by the national Government or other sources external to the Council?
2. How much has now been spent from Council funds and from which budget?

At the Council meeting on 24th November we were informed that £288,000 had been spent so far in the

Written Response

Budgeted resources by the Council for 2025-26 total £200k. In addition to this the Council have been given a £95k grant from the Government. The total spend to date on consultancy advice and other resources to prepare the LGR 3 Councils proposal, publicise the MHCLG consultation – as requested by Government - and progress the preparatory phase of collaborative working with the other Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Councils is £295,000. This is in line with the Budget allocation and because the Council budget spend is under £250k decisions could be taken by officers in line with the scheme of delegation in the Constitution.

2025/26 FY. As the constitution (18.10) requires that unbudgeted expenditure in excess of £250,000 is brought to Cabinet and/or Council could the Cabinet Member explain where and when this decision was made?

Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford; Deputy Leader of the Council

AR1: From Cllr Miles to Cllr Railton

Question

How much pending maintenance is required for the city's playground equipment? How does this compare to a typical year, and when do we anticipate the backlog will be cleared?

Written Response

Play equipment repairs are usually identified at either monthly, or 6 Monthly statutory inspections.
 Inspections in 2025 identified c £156,400.00 worth of repairs and replacements, of which £123,582.50 were instructed during the course of the year. The remaining £32,800 will be prioritised for instruction early in 2026 financial year, planned under the play equipment capital budget. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by June 2026. Equipment replacement spend is somewhat higher than previous years, due to the wet weather conditions and accelerated degradation of timber play equipment, which will be replaced with metal equipment as part of this work

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AR2: From Cllr Goddard to Cllr Railton

Question

When was the last maintenance check done on the playgrounds in Wolvercote and the play equipment last updated?

Written Response

Monthly Playground inspections took place in February, coinciding with this, the 6 monthly statutory inspection also took place in February. Officers are awaiting the findings of this inspection for confirmation of any repair requirements.

Lower Wolvercote Green is due to have the two new items of play equipment installed, funded through a CIL application made by the Wolvercote Commoners. Upper Wolvercote Green has no immediate works identified as being required at present.

AR3: From Cllr Miles to Cllr Railton

Question

The roundabout in the small children's playground on Stone Meadow was removed over a year ago because it was considered unsafe. Residents were informed that it would have been replaced in 2025 but this area is still out of action and surrounded by temporary high metal fencing. When exactly will the roundabout be replaced with new equipment and the temporary metal fencing removed?

Written Response

The Equipment will be replaced in May this year, and fencing will be removed at the same time. The delay was due to cost clarifications and longer than expected manufacturing lead time.

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AR4: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Railton

Question

Will the Council commit to not fell any trees in Grandpont Nature Park during the 2026 nesting season?

Written Response

The programme for the delivery of the bridge is being reviewed. If it is necessary to remove trees before the end of the bird nesting season it will only be done with an ecological clerk of works in attendance to confirm there is no nesting birds.

AR5: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Railton

Question

Will the portfolio holder ask the Westgate Centre to consider introducing a compulsory pre-booking

Written Response

scheme for parking in the Westgate carpark at weekends?	The Westgate Car Park is a privately managed car park, the Council has previously approached them around this but ultimately it is for the Westgate to determine how the car parking is managed.
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AR6: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Railton	
<p>Question Will the Council sign the Bristol Declaration on Healthy Transport', calling for the transformation of the UK to a place where healthy transport options are the easiest, natural choice for most everyday journeys, without relying on a car?</p>	<p>Written Response Yes, though I note the city council has already made a number of active interventions for the 10 actions we have control over. The city council is not the decision maker for the majority of the actions in this declaration.</p>

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AR7: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Railton	
<p>Question Oxford can be proud of its progress on addressing air quality. February saw the publication of the Air Quality Action plan 2026-2030. Within the plan, the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods is listed as a key achievement which has been responsible for 'creating quieter and safer streets, leading also to air quality improvement. Similarly, traffic filters, the workplace parking levy and the expansion of the ZEZ are listed as major transport initiatives 'which aim to reduce private car usage'. Given that priority A of the Air Quality Action Plan is 'Promoting Active Travel and reducing the need to drive', can the portfolio holder confirm the administration's position on these measures, which their own Air Quality Action Plan, as approved the cabinet, clearly identify as essential to</p>	<p>Written Response There is a publicly available statement issued by the Leader of Oxford City Council, Councillor Susan Brown, in her right of reply submitted on 2 March 2026. This statement sets out the administration's position regarding the transport measures referenced in the Air Quality Action Plan: <u>Statement from Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of Oxford City Council (2 March 2026):</u> "Responsibilities for air quality and transport are currently split across two councils. Oxford City Council is responsible for monitoring and reporting on air quality, while Oxfordshire County Council, as the Highways Authority, is responsible for transport policy and measures such as LTNs, traffic filters, the Workplace Parking Levy and the Zero Emission Zone. As we made clear when approving the Air Quality Action Plan, the City Council must report on measures proposed by the transport authority, but we do not control them. We have set out our view that we disagree with the County Council's approach and do not believe that several of the policies proposed are the right ones or likely to be successful.</p>

securing the necessary improvements to air quality in Oxford City?

For the record, Oxford Labour has never supported a Congestion Charge, does not support a Workplace Parking Levy, and believes that if bus filters are introduced, all city residents should be exempt. We have also asked the County Council to review some LTNs where residents have raised concerns.

Our view is that the preferences of residents and businesses in Oxford have not been sufficiently taken into account by the County Council. The proposed '3Councils' reorganisation provides an opportunity to bring transport decision-making back to the city."

This publicly available statement outlines the administration's current position in relation to the transport schemes referenced in the city's Air Quality Action Plan.

AR8: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Railton

Question

Can the portfolio holder please outline what the likely implications of not proceeding with traffic filters, the workplace parking levy and the expansion of the ZEZ would be for Oxford's ability to meet its new Local NO₂ target of 20 µg/m³

Written Response

Oxford City Council has a statutory duty to review and assess air quality in the city and to produce an Air Quality Action Plan that sets out how the city intends to achieve its air quality objectives. Many of the dominant sources of nitrogen dioxide emissions in Oxford are transport-related. However, Oxfordshire County Council is the Highways Authority and therefore holds responsibility for transport policy and for schemes such as traffic filters, the Workplace Parking Levy, and any expansion of the Zero Emission Zone.

The City Council's Air Quality Action Plan references transport schemes being developed by the County Council and other partners because they are important contributors to the improvements in emissions that underpin the plan's projections.

The commitment to meeting Oxford's local annual mean nitrogen dioxide target of 20 µg/m³ by 2030 is based on the combined delivery of the full suite of measures set out in the Action Plan, including those led by partner authorities. If a number of these transport-related measures were not to proceed, the overall scale of emission reduction assumed in the Action

Plan would be reduced. This would make achieving the 2030 local NO₂ target more challenging and could compromise the city's ability to meet it.

In short, the city doesn't decide on any of the schemes you mention here but will be monitoring the air quality impacts across Oxford. Our air quality monitoring work does also not usually extend to predicting the impact of schemes like this.

AR9: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Railton

Question

Trees in Davenant Road have grown to the extent that significant parts of the pavement are hazardous for pedestrians and impassable for wheelchair users, people with buggies and the less mobile. Has this issue been identified in routine inspection and monitoring, and does Davenant Road feature in long-term maintenance plans?

Written Response

The maintenance of trees within the highway is the responsibility of the County Council. To address the problems arising from the trees it has been identified that it requires works that go beyond the maintenance responsibility of the City Council under S42 and therefore the County Council have been in discussion with residents and ODS around a potential solution to the problem.

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Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford

LA1: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Arshad

Question

In recent weeks, there has been an increased level of immigration enforcement activity in Oxford. As a council of sanctuary, Oxford has undertaken to actively support migrant communities in the city. During the increased immigration enforcement activity, immigration enforcement officers have been actively

Written Response

The portfolio holder is not aware of an increase in immigration enforcement activity in Oxford and has not had any correspondence with the Police and Crime Commissioner on this matter.

collaborating with Thames Valley Police. Will the portfolio holder please outline whether she has had any correspondence with the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding this increased activity?

LA2: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Arshad

Question

Will the portfolio holder undertake to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner raising concerns about the negative impact that increased collaboration between Thames Valley Police and immigration enforcement has on our communities?

Written Response

The portfolio holder has not been made aware of increased collaboration between the police and immigration enforcement in the city.

The portfolio holder will raise the matter with the police to seek assurances that such activities are sensitive to community concerns and align to stated national government policies.

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LA3: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Arshad

Question

During the recent budget process, council approved the creation of new anti-social behaviour wardens. As a non-statutory role, council has the opportunity to set the remit of these wardens. Will the portfolio holder please confirm that the warden's role will not involve any engagement with immigration enforcement outside of the strict legal obligations incumbent on the council?

Written Response

The Community Safety Service teams work in partnership with a wide range of organisations. This may involve working on issues relating to modern slavery and the exploitation of adults and children. Where immigration teams have a role to play in the disruption of these activities, Council officers and other partners will work with the Home Office on these matters, and we will engage where there is a legal requirement upon us to do so.

LA4: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Arshad

Question

Written Response

Can the portfolio holder please confirm the extent to which the council collaborates with the voluntary returns process in collaboration with immigration enforcement?

The Council does not assist in the voluntary returns process in licensing.

Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies

NC1: From Cllr Smowton to Cllr Chapman

Question
The Bury Knowle toilets have been in a poor state for a considerable time, with some cubicles barricaded and all in need of paint and external cleaning in order to present a welcoming appearance to passers-by. Will you ensure these are renovated?

Written Response
I share councillors' frustration at the state of our public toilets. In this case and in others, we are dealing with a shocking level of vandalism which means the repairs are complex, costly and take time.
There are nine toilets at Bury Knowle with three currently closed as they have been badly vandalised with smashed tiles and ripped up flooring. The repairs will be undertaken, which, after lead times for materials, will take circa four weeks.
It should be noted that these toilets were decorated in 2024/25.
The above repairs will be done ahead of a survey of the condition of all our public toilets. The budget for the survey was approved in the latest budget. Following commissioning, this is likely to be completed in the summer. Once the results are known, a prioritised programme of capital works will be presented to Council officers for approval. I have urged Council officers and ODS get these repairs done as soon as is feasible.

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

There is a leaking roof in the diamond place public toilets. What is the timeline for the roof to be mended?

Written Response

There are six toilets in this block. There are presently three unaffected cubicles, with a fourth awaiting repair. The remaining cubicles are closed awaiting the major roof repair to be completed.

As I replied in my earlier answer, the above repairs will be done ahead of a survey of the condition of all our public toilets, the budget for the survey was approved in the latest budget. Following commissioning, this is likely to be completed in the summer. Once the results are known, a prioritised programme of capital works will be presented to Council officers for approval. I think we all regret we are facing this expense and the temporary closure of facilities in our parks and other spaces.

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

ODS is about to buy some new bin lorries and other HGVs. Can the portfolio holder set out whether he agrees that standards for "Direct Vision" or other vision safety standards which prevent cyclists and pedestrian deaths should form part of the decision making on this?

Written Response

All ODS bin lorries are fitted with MOIS systems which detect cyclists and pedestrians in the vehicles blind spots. If an object is detected, the driver is alerted via an audible system within the cab of the vehicle. Along with this, the vehicles are also fitted with rear mounted LED warning lights.

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

During the previous full council meeting of January 26 i.e. the meeting prior to budget council, the cabinet member confirmed that repairs to the Manzil Way public toilets were due to be completed no later than

Written Response

There have been numerous repairs undertaken over the last couple of months. Unfortunately, serious and costly damage has re-occurred since these repairs were completed.

There are five toilets in this block, with two out of action due to vandalism.

January 30. However, at time of writing two of these public toilets remain out of order. Can the portfolio holder please explain the delay and outline when repairs will actually be actioned?

The doors used for the toilets are fabricated metal doors and have been damaged beyond repair. One has a bent steel door and frame, and the other has damage to the door handle, which will need metal strengthening. Before commissioning any further repairs, in the short term, advice will be sought from the Community Safety Problem Solving Officer. As I replied to a similar question about other toilet closures, the above repairs will be done ahead of a survey of the condition of all our public toilets, the budget for the survey was approved in the latest budget. Following commissioning this is likely to be completed in the summer. Once the results are known a prioritised programme of capital works will be presented for approval. Community Safety advice will also inform the programme of works.

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NC5: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Chapman

Question

During the budget setting process, several of the political groups put forward amendments focused on noticeboards in the city. The Scrutiny Committee also recommended that action to standardise the provision of notice boards was taken. While it is accepted that council did not opt for this course of action and there is not now funding for an officer to operationalise the running of noticeboards, can the portfolio holder please confirm whether there might be scope for replenishment of noticeboards to be included within existing funds for street scene repairs?

Written Response

As detailed in the report to Scrutiny Committee, there are circa 80 noticeboards across the City Council's communities. These are maintained by volunteers. The system is not overseen by a designated officer and there is also no dedicated budget to maintain their physical state. There is potential to utilise CIL and / or ward member budgets. Further details are available about this on the website and via the Members' area on the intranet. [Members page Support Your Community with Ward Member Budget and Community Infrastructure Levy funding](#)
Most community noticeboards in the city were put in through member ward budgets in the first place.

NC6: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Chapman

Question

Written Response

It is understood that sometimes, ODS may have to leave batteries left out by residents to be recycled if the cages are full and collect them instead on the following collection day. Can the portfolio holder explain how this is being communicated to residents, so they know that this is the reason that they have not been picked up, and not that the pick-up was forgotten or rejected?

ODS has had issues with a number of the cages on the RCV fleet. ODS have undertaken the necessary repairs at their workshop and alterations have been made so there should be no further failure in collecting batteries.
The councillor is right – the norm if we miss a collection is to undertake it on the next appropriate collection day (so within a fortnight). It is not practical for us to contact each householder for obvious reasons. If we were to miss many collections – and this should not happen now – we will use social media to alert residents.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture

AH1: From Cllr Mundy to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

The Museum of Oxford Income Generation Review November 2024 includes several alternative ideas for revenue generation for the Museum. Could you clarify why other ways of increasing revenue were not trialled before charging for entry was introduced?

Written Response

Other ways of increasing revenue for the museum have been trialled, for the last four years. This includes room hire, donations, a pay-what-you-can donations entry scheme, an adopt an object scheme, and paid-for activities. These have not proved to be sufficient on their own to close the budget gap to the net spending level on the Museum of Oxford set by this Council.

AH2: From Cllr Mundy to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Templars Square and the surrounding infrastructure has long needed redeveloping. The crumbling buildings and long vacant units are not good enough for Cowley Centre and its residents. Is the cabinet

Written Response

The City Council is in constant dialogue with the site owner Redevco around redevelopment of Templars Square. The developer is exploring

member keeping in contact with the site owner Redevco and pushing for progress on plans to redevelop Templars Square?

funding options to bring the redevelopment of the site forward, given financial challenges in the development market. The City Council is supporting this process, including introductions to Homes England. The City Council's ambition is for complete redevelopment of Templars Square as a thriving modern district centre for Cowley, along with a significant increase in homes provided on the site.

AH3: From Cllr Mundy to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Templars Square, granted it's 60 years old, aged quickly. The layout does not suit the modern shopping and community needs of a bustling community centre like Cowley. Does the cabinet member agree that any future redevelopment at Templars Square needs to be fit for the future, moving away from car-centric design and closed alleyways to open spaces and pedestrian friendly place making?

Written Response

Yes.
The City Council's ambition is for complete redevelopment of Templars Square as a fully regenerated and modern district centre for Cowley that is fit for the future and meets the needs of current and future residents. The current and emerging Local Plans highlight the importance of Templars Square as a district centre focused around people and not vehicles. The City Council is working with the developer to ensure this is the underlying principle of any future development.

AH4: From Cllr Mundy to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

What is the portfolio holder doing to advance progress on plans to redevelop Templars Square Shopping Centre?

Written Response

The City Council is in constant dialogue with the site owner Redevco around redevelopment of Templars Square
See answers to previous questions on this issue.

AH5: From Cllr Yeatman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Written Response

How complete and accurate is the footfall data held by City Council in relation to visits to the Museum of Oxford

Data held since 26th January 2026 is complete and accurate. Footfall is directly related to tickets sold for general entry, and attendance numbers at events.

Before that the footfall counting methods were ad hoc and variant, and totals involved adding together separate figures without taking into account possible duplication. The numbers given as visitor numbers were therefore maximum estimates rather than actual numbers of visitors. It is not possible to measure the degree of duplication at different points.

Prior to redevelopment of the Museum there were laser counters on two separate areas in the Town Hall containing items and exhibitions which are now brought together within the Museum. Daily movements through these two separate doors were each halved – to account for entrance and exit – and then added together with a manual count of visitors at the Museum for a total which was then published as the total number of visitors to the Museum.

This did not account for one person visiting the separate places that were being treated as parts of the Museum and attending an event as part of the same visit, thus providing a footfall implying three visitors when it was in fact a single visitor. The laser counters also did not account for multiple movements backwards and forwards through a door by one person, thus treating a single person as potentially several people.

After the reopening of the Museum in October 2021 following Covid there was a system of making a manual count of visitors entering the Museum, and this number was added to the number of people attending any events held during that day. This means that for any event during normal opening hours a single visitor could be counted more than once.

In summary the figures from January of this year are accurate and complete and can be relied on. Figures prior to that are not as reliable, but the degree to which single visits were duplicated or triplicated – or more – is not possible to estimate. Figures from prior to 2026 should be treated with caution and will be to some extent an inflated figure of the actual number of visitors.

AH6: From Cllr Yeatman to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

What benchmarks will be used to determine whether the Covered Market redevelopment delivers measurable economic benefits for local traders rather than primarily attracting new operators?

Written Response

The Covered Market has over its 250 years of history always attracted new traders. Customers' needs and wants evolve, and new traders with new ideas and new products to sell come forward to test the waters. Change is what makes any market successful.

The existing Covered Market Leasing Strategy is clear that the City Council will "encourage occupation by sole traders, independents and local retailers", and will select new tenants based on factors including their local connections. Assignment of leases to high street chains will not be permitted. That will not change at all, leaving the Covered Market as a place where local entrepreneurs can establish and build their businesses. The main benchmark to be used to measure the success of the Covered Market redevelopment will be the demand from local traders to lease the units. At present this demand for units exceeds supply, and the aim is for that to continue.

AH7: From Cllr Henwood to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

Within the 2025/26 budget, Oxford City Council identifies a £250,000 projected loss in revenue from council-run car parks.

Since the introduction of the congestion-related traffic measures, will the portfolio holder publish the monthly revenue figures for each council-run car park, including the figures from the 12 months prior to the scheme, so councillors and residents can clearly assess the financial impact?

Written Response

The £250k has been included in 2026-27 as a corporate contingency for City Council run car parks as a whole – it is not a loss in revenue, but a more cautious assumption of an increase in the revenue base budget. The overall base budget for car park income was increased by £650k, as opposed to the £900k increase proposed in the Consultation Budget. It is difficult to forecast the impact the congestion charge may have on car parking income from the limited data so far available and the number of variables. The advice of officers to members when Full Council set its budget that this was an appropriate degree of caution given the lack of certainty based on such a short period of data collection.

The Council does not normally publish income from individual car parks because the Agresso system is not designed to do so; any variance in portfolio income is shown through the quarterly budget monitoring reports to Cabinet.

AH8: From Cllr Henwood to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Does the fall in car-park revenue also reflect reduced city-centre footfall?

Written Response

The usage figures on the city centre car parks based on tickets sold in January 2026 are showing there is a 16% decrease when compared with the same period last year.

This doesn't necessarily equate to a 16% reduction in income because there are different tariff bands and these might be impacted in different ways – for example a reduced number of tickets sold but longer stays might not result in a decline in overall revenue.

As noted in the following question, the City Council does not currently have access to footfall data that can be considered reliable.

AH9: From Cllr Henwood to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Footfall data for the city was previously published but no longer appears to be publicly available. Could the portfolio holder explain why those figures are no longer published, and whether the Council will resume publishing them?

Written Response

Huq, the company who are currently the City Council's providers of footfall data, have confirmed that there have been accuracy issues with the platform that they are using, particularly for year-on-year change. When these concerns about data accuracy came to light in mid-2025 the City Council paused publication of data which could not be relied on to be wholly accurate.

The City Council have been attempting for some time to get Huq to resolve these issues so that the data can be relied on, but this has not been successful.

The City Council is therefore now seeking another provider for footfall data and will resume publishing it as soon as that provider is contracted and in place.

AH10: From Cllr Kerr to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder set out whether the City Council is doing all it can to work with the County Council to get a more equitable dropped kerb policy in place when residents apply to the City for Planning Permission to convert? We know that current specs cause serious problems for residents wheeling or who have challenges walking, and there is a known solution with Dutch-style entry kerbs.

Written Response

This is not a planning matter. In planning terms a Local Planning Authority, such as the City Council, may only require planning permission where the dropped kerb is going onto a classified road. The type of kerb is not something that can be specified in a granting of planning permission, as the specifications for kerbs are set by the Highways Authority, in this case Oxfordshire County Council.

AH11: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder confirm whether the council has signed a contract for the construction of the proposed Oxpens Bridge?

Written Response

The contract has been signed by the contractor.

AH12: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder set out what evidence the council has regarding the demand for life science space in Oxford?

Written Response

The Oxford Employment Land Needs Assessment (ELNA) provides the evidence on the market, demand and supply of employment land for the emerging Local Plan.

The ELNA found Oxford is an attractive location in terms of the Laboratory and Research and Development market, and therefore considerable demand for new space for these industries. Important factors include having two world class universities, a number of research hospitals, the investments of Oxford Science Enterprises, and the market response to Oxford's leading role in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic and corresponding enhanced international reputation.

AH13: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

The employment space on the proposed Oxpens development is big enough to accommodate approximately 6,000 jobs. Given the current housing crisis in Oxford, does the portfolio agree that the council should be working to ensure that there is a more joined-up approach to ensuring that the number of new jobs created through employment space mirrors the number of new houses?

Written Response

For many years the so called 'County Towns' approach to strategic planning in Oxfordshire was based on a fundamentally flawed assumption that somehow the city as an attractive place for jobs could be wished away. Pretending that economic growth would not happen, even as the evidence it was happening and could not be prevented was obvious, meant that housing in sufficient numbers was not provided in and immediately around the city of Oxford.

The result of this strategic planning error was a housing affordability crisis that is impacting on a huge proportion of ordinary families in Oxford, and a congestion and environmental crisis caused by forcing many of those families to live miles outside the place where their jobs were and have to commute back in to what had been and should still be their home city. So rather than repeating the same error by pretending that jobs can be wished away, this City Council and whichever body succeeds it in two years' time should be following a joined-up approach that supports building the number of houses to meet the number of jobs that already exist and will be created by economic growth that is already happening.

AH14: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder explain how an employment to housing ratio of approximately 6:1 on a central Oxford site would affect the numbers of commuters coming into Oxford?

Written Response

Employment cannot be wished away, and will either happen here on this site which is ideally centrally located with the best public transport capacity in Oxfordshire, or somewhere else close by but not as well connected. What is required is the tens of thousands of homes that have been prevented in and around Oxford through imagining that reality can be ignored.

AH15: From Cllr Muddiman to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

Given the cost of living crisis and the rise in energy bills, will the portfolio holder reconsider some of the restrictions on installing new doors, windows and solar PV in conservation areas?

Written Response

New doors, windows and solar panels can be installed within most conservation areas without the need for planning permission as long as they meet the nationally set criteria for size and scale as set out in the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*.

The exceptions are in the Osney Island and Jericho Conservation Areas where Article 4 Directions removes some Permitted Development Rights and requires planning permission for changes to windows and doors. The Article 4 Direction also ensures that these are appropriate to meet the key elements of the character and appearance of the conservation area. Solar panels can be installed under permitted development provided they meet relevant conditions which include being sited as far as is practicable to reduce their visual impact. In some cases, the only practical option will be on the front roof slope.

Where planning permission is required, the Council are supportive of householders needs to improve the energy of their homes. When a property lies within a conservation area, the objective is to help achieve this aim whilst responding sensitively to the character and appearance of the property and area. There are many ways to enhance the energy efficiency of buildings and many options to upgrade the thermal properties of windows and doors in a sensitive manner, as well as incorporating

renewable energy technology. Subject to good design, many of these suggestions can be incorporated within buildings in conservation areas. In addition to Technical Advice Note 15 (Heritage Retrofit Guidance: Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction) the Council has drafted a suite of design guidance that seeks to set out what can be done under permitted development and how some of these options can be undertaken sensitively.

AH16: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

I note the powers of access conferred on immigration enforcement under the section 179 of the Licensing Act 2003, as amended by the Immigration Act 2016. Can the portfolio holder please confirm that the council is only using this power to enter properties as per its legal obligations, and not additionally involved in disclosures to immigration enforcement in regard to its licensing functions?

Written Response

Licensing officers only use powers in the Licensing Act 2003 to carry out the council's legal functions as set out in the Act, as amended. Immigration crime is a relevant matter for the purposes of the Act. Where there is a suspicion that immigration offences are occurring within a licensed premises, officers will inform the Home Office, police and other relevant partners.

AH17: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder please confirm whether immigration enforcement have been invited to attend licensing enforcement visits outside of contexts where there is a legal obligation upon the council to extend such an invite?

Written Response

The General Licensing Team's duty under the Licensing Act 2003 to uphold the licensing objectives includes addressing immigration offences perpetrated within licensed premises. The General Licensing Team do not invite immigration enforcement teams to attend scheduled compliance operations. Immigration enforcement invites the General Licensing Team to attend their operations when they are attending licenced premises within our local authority area for the purposes set out in the Licensing Act 2003.

AH18: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

Can the portfolio holder please provide an update on discussions regarding the possibility of an Oxford Accommodation Business Improvement District? I note the council's limited role, but any further details on developments since July 2025 would be appreciated.

Written Response

In the last 8 months the City Council have established Tourism Task Groups with both the hoteliers and separately those colleges who would be covered by an ABID. A detailed list of visitor improvement projects that an ABID might support is now being finalised. The aim is to reach a point over the next few months where the preparation work will be completed and the different bodies involved can decide whether or not to create an ABID – please note that the City Council does NOT have any say in the matter, only the bodies that would be paying the charges. We are simply playing a convening role.

The Government has announced consultation on an Overnight Visitor Levy. At present this could only be introduced by a Strategic Authority – such as the possible Thames Valley Strategic Authority that is being considered. It may also require an elected Mayor before any such levy could begin, and again the City Council would not be the decision maker.

AH19: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

Can the portfolio officer outline how often planning applications feature inaccuracies on plans? How often are these missed by the planning authority when first approved?

Written Response

The City Council Planning Department do not specifically collate that sort of data. It would only be on rare occasions whereby a specific inaccuracy in an application was missed by the officers involved in the Development Management process.

AH20: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question****Written Response**

Can the portfolio holder set out what action the council takes to ensure inaccuracies on planning applications are not missed?

The application form requires the applicant to make a declaration that the plans accompanying the application are accurate. Planning officers undertake site visits to assess planning applications and that includes reviewing the plans on site. The identification of an inaccuracy prior to approval can depend on the scale of the inaccuracy and also whether it is brought to the officers' attention.

AH21: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder explain how the council holds applicants to account for submitting inaccurate plans, especially where the results mean the development does not meet the considerations and conditions set out in the planning application?

Written Response

The council investigates any alleged breach of planning control. If an inaccuracy is identified, then we will review that against the approved permission, and the matter will be reviewed by our enforcement team. Where a breach has occurred then consideration is given to what course of action is needed to remedy the breach of control.

The council will take enforcement action to address such breaches. This was the case with the successful enforcement of the unauthorised development at 1 Quarry High Street. This enforcement notice that was upheld on appeal and also in the high court.

AH22: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Can the portfolio holder explain how the council support residents who are affected by inaccurate plans being approved and ensure they receive proportional compensation for harm caused?

Written Response

The Council investigates breaches of planning control as mentioned in the previous answer.

Should a resident feel that they have grounds for pursuing either the City Council or a developer for compensation following a breach of planning control then they would need to take appropriate independent legal advice.

AH23: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

Can the portfolio holder set out how many reports of potential breaches in planning control have been reported to us in each of the last 3 years, and what proportion of planning enforcement investigations have resulted in: negotiation on remedial works or alterations to the development; an invitation for a retrospective planning application for the works; a decision that the breach is minor in nature or would be granted planning permission and take no further action take formal enforcement action?

Written Response

The table below sets out the number of alleged breaches the of planning control that the planning enforcement Team have investigated for the last 3 years. The regulations of planning enforcement are clear that the preferred outcomes are resolution through voluntary action or retrospective planning application, and that enforcement action is only justified if the harm of the planning breach outweighs any harm that would arise from the enforcement action.

The data shows the number of those cases within the last three years where the breach was resolved through negotiation resulting in a voluntary action by the property/landowner to make changes to address the breach of planning control, the number of breaches resolved through the submission of a retrospective planning application, and the number of cases closed where it was decided that it was not expedient to pursue formal enforcement action and where no voluntary resolution or a retrospective application could be secured.

	2025	2024	2023
Total number of cases received	353	336	320
Voluntary action	62	71	41
Retrospective planning application	59	68	34
Not expedient	45	67	48

AH24: From Cllr Rawle to Cllr Hollingsworth**Question**

Can the portfolio holder set out how many reports of breaches in planning control are currently being investigated, how many are outstanding and what is

Written Response

Currently, there are 319 open planning enforcement investigations. Due to the wide-ranging nature of planning enforcement breaches, the City Council does not specifically collate the average length of time planning

the average length of time for the council to resolve reported breaches?

enforcement investigations take across a given period. If there are/is a specific case(s) that the Member wishes to know about then details can be provided for the length of time that case was open and the number of hours spent by officers investigating and resolving any breach.

AH25: From Cllr Robinson to Cllr Hollingsworth

Question

Could the portfolio holder confirm the exact shortfall in the museum income and total running costs for the last two financial years? There seems some confusion in previous figures shared and opacity in the budget, which sometimes appears to conflate Town Hall running costs and Museum running costs.

Written Response

- The museum income shortfall against the income budget in 2024-25 of £151,750 was **£46,121**
- The museum expenditure overspend against the directly controllable expenditure budget of £293,617 in 2024-25 was **£30,940**
- The variance to controllable budget in 2024-25 was therefore the income shortfall plus the overspend, so a total of **£77,061**
- After the allocation of an appropriate share of overhead support costs for central City Council internal functions such as HR, Finance and the like, which are not directly controllable but are real costs, the total (controllable & uncontrollable) expenditure budget in 2024-25 was £326,231 and the total overspend was **£120,586**
- In monitoring reports & Cabinet reporting controllable costs are reported, and the uncontrollable costs are excluded.
- The museum income surplus against the income budget in 2023-24 of £138,750 was **£1,706**
- The museum expenditure underspend against the directly controllable expenditure budget of £392,717 in 2023-24 was **£89,417**

- The expenditure underspend against the total controllable & uncontrollable expenditure budget of £425,331 in 2023-24 was **£91,228**
- In summary therefore across the two years the income of the Museum fell from **£140,456** in 2023-4 to **£105,629** in 2024-5 - which is a decline in income of **£34,827** compared to a planned budget increase in income of **£13,000**
- Across the two years the controllable expenditure for the Museum rose from **£303,300** to **£324,557**, which is an increase in controllable expenditure of **£21,257** compared to a planned budget reduction in controllable expenditure of **£99,100**. This budget reduction in controllable expenditure was a reversal of the additional short-term costs budget agreed on the opening the museum.
- Across the two years the net deficit, taking into account both income and controllable expenditure, of the Museum increased from a net deficit of **£162,844** in **2023/24** to a net deficit of **£218,928** in **2024/25**

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

CM1: From Cllr Fouweather to Cllr Munkonge

Question

Written Response

<p>Further to my question at the November 24th Council, many basketball courts in Council run parks in Oxford still have damaged or missing nets on the basketball hoops. Can the Cabinet Member ensure that all sports nets in the Parks are checked immediately and repaired or replaced where needed?</p>	<p>Colleagues within Oxford Direct Services are in the process of replacing the nets where needed across the City. Most recently the nets at Alexandra Courts have been replaced and Cutteslowe and Sunnymede and Bury Knowle park nets are programmed to be replaced within the next two weeks.</p>
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<p>CM2: From Cllr Gant to Cllr Munkonge</p>	
<p>Question What progress can the Cabinet member report in respect of the lease of the cricket nets in Cutteslowe Park?</p>	<p>Written Response We have been working closely with Wolvercote Cricket club, who have since requested whether additional facilities could be added into the work on this. A draft demise plan has been agreed in principle, with revised Heads of Terms incorporating these potential changes currently being amended for distribution shortly to the club for their review and agreement.</p>

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<p>CM3: From Cllr Miles to Cllr Munkonge</p>	
<p>Question When will Hinksey pool open for the 2026 season?</p>	<p>Written Response Unfortunately during the preparations for the new Hinksey Pool season, the plant room at the facility flooded causing damage to electrical systems and also to mechanical equipment which included the pool pumps. The Council's leisure contractor is working hard behind the scenes to identify the necessary timelines to rectify the damaged equipment and be clear about the timelines necessary for opening. We will ensure that members are updated as soon as we have firm assurances on the opening date.</p>

LS1: From Cllr Smowton to Cllr Smith**Question**

How many Right-to-Buy requests did the City Council receive in November and December 2024, immediately after the announcement of the reduction in the RTB discount? For comparison, how many did it receive in the same period of 2023 and 2025? How long have RTB applications made in these respective periods taken to complete?

Written Response

Between the date of the announcement of the changes, 30th October 2024 and 21st November 2024, there were 168 applications. For the same three-week periods in 2023 there was one application and in the same three-week period 2025 there was only one application.

Applications 2023-24 - 66
 Applications 2024-25 - 239
 Applications 2025-26 – 26

RTB applications should be processed with a decision being made to Admit or Deny the RTB within 28 days of receipt of the application. In common with other Local Authorities, we did operate a backlog for a period with additional resources being brought in to deal with the unprecedented numbers. The backlog within the Applications Team was cleared in January 2025.

LS2: From Cllr Mundy to Cllr Smith**Question**

I have been told that there are delays in the OCC Tenancy Team confirming records of tenancy transfers/ inherited tenancies/ succeeded tenancies. It's impacting peoples' benefits, as up to date information fails to be provided for the purposes of establishing entitlement for housing costs on benefits. This in turn leads to rent not being paid on time and arrears owed to OCC.

Why are there these delays and what is being done to resolve this?

Written Response

Officers are not aware of any particular delays with dealing with succession cases. Relevant checks have to be made to evidence that succession eligibility criteria are met. If the member could pass on details of any specific cases, I will ask officers to investigate

LS3: From Cllr Henwood to Cllr Smith**Question**

When will the roof at Littlemore Community Centre be repaired? There has been a long-standing leak and fungal growth is now visible near the affected area, which raises concerns for users of the building.

Written Response

There are asbestos containing materials in the roof void, these are in the process of being safely removed by a competent contractor and are planned for the end of March. Once that has taken place the roof repairs will be booked in carried out in the following week. We are working with the committee to ensure the works cause as little disruption as possible.

LS4: From Cllr Mundy to Cllr Smith**Question**

Can the portfolio holder explain why there are delays in reporting of tenancy transfers/ inherited tenancies/ succeeded tenancies? This is impacting on people's benefits.

Written Response

Officers are not aware of any particular delays with dealing with succession cases. Relevant checks have to be made to evidence that succession eligibility criteria are met. If the member could pass on details of any specific cases, I will ask officers to investigate.

LS4: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Smith**Question**

Can the portfolio holder please outline under what circumstances the details of homeless people within Oxford City are shared with immigration enforcement?

Written Response

The Council does not share information collected from people accessing homelessness services with the Home Office for purposes of immigration enforcement.

The Council and its commissioned service providers would only speak to the Home Office with a client's explicit consent.

LS5: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Smith

Question

Can the portfolio holder please confirm whether any details of homeless people are shared with immigration enforcement outside of legal obligations upon the council to provide such details?

Written Response

The Council does not share information collected from people accessing homelessness services with the Home Office for purposes of immigration enforcement.

The Council and its commissioned service providers would only speak to the Home Office with a client's explicit consent.

LS6: From Cllr Powell to Cllr Smith**Question**

Can the responsible member please confirm whether and in what circumstances details of residents who have accessed housing advice are shared with immigration enforcement?

Written Response

The Council does not share information collected from people accessing homelessness services with the Home Office for purposes of immigration enforcement.

The Council and its commissioned service providers would only speak to the Home Office with a client's explicit consent.

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

Recent reports have detailed sharp rises in vacancy rates in purpose built student accommodation in the UK. Can the portfolio holder confirm whether she is aware of any similar uptick in vacancy rates within Oxford City over the past 12 months?

Written Response

The Council does not collect information on occupancy rates in student accommodation.

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To: Council

Date: 23 March 2026

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 and with written responses from Cabinet Members

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. Emily Scaysbrook
2. Dr Vira Ameli

Addresses to be taken in Part 2 of the agenda

1. Emily Scaysbrook

A scooter rider was recently seriously injured after hitting a pothole on Oxford Road in Old Marston. Local residents stated that the same pothole had already been filled twice this year prior to the incident, and having visited the site myself since, I can see that the repair carried out after the accident is already beginning to fail.

This raises concerns that when potholes do materialise, they are not always being repaired in a durable way, but are instead being repeatedly patched, allowing the same defect to reappear within a short space of time and requiring further repair, wasting public money.

My understanding is that this road's maintenance is delivered through the council's contract with ODS.

With that in mind, could the apt Council Member please explain what contractual mechanisms the council has in place with ODS to ensure that pothole repairs are carried out to a good and long-lasting standard, and how the council is able to hold the contractor accountable - including through financial penalties - when the same defects require repeated repair within short periods of time?

2. Dr Vira Ameli

My name is Vira Ameli. I am a researcher and lecturer at the University of Oxford, where I also completed my DPhil. I have been a resident of Oxford for almost a decade now. As a Social Scientist, I study how health systems can perform equitably and efficiently, and how societies build and sustain the structures that maintain life.

So I want to speak from experience, as an Iranian woman born and raised in Iran, as a resident of Oxford, and as a Social Scientist studying health systems.

The US-Israeli illegal aggression against Iran and Iranians, for a second time during negotiations and just before an agreement was within reach, as announced by the Omani Foreign Minister and mediator, cannot be understood only as a conflict between states or even people. It is an illegal act of aggression that targets Iran and Iranians in three layers:

Through the destruction of life.

Through the destruction of memory.

And through the narrowing of our futures.

First, it is the destruction of life.

We see that medical centres have been targeted and damaged, that schools have been struck directly, that hundreds of innocent schoolgirls and boys were among the very first victims of this war. Civilians, women, and children are being killed by the US and Israeli missiles and bombs every day across the region and now in Iran.

We then report numbers. But any one number is already too large.

By last week, according to the Iranian Red Crescent, 67,414 civilian buildings were destroyed, 236 medical centres and 498 schools were targeted and damaged. More than 1400 people, including over 400 women and children were killed. Sixteen medical personnel and one paramedics were killed.

But numbers can obscure as much as they reveal.

Because what is being lost is not only what is visible in the moment of impact, it is the system that maintains life and makes survival possible.

When health workers are killed, when hospitals are struck, the violence does not end there. It continues, quietly, in the patient who cannot be treated, in the delayed surgery, in the chronic condition that becomes fatal only because existing treatment is no longer accessible.

A health system is not only infrastructure. It is the thin line that stands between illness and death.

And when that line is broken, it is not broken equally. It is the most vulnerable who fall first.

Second, it is the destruction of memory.

We now know that museums and historical sites across Iran have been targeted and damaged, including sites marked by UNESCO as World Heritage sites, places where history has not been preserved in isolation but layered across centuries, belonging not just to Iranians, but to humanity.

By last week, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage reported serious damage to more than 56 museums and historical buildings across the country. In Tehran alone, 19 sites were damaged, including the beautiful Golestan palace and the Hall of Mirrors. In historic cities, such as Isfahan, Shiraz, and Semnan cultural heritage was severely damaged.

These are the heritage from the Achaemenid and Sassanian worlds, through the Seljuk and Safavid periods, these are not simply magnificent structures. They are the record of continuity, of a civilisation that has endured for more than two and a half thousand years.

And that endurance has not been built on expansion. It has been built on preservation, on the ability of a people to remain alive in their language, in their memory, in their resistance, and in their understanding of themselves.

So when these sites are targeted, what is struck is not only stone. It is that continuity. It is the link between past and present. It is our national heritage, but also World Heritage.

And here, in Oxford, this cannot be unfamiliar.

This is a city that has made a life out of preservation. It understands that history is not decoration. It is what allows a society to recognise itself across time.

So when heritage is damaged elsewhere, Oxford is not untouched by it. It is implicated in the question of what we choose to value, and what we are willing to let disappear.

Third, it is the destruction of the future.

Because what is being dismantled now is not only what exists, but what could exist.

Hospitals, schools, bridges, roads, systems built over decades by a nation under constraint, under pressure, under sanctions and economic strangulation.

To destroy them is not only to wound the present. It is to reach forward and make the future smaller.

It is to leave fewer possibilities, weaker systems, and a longer shadow of harm. And so the question returns, inevitably, to us.

Oxford calls itself a City of Sanctuary.

But sanctuary is not a word that can survive contradiction.

It cannot mean welcome in principle and restriction in practice. It cannot mean openness when it is easy, and withdrawal when it is difficult.

Because it is precisely at moments like this, when the conditions of life are being dismantled elsewhere, that the meaning of sanctuary is decided.

And there is something else that must be said, without evasion.

The country that is now under attack, Iran, is also one that has, for decades, hosted one of the largest refugee populations in the world. More than 3.5 million people have sought refuge and live in Iran.

So we are faced with a reversal that should give us pause. A place that has offered refuge is itself made unsafe.

This is not a complicated question.

It is a question of whether we are willing to recognise what is being destroyed. Not pretending for a second that any of this can bring any good for anyone – not for Iranians, not for Americans, and not for Jewish people.

And whether we are willing to speak in a way that is equal to that reality.

Because if a city like Oxford, a city that claims to stand for knowledge, for history, and for human dignity, cannot speak clearly at a moment like this, then it becomes difficult to know what those claims mean.

I urge you to support this motion, and speak against the destruction of:

Life.

Memory.

Future.

Thank you.

Address to council in support of petition

We represent nearly 2000 Oxford residents who were horrified to discover that the Council had decided to introduce entrance fees to the Museum of Oxford.

I started this petition and have been amazed to see how it has grown organically as word has spread. On the final day before charging started, people flocked to the museum to leave messages against charging. You can read them on the Save Our Museum website.

Today we want to set out three main areas of concern:

1. Introducing charges is the wrong decision for the museum and threatens its long-term viability

- The museum will not be able to compete with the much larger and higher-profile university museums, which are all free
- We will likely see a serious drop in footfall which means the funding gap will not be filled - this is the conclusion the council's own commissioned research came to, but it seems to have been ignored.
- Meanwhile this has created barriers to entry for the local people of Oxford. All of us should have the right to access our own history. Furthermore, requiring people on benefits and seeking asylum to prove their status in such a public place to gain free entry is undignified, embarrassing and potentially dangerous in the current climate.

2. The decision was taken in an undemocratic and untransparent way

- The introduction of charging was decided by Cabinet, not the full Council
- There was no consultation amongst museum users or museum staff
- But funding was applied for from the Arts Council, on the basis that charging was going to be introduced, even before Cabinet discussed and agreed it. This means the decision was actually made behind closed doors by senior councillors and officers with no transparency and accountability at all.

3. Councillors have been undermining the museum to make their case in the press, using inaccurate and inconsistent figures

- Councillor Hollingsworth said to the BBC the museum's visitor numbers have significantly dropped. Actually, they have been rising steadily since the museum reopened and no doubt would have continued to rise. He is comparing them to pre-redevelopment visitor figures that, according to the Council itself, were counted in a different way and are not comparable

- Councillor Hollingsworth also claimed *‘the museum received around £5,000 in voluntary donations from visitors last year’* but actually it was nearly £12,500
- Councillor Hollingsworth claims the funding gap is £77,000 and Councillor Brown claims it’s nearly £100,000. Our FOI request showed a gap of closer to £50,000 that didn’t take into account nearly half the museum’s income. Why are different councillors using different numbers? Which is correct?
- The council argued in the Oxford Mail a month ago that if the funding gap cannot be filled the museum may have to close, as it’s taking funds away from other community groups. This is cynical and divisive when the museum itself is an amazing community resource, partnering with groups across the city on educational and outreach activities. Trying to pit community-focused organisations against each other like this is outrageous. We want a Council that will champion and support local history and community groups, not try to turn them against each other.

In conclusion, **we would like to see the entry fees dropped immediately.**

Ultimately, Councillors need to recognise that the Museum of Oxford is a wonderful community resource that they should be proud of. Instead of this negativity and divisiveness, we want to see a Council prepared to work in partnership with the talented and hard-working museum staff, and the Museum Development Trust, to find alternative ways to secure its future.

If you don’t know the museum well, please take 10 minutes out of your day to go and wander round. Read stories you will not find anywhere else in Oxford about events that have shaped our city:

- like the Cutteslowe Walls and the Florence Park Rent Strike
- ancient artefacts such as our Patron Saint Frideswide’s gravestone
- a celebration of our industrial past such as the Cowley plant
- a tin of Cooper’s Oxford Marmalade that went all the way to the Antarctic with Scott

The Museum of Oxford was never designed to have an entrance fee. It was designed to be a free resource for the people of Oxford. Please keep it that way.

To: Council
Date: 23 March 2026
Report of: Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Update from the Scrutiny Committee

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

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:
1. Note the work of the Scrutiny Committee and the recommendations as set out in the report.

Information Exempt From Publication
Appendix 2 to this report is deemed exempt from publication under Schedule 12A paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Scrutiny recommendations and Cabinet responses	No
Appendix 2	Exempt Scrutiny recommendations	Yes

Introduction and Overview

1. This report provides an update on the activities of the Scrutiny Committee and its Working Groups since the last update to Council on 24 November 2025. It covers the period from 20 November 2025 to 18 March 2026.
2. Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 grants the power to the Scrutiny Committee to make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive; and on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.

Update on Scrutiny Activities

3. Since the last full Council meeting, the Scrutiny Committee held 4 ordinary meetings to consider a range of substantive items:

2 December 2025

- Authority Monitoring Report and Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25
- Devolution

13 January 2026

- Workforce Equality Report
- Proposed Submission of Draft Local Plan 2045

3 February 2026

- Debt Recovery Procedure
- Noticeboards Update
- AI Strategy Update
- Budget Review Group Report

10 March 2026

- More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update
- Nighttime Economy
- Fly-tipping and Litter Management

4. The Committee also endorsed recommendations from the following Working Group meetings:

Housing and Homelessness Working Group – 13 November 2025

- Housing Complaint Handling Performance (Q1 and Q2)
- Building Safety & Compliance (Q1 and Q2)
- Draft Resident Involvement Strategy 2025-28
- Decarbonisation update: Impact of Energy Efficiency Funding programmes (LAD1b and SHDF) and EPC programme

Climate and Environment Working Group – 17 November 2025

- Net Zero Tracker
- Air Quality Action Plan
- Biodiversity Strategy and Environment Act Update

Finance and Performance Working Group – 26 November 2025

- OxWed LLP – Delivery Options for Oxpens [SJVG]
- ODS Clienting
- Treasury Management Annual Report 2024-25

Climate and Environment Working Group – 25 February 2026

- EV Infrastructure Update
- Heat Network Update
- Net Zero Tracker

Housing and Homelessness Working Group – 26 February 2026

- Allocations Scheme Review
- Measures to meet growing demand for Temporary Accommodation

5. In reviewing the abovementioned reports, the Committee submitted 41 recommendations (inclusive of the Budget Review Group recommendations). 24 were agreed by Cabinet, 7 partially agreed and 5 not agreed. For the remaining 5, only commentary was provided without a stated position.
6. Cabinet considered these at its meetings on 10 December 2025, 13 January 2026, 11 February 2026 and 18 March 2026. Written responses were provided to inform Scrutiny of the rationale behind Cabinet's decision. There is a table summary setting out in detail the recommendations and responses, supplied as Appendix 1 to this report. No table was produced for items where no recommendations were made.
7. Recommendations made to the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group were endorsed under delegated authority by the Scrutiny and Governance Advisor, in consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee. These were submitted to the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group for consideration at their Special meeting on 1 December 2025. Further details are provided in the exempt Appendix 2.
8. Minutes of relevant meetings are provided below as hyperlinks:
 - [Scrutiny Committee 2 December 2025](#)
 - [Scrutiny Committee 13 January 2026](#)
 - [Scrutiny Committee 3 February 2026](#)
 - [Scrutiny Committee 10 March 2026](#)

Summary of discussions

Authority Monitoring Report and Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25

9. The Committee raised concerns around why the housing targets had not been met and why the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for the different wards within the city was not consistent. There were also comments about the downturn of large-scale sites within the city and if there was any provision for homes for an aging population. Finally, there were comments about the ongoing communications with the universities and the impact on student housing across the city in the emerging local plan.

Devolution

10. Reflecting on Local Government Reorganisation, the Committee raised uncertainties about how the Three Unitary Authority (3UA) model relates to the larger concept of a Thames Valley Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA). Members asked about the Government's position on the MSA, in contrast to the more complex LGR landscape, and whether the MSA process might progress more smoothly given the broad agreement amongst authorities. In seeking further clarity, the Committee noted potential synergies between a smaller, place-based unitary and a larger strategic authority capable of securing investment and delivering major transport, planning and long-term environmental projects which could be channelled to local areas. The 3UA model was reiterated as essential to ensuring Oxford retains a meaningful voice within any future MSA, particularly given that this influence could be diminished under a county-wide unitary.
11. Some concerns were raised about Oxford identity in the Thames Valley, noting that many residents may not instinctively identify with the area, and the need to clearly communicate the benefits of Devolution including powers over issues like planning, infrastructure, skills and potentially tourism levies. The Committee then queried Swindon's place within the proposed geography, and noted that Swindon, not only initiated early discussions, but has strong economic and business links with Oxford, and is naturally aligned with the Thames Valley economy. Further to this, Swindon is viewed as a logical western end to the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.
12. Additionally, the Committee sought clarity on several governance-related issues: what arrangements are likely to accompany an MSA and how these would align with what the Council's current position; what decision-making powers would the Council retain or gain; how successful initiatives such as Oxford Direct Services (ODS) would be safeguarded within a larger strategic structure. It was explained that governance discussions will form the next stage once Government's response is known, and that a collegiate model is being explored. The Committee noted that whilst certain decisions would rest with the Mayor, the system is designed to avoid unilateral imposition.
13. Lastly, in relation to devolved powers and budgets, the Committee heard that these would likely include strategic planning (for example, housing and environmental sustainability targets) and strengthened by the soft power of representing a large, economically strong region.

Workforce Equality Report 2025

14. The Committee was pleased with the data the Council publishes annually relating to recruitment and that it was meeting its targets for 16.5% workforce representation from minority ethnic groups across the authority. There were also comments relating to the Council ensuring to issue fair pay decisions and progress towards the incremental progression plan following staff completing their 6-month probationary

period, along with further work on inclusive recruitment practices. The committee also raised concerns and questions on how best to ensure that Trans staff are protected within the context of waiting for the EHRC to issue its revised code of practice.

Proposed Submission of Draft Local Plan 2045

15. In discussing the proposed submission of the Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045, the Committee was minded to emphasise the importance of providing clear guidance on how planning can be designed to ensure Oxford creates child-friendly places and amenities, recognising that such practice has been adopted by other authorities. The Committee noted that children's needs should be addressed within the Local Plan policies, potentially through the Technical Advice Note. Acknowledging the current timeline for the Plan's implementation, the Committee requests that this matter be recorded and revisited in future.

Housing Complaint Handling Performance (Q1 and Q2)

16. The Housing and Homelessness Working Group acknowledged the positive feedback from the Ombudsman regarding the Council's complaint handling. It noted the current backlog and sought assurance that sufficient resource is in place, with Officers confirming new staff are being trained and the backlog is expected to be cleared by the end of Q3. Members raised questions about escalation routes when officers do not respond and highlighted the need for clear communication pathways for residents who wish to raise concerns without entering the formal complaint process. There were no recommendations.

Building Safety and Compliance Performance (Q1 and Q2)

17. The first point noted by Members was regarding the subcontracted fire risk assessors not appearing on the professional register, which was raised by external auditors in their report to the Audit and Governance Committee. The Housing and Homelessness Working Group was reassured that an internal fire assessment team has been established following recommendations from the auditors and that auditors were positive about this progress.
18. Members also discussed the anticipated impact of Awaab's Law and the likelihood of increased reporting and resource need. Lastly, the Working Group sought clarification on stairlifts provisions and implications for vulnerable residents to whom these were provided. It was clarified that stairlift provisions for residents are not legally required under LOLER, however as a result of this oversight, the Council agreed arrangements with residents and will reassess future arrangements. No recommendation was put forward by the Working Group.

Draft Resident Involvement Strategy 2025-28

19. A strong expression of support for the Strategy was offered by the Housing and Homelessness Working Group, welcoming the significant resident influence throughout its design. The Working Group welcomed the opportunity to track that the strategy's intentions are reflected in the way policies are delivered, and any plans to strengthen feedback loop from the Tenant Board.
20. Other points raised included resident involvement which often intersects with other areas of work such as EPC inspections. Members highlighted the importance of making sure that feedback from residents are captured consistently and channelled effectively across workstreams, including the work of Scrutiny. The Working Group also noted the need to avoid duplication of work and to ensure resident voices are

not diluted. They welcomed the confirmation that efficient governance arrangements are being reviewed with these considerations in mind. There were no formal recommendations made.

Decarbonisation update: Impact of Energy Efficiency Funding programmes (LAD1b and SHDF) and EPC programme

21. Discussions centred around the risk of large numbers of EPCs expiring simultaneously with Members noting the need to manage assessment cycles more evenly. The Housing and Homelessness Working Group also sought clarity on progress towards EPC targets and whether the Council remains on track to reduce properties below Band C by 2030.
22. Other concerns raised pertained to resilience and future external funding, and tenant refusals to retrofit work. It was noted that these often stemmed from disruption, health issues, or misconceptions particularly surrounding insulation and air source heat pumps, which prompted the Working Group to highlight the importance of educating residents on these topics. No recommendations were made.

Air Quality Action Plan

23. The Climate and Environment Working Group noted the Air Quality Action Plan consultation booklet has effectively incorporated previous scrutiny feedback on ensuring information for the public is clear and easily digestible.
24. Points were raised regarding the extent to which delivery of the AQAP may be affected by county-level policies and measures, including the congestion charge. They queried whether the document sufficiently accounted for potential inconsistencies between administration and whether these differing positions were acknowledged. In the context of Local Government Reorganisation, the Working Group emphasised the need to maintain strong commitment to the excellent work being done, and to ensure that this positive trajectory continues.
25. Some concerns were also noted from areas such as Woodstock Road and Hollow Way about potential displacement effects arising from temporary congestion measures, and the Group considered whether additional monitoring in these areas might be beneficial. The Working Group accepted the clarification that the 44 diffusion tube monitoring points previously assessed in relation to traffic filters align with those areas predicted to experience the most significant impacts from congestion related measures. Overall, the Working Group expressed general support for the draft Air Quality Action Plan. No formal recommendations were made.

Biodiversity Strategy and Environment Act Update

26. The Climate and Environment Working Group wished to ensure that the newly appointed Ecologists have the resources required to meet the Council's biodiversity commitments and duties. It noted that the team is still assessing its needs and would be in a position to forecast these in due course. Members queried Section 106 allocations and whether parameters should be set, however it was understood that a deliberate decision had been taken to retain simpler guidance to avoid placing unnecessary limitations on the biodiversity team. The Working Group also discussed the robustness of enforcing biodiversity policies within the Local Plan, and the potential to link certain elements to Section 106, both of which will need to

be worked out within the forthcoming Biodiversity Net Gain document to formalise the Council's approach.

27. The Working Group welcomed and expressed thanks to Richard Hill and Sarah Hawes, both of whom joined the Council recently as Principal Ecologists and extended its appreciation to the wider Environment Sustainability team for their contributions to the meeting.

Treasury Management Annual Report

28. There were no recommendations from the Finance and Performance Working Group.

ODS Clienting

29. The Finance and Performance Working Group initially proposed two recommendations to the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group. However, as they related to the clienting function between Oxford Direct Services and the Council, they therefore fell to the Cabinet for a response, in line with the relevant schemes of delegation.

Debt Recovery Strategy

30. The Committee discussed the Council's use of enforcement agents in recovering debt and measures in place to safeguard vulnerable residents, raising points on accessibility including whether language barriers and digital exclusions are being addressed. Members were satisfied that enforcement procedures aligned with council policies, emphasising the protection of vulnerable residents, and the role of advice centres as contact points for which partnership with the council must be maintained.

Noticeboards Update

31. In light of discussions relating to the effective use and management of noticeboards, there was a clear view from Scrutiny for Council to introduce active day-to-day management and operation of noticeboards and save for where there were already effective mechanisms in place such as arrangements led by parish councils or neighbourhood associations, urging that they should not be discouraged should the Council proceed with the recommended option. Noting budgetary implications to this approach, a recommendation was made as part of the budget review process. Alternatively, should the first preferred option be deemed unachievable, the Committee made a secondary recommendation for Council to take no further action.

AI Strategy Update

32. Recognising that AI is a rapidly evolving technology, the Committee was generally supportive of the current strategy and governance arrangements, as well as future plans to develop further training and monitoring of its use within the Council. The Committee was overall supportive of the use of AI within the Council as a tool for efficiency but not as replacement for the workforce. No recommendations were made.

Budget Review Group Report

33. The Budget Review Group held five meetings in December 2025 and January 2026 to examine the draft budget proposals, as approved by Cabinet for consultation in December 2025. The Group made 10 recommendations which were endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee on 3 February 2026, considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 11 February 2026 and submitted to Full Council on 23 February 2026.

34. The Budget Review Group was grateful to all officers, working group members and cabinet members who have all contributed to the process, responding to questions in advance and attending the evening meetings.

More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update

35. The Committee sought further clarity on data presented within the report, particularly in regard to the second year performance figures and the number of recorded visits, noting the discrepancies in previous year's data that were due to mobilisation. Members also sought to understand the disaggregation of data when it comes to gender, young age groups and usage particularly against geography.
36. The Committee made positive comments on the investments being made to the redevelopment of the leisure centre in Blackbird Leys, however some concerns were raised relating to displaced users of the sports hall with members seeking confidence that there have been offers of alternatives to ensure users were encouraged to continue with their sports. Finally, the Committee explored how the council's range of leisure offering could be expanded to provide non-traditional sports, as well how the Council could better improve gaps in youth participation specifically the under 18's.

Nighttime Economy

37. The Committee supported the work being undertaken to improve Oxford's nighttime economy. Comments were particularly focused on expanding the geographical scope including other areas in Oxford where nighttime economy like Cowley Centre and Botley industrial estate could also improve.
38. In relation to the existing live music offering, members discussed the frequency of live music events, how audits should better assess venue capacity, as well as opportunities to grow grassroots music and alternative venues. The Committee also focused on a more inclusive nighttime economy, drawing on creative activities offered in other cities such as night museums, late night café's, bookshops and other non-alcohol focused offerings that are family-friendly. Better use of council-owned spaces was also explored.
39. Lastly, members raised concerns about impacts on residents and environmental health, the safety of nighttime economy workers particularly the availability of late night transport arrangements and how these issues could be addressed.

Fly-tipping and Litter Management

40. The Committee welcomed the ongoing work to address fly-tipping and litter in Oxford. Members encouraged stronger focus on prevention, including improved data on hotspot locations and clearer use of signage particularly in areas where this had been beneficial. There was also significant interest in community and behavioural solutions such as education campaigns and encouraging residents to take part in practical litter-picking initiatives.
41. Other questions Members had raised centred around bin placement and design, park litter capacity and business responsibility for waste generated by licensed premises and other venues.

EV Infrastructure Update, Heat Network Update and Net Zero Tracker

42. The Climate and Environment Working Group noted the concerns previously raised by this Working Group regarding the risk of monopolistic behaviour and the potential

for the Council to have limited leverage once Heat Network infrastructure is installed and operational, further noting the importance of a robust approach to procurement.

Allocations Schemes and Measures to meet growing demand for Temporary Accommodation

43. The Housing and Homelessness Working Group noted the proposed changes to the Allocations Scheme and asked questions relating to relocation capabilities under unique circumstances such as trauma or mental health challenges, and noted the role of the Exceptional Circumstances Panel in dealing with these types of scenarios.
44. The Working Group also delved into the practice envisioned for the new face-to-face offer in the city centre as means to prevent homelessness noting similar and successful practices by other local authorities. No recommendations were agreed; both reports were supported by the Working Group.

Acknowledgements

45. The Committee would also like to offer its thanks to all Council Officers, Members and Speakers who contributed to Scrutiny's work and meetings this reporting period.

Financial implications

46. Financial implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
47. Where appropriate, any further financial implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Legal issues

48. Legal implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
49. Where appropriate, any further legal implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Level of risk

50. Risk Registers, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
51. Where appropriate, the risk register was reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Equalities impact

52. Equalities Impact Assessments, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
53. Where appropriate, the Equalities Impact Assessments was reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

54. Consideration for Carbon and Environmental impacts, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.

55. Where appropriate, the Carbon and Environmental impacts were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

56. Implications of Local Government Reorganisation for the reports listed above were outlined within the report when presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.

57. Where appropriate, any further implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations using the linked guidance from Government: [Financial decisions before local government reorganisation - GOV.UK](#)

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Appendix 1: Scrutiny Recommendations and Cabinet Responses

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny recommendations and Cabinet responses

Table 1 – Cabinet response to the list of Scrutiny recommendations in December 2025

The table below sets out the response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made or endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting on 10 December 2025.

Authority Monitoring Report and Infrastructure Funding Statement

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) For Cabinet to review the reporting of housing delivered, separating out those on sites of under 10 units where the requirement for affordable housing is not triggered within the covering report for future years.	Yes	We are happy to explore how additional clarity on this matter can be added to the covering report in future years.
2) For Officers to identify, if possible, the complex set of reasons as to why the housing completions reported are currently under the target or if not possible, explicitly state this.	Yes	The Covering Report currently states: <i>“Figure 2 below shows the cumulative projection is just under the target to meet the minimum of 10,884 dwellings to 2036 as set out in policy H1. There are likely to be a range of potential factors which have affected completion rates in recent years, these are difficult to separate out statistically, however officers are working hard to maximise opportunities to deliver housing to meet the target.”</i> We could amend this to read: <i>“There are likely to be a range of potential factors which in combination have affected completion rates in recent years, officers have explored possible explanations but these are difficult to separate out statistically and cannot be accurately isolated. However officers are working hard to maximise opportunities to deliver housing to meet the target.”</i>

3) For Cabinet to request officers to investigate bottlenecks with the current processes.	Yes	At the meeting, in response to questions about bottlenecks in the system, reference was made to the impact which legal delays and hold ups in receiving 3 rd party input into Section106 agreements can have. Officers will continue to work with external partners in exploring how these can be resolved efficiently.
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Biodiversity Strategy and Environment Act Update

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That Cabinet draw on the expertise of community and voluntary groups to provide input and support the delivery of the Biodiversity Strategy; and actively inform the public about the criteria for good habitat, clearly promoting what good biodiverse habitat looks like so as to strengthen public understanding and support for practices (such as leaving verges uncut) that protect local species.	Yes	The Biodiversity Strategy will utilise input from community and voluntary groups, through creation of a steering group.

60

Recommendations relating to ODS Clienting (ODS Group Performance Report)

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) To increase the use of CCTV given that it has been the most effective measure for preventing fly-tipping.	Yes	CCTV cameras, overt and covert can be an effective tool in preventing and detecting fly-tipping. An investment in cameras, permanent signage on HRA stock where fly-tipping is a problem (usually around bin stores, alleyways and garages) and temporary signs during an enforcement operation would be useful methods to tackle these offences. This will need to be part of a detailed

		costed set of plans for certain HRA sites, which is what we plan to do in the next financial year.
2) That repairs of play area equipment be reverted to a delegated budget arrangement, as this model has previously demonstrated greater efficiency and addresses the backlogs in maintenance.	No	The Shareholder and Joint Venture Group has spoken to Officers. A project is underway on the clienting and commissioning of Oxford Direct Services by the council and this should be picked up by that process. To confirm, however, no delegated budget has been removed from ODS.

Table 2 – Cabinet response to the list of Scrutiny recommendations in January 2026

The table below sets out the response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made or endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting on 13 January 2026.

Workforce Equality Report

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That the current target for workforce representation of 17% for employees from minority ethnic groups be increased to a higher, evidence-based, figure in order to restrengthen the Council’s recruitment from these groups.	Yes	The Council has achieved its current, formal target of 16.5% and has since been working towards 17%. It is appropriate to increase the target.
2) That Cabinet fully implement an anonymised, third-party reporting system, reflecting standard practice across the public and private sectors, to enable employees to raise concerns relating to harassment, bullying, discrimination, corruption and other workplace-related issues with confidence.	Yes	The Council is currently exploring options for a service. One provider is quoting around £300 per month plus vat for the service for the Council’s workforce. An internal solution would not incur extra costs but would take up staff time.
3) Acknowledging there are challenges posed by low staff numbers and reliability of available data in this area, that future workforce equality reports include a dedicated section on gender reassignment, recognising this as a protected characteristic.	In part	As this group of employees is small and hesitant about sharing personal data, we do not wish to highlight numerical data on the group but would be happy to refer to the work we are doing to support employees and acknowledge gender reassignment as a protected characteristic. Non-binary, trans and gender questioning employees would be included. A separate section may not be required but this will be considered.

Proposed Submission of Draft Local Plan 2045

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) For officers to undertake a further review of the areas in Greater Leys, in particular Dunnock Way, and other sites such as Littlemore to be allocated Local Centres under Policy C1, noting their similarities to Underhill Circus.		Officers will carry out a further analysis of the list of Local Centres.
2) That the evidence-base is thoroughly examined to determine whether 10% biodiversity net gain is conclusively the most ambitious minimum the council could set.		Officers have reviewed the position and can confirm the following: The Environment Act 2021 sets a statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG) of 10%. The Planning Practice Guidance was updated last year to say that local plans should not seek a higher percentage than this statutory level 'unless justified'. To support a higher percentage we would need robust evidence to justify this approach, which would need to look at specific local need, as well as demonstrating opportunities to deliver it and looking at the impact on development viability. Because of the constrained nature of Oxford and the limited opportunities for development, and indeed for achieving BNG within the city, this is not considered to be an approach that could be justified and evidenced.
3) For officers to explore whether a higher threshold for the acceptability of loss of sports facilities could be incorporated in the Local Plan.		In the development of the Plan officers have reviewed all the green spaces in the city, and in some cases go further than the NPPF by attempting to preserve spaces in situ, because of their important functions that justify this and make it difficult to re-provide, e.g. as a wildlife corridor of functional floodplain. Other spaces are part of the supporting Green Infrastructure network, and these spaces follow the NPPF approach that development may be justified if re-provision can be made, or if they are shown to be surplus. We do not have a surplus of pitches, so pitches in use do require re-provision. Re-provision needs to be of equivalent or better quality and capacity but not necessarily

		<p>quantity, so sometimes a smaller area of pitches, or enhanced pitches elsewhere, that can provide the same level of use, may be accepted.</p>
<p>4) For officers to reconsider the language in Policy C2(h) encouraging the development of city centre play amenity.</p>		<p>The Plan is very supportive of play space and specifically in including this in our centres, for example: in Policy C2 about maintaining vibrant centres (which includes the city centre): <i>"enhancement and new opportunities for public realm and landscaping such as tree planting, including incorporation of small green spaces where people can stop, dwell, socialise and play;"</i>.</p> <p>There is policy support elsewhere in the Plan too, Policy G1: protection of green infrastructure states: <i>"Proposals impacting the following types of open space will need to be accompanied by additional evidence that demonstrates consideration of the following:...b) Parks and gardens, accessible greenspace and amenity greenspaces: i) the role of the space in supporting people to socialize, take part in informal recreation (particularly where facilities like children/youth play and outdoor gym equipment are present), or as an escape from the urban environment,"</i></p> <p>Also, in Policy G2: enhancement of green and blue infrastructure says proposals should demonstrate how they've considered: <i>"Health and wellbeing, including facilitating recreation and play for people of all age groups and abilities, particularly children and teenagers;"</i></p> <p>More broadly, the City Council supports the concept of a play space in the city centre, however, without a site having been identified, there is little more the Local Plan can do to deliver it.</p>

Table 3 – Cabinet response to the list of Scrutiny recommendations in February 2026

The table below sets out the response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made or endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting on 3 February 2026.

Debt Recovery Strategy

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment																																														
1) That a summary report on council debt recovery activities at all stages is provided to Scrutiny and Cabinet at a future meeting to ensure there is awareness in this area of the council's work.	Yes	<p>A complete summary report of debt recovery stages will be presented at the next available scrutiny meeting; here is a breakdown of the current number of accounts in recovery and the stage.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Recovery Stage</th> <th>Jan 2026</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No - Reminder 1 - RM1</td> <td>2333</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£1,451,097.12</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Reminder 2 - RM2</i></td> <td>593</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£275,657.81</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Reminder 3 - RM3</i></td> <td>31</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£9,949.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Final - FIN</i></td> <td>5989</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£5,293,928.37</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Summons - SUM</i></td> <td>470</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£427,840.92</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Liability Order - LO</i></td> <td>1004</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£1,043,312.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Arrangement - ARG</i></td> <td>705</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£457,762.94</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Attachment of Benefits - AOB</i></td> <td>669</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£330,238.48</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Attachment of Earnings - AOE</i></td> <td>249</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£204,631.57</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Enforcement Agents - BLF</i></td> <td>4226</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£4,116,804.41</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>No - Charging Order - CHO</i></td> <td>117</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>value</i></td> <td>£127,559.20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Recovery Stage	Jan 2026	No - Reminder 1 - RM1	2333	<i>value</i>	£1,451,097.12	<i>No - Reminder 2 - RM2</i>	593	<i>value</i>	£275,657.81	<i>No - Reminder 3 - RM3</i>	31	<i>value</i>	£9,949.99	<i>No - Final - FIN</i>	5989	<i>value</i>	£5,293,928.37	<i>No - Summons - SUM</i>	470	<i>value</i>	£427,840.92	<i>No - Liability Order - LO</i>	1004	<i>value</i>	£1,043,312.30	<i>No - Arrangement - ARG</i>	705	<i>value</i>	£457,762.94	<i>No - Attachment of Benefits - AOB</i>	669	<i>value</i>	£330,238.48	<i>No - Attachment of Earnings - AOE</i>	249	<i>value</i>	£204,631.57	<i>No - Enforcement Agents - BLF</i>	4226	<i>value</i>	£4,116,804.41	<i>No - Charging Order - CHO</i>	117	<i>value</i>	£127,559.20
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<p>2) That Cabinet considers incorporating clear, plain language summary within letters issued to individuals in addition to links to further information online, given the prevalence of digital exclusion and unfamiliarity with local government terminology. This would reduce reliance on residents needing to follow online links to understand the purpose and implications of the letters.</p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>Billing and Recovery Documents Local Taxation</p> <p>Every element of our billing and recovery documentation, including SMS messaging, has been developed using evidence based behavioural insights provided by Dr Amy Jones, a behavioural scientist and recognised expert in local taxation communications. In designing these materials, careful consideration was given to the strict legislative requirements governing the content of local taxation documents, ensuring that all mandatory information remained fully compliant.</p> <p>While further amendments through supplementary inserts is possible, Dr Jones emphasised the importance of keeping all key information within the main billing and recovery documents themselves. She advised that, wherever possible, the most important messages should be presented prominently on the front page to maximise clarity, comprehension, and customer engagement. We</p>																

	<p>think this is in line with the spirit of the scrutiny recommendation.</p> <p>We have included a link which makes clear her thoughts and our response to how our document should be presented:</p> <p>The Insights of Dr Jones</p> <p>Members also asked for information on translation services in considering this matter so it is provided below:</p> <p>Availability of Translation and Interpreting Services</p> <p>Oxford City Council offers a full range of translation and interpreting services through its provider Word360. These services include telephone interpreting, face-to-face interpreting (including British Sign Language), video interpreting and document translation.</p> <p>Residents can access these services by contacting the Council's main switchboard on 01865 249811 or by visiting the Customer Service Centre, where staff can arrange the required language support.</p> <p>In addition to English, the recovery team is multi-cultural, with the following languages also spoken:</p> <p>Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati</p> <p>Translation Services in the Oxford City Complaints Process</p> <p>These translation and interpreting services are available to support residents when making a complaint. The services are intended to ensure that all residents can communicate effectively with the Council and access services regardless of language barriers.</p>
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	<p>Translation Services Provided by Enforcement Agents Engaged by the City Council</p> <p>XL Enforcement</p> <p>Offer a range of in house language support through their multilingual team.</p> <p>In addition to this internal capability, the organisation can produce written communications in over 100 languages using Google Translate and works with Cymon for high quality Welsh translations. These tools also support their digital engagement channels, including Telsolutions campaigns, and are being built into the development pipeline for the bespoke DebtorApp. To ensure full accessibility for all service users, XL Enforcement also provides large print documents, Braille, dyslexia friendly formats, British Sign Language interpreters, and RelayUK for hearing impaired customers. They are further enhancing real time communication by moving towards the use of Samsung Translate across all enforcement agents' Samsung smart devices while on the road.</p> <p>Jacobs Enforcement</p> <p>provides a full translation service for customers across all contact points, supporting communication in any language through its partnership with TheBigWord, a professional provider offering telephone, online, and in person translation on demand.</p> <p>Agents also carry language identification tools on their iPads, enabling them to quickly identify a customer's preferred language and arrange a translator as needed.</p> <p>Where appropriate and authorised by the debtor, translation can also be facilitated through trusted community groups.</p>
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		In addition to these services, the organisation benefits from the wide language skills of its Enforcement Agents and can provide accessible formats such as sign language interpretation, Braille, and other specialist communication support.
3) That the timescales of meetings with advice centres is revisited to ensure they correspond to their capacity and availability, noting that critical role of advice centres as both a key contact point for residents and a source of specialist advice and support.	Yes	We have asked advice centres about this; so far, the Council has not yet received a response with regards to reinstating these meetings at times that align with capacity and availability of advice centres. Once this is confirmed, Council will ensure the meetings can be scheduled accordingly. Advice centres are indeed valued partners and points of contact.

Noticeboards Update

66

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) Subject to the agreement that Council will commit to actively managing and operating the noticeboards as recommended in the budget review process, that clear guidelines are developed for the use of noticeboards, including how new items and updates are managed, and the responsibilities of key holders.	In Part	Agreed, subject to budget discussion.

Table 4 – Cabinet response to the list of Scrutiny recommendations in March 2026

The table below sets out the response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made or endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting on 10 March 2026.

More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That future reports provide More Leisure KPI outcomes broken down by gender, as well as youth participation by geographic venue, acknowledging that demographic in certain geographic areas differ. This is to identify if there are any interventions required to address any gaps or segments that are underrepresented.	Yes	This data will be provided in future reports.
2) That, as part of the service plan, Council and More Leisure set out what could be done to expand into non-traditional sports that are not currently offered in the leisure centres.	Yes	A note on this will be included in the service plan, with the intention to explore opportunities.

70

Nighttime Economy

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That when considering the nighttime economy in relation to families and children, age groups are disaggregated into children up to age 11 and young people under 18.	Yes	This distinction is helpful and we also recognise that all ages of children can be different with different interests and needs, and it's important that a nighttime economy appeals to all of them. We will reflect this in our approach to ensure there is inclusivity across all ages and make sure we flag this in discussions with key stakeholders.

2) That the ongoing work maintains an open-minded approach to a wider range of nighttime activities, including bookshops, museums, the Covered Market, and other activities that are non-alcohol related.	Yes	We will reflect this in our approach to ensure there is inclusivity across different ages and interests, and again flag this in discussion with stakeholders.
3) That late night cafés are categorised separately from other food-related venues.	Yes	These will be categorised separately so there is clear data available.
4) That consideration is given to include local promoters as part of the Live Music Taskforce.	Yes	The local promoters will be part of the Live Music Taskforce once assembled.
5) That the Council continues to engage with employers to identify how best to address the issues faced by workers travelling home late at night.	Yes	The Council will continue to engage with employers and Thames Valley Police where feasible.
6) That current analysis includes the capacity of venues, in addition to the number of venues.	Yes	This will be included going forward to ensure appropriate data is collected.

Fly-tipping and Litter Management

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) To explore the provision of facilities in parks during the summer period to allow “2-minute litter picks” where this would be beneficial.	Yes	ODS will explore this, especially around appropriate trial locations and discuss funding options with OCC officers.
2) To review the appropriateness of measures businesses have in place to ensure that the waste they produce is managed responsibly and that they are encouraging their customers to dispose of litter appropriately.	No	This was not part of the scope of the paper and is not covered by the author’s roles. It will need to be discussed with the relevant officers. There is a regular dialogue between ODS and businesses, using its commercial services, about the timing of collections but late evening ones are not permissible under our current EA licences.

		CRT do conduct regulation of businesses and waste issues. The guidance in place specifically for the city centre ensures that commercial waste is removed during the busiest footfall periods in the daytime, to allow for street cleansing and safety.
3) To audit the use of signage in areas with high levels of fly-tipping and to consider where additional signage could be most effectively implemented.	Yes	ODS will explore the logging of fly-tipping activity where fly-tip signs are in place to ascertain effectiveness long-term and help inform future locations. This may require additional funding if more signage is required.
4) That Council consider reengaging with education programmes and resources aimed at addressing behaviours and culture relating to litter and fly-tipping.	Yes	OCC to explore options for a communication / engagement programme for litter and fly-tipping. There is a programme of engagement and education in place for improving residential waste collections, with a focus on increasing recycling.
5) That future reports include a breakdown of locations with high levels of litter across the city, presented visually on a map where possible.	In part	Mapping of litter levels is not currently possible but ODS will explore what data is available from audit activity and how this can be presented.

Heat Network Update

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That Cabinet formally write to Central Government seeking inclusion of Oxford in the first tranche of Heat Network Zones to be designated following the commencement of Heat Network Zoning Regulations, so that the Council will have clear statutory powers to enforce delivery against agreed plans, intervene in cases of non-compliance or underperformance, prevent monopolistic practices, as well as ensure transparency and appropriate safeguards.	Yes	This would be done, in hand with progressing to procure a Heat Network Developer for Oxford, via a Development Agreement.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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To: Council
Date: 23 March 2026
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 14 January 2026, as amended by the proposers.

As Council deferred the business from the previous substantive meeting, including the motions submitted by the Liberal Democrat and Green Groups, at the meeting on 26 January 2026, these will be taken first.

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 (re-submitted motion), Green (re-submitted motion), Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, Independent Oxford Alliance groups in that order.

Introduction

- a) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (proposed by Cllr Jupp, seconded by Cllr Miles) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Muddiman, seconded by Cllr Rawle]
- b) Prisoners for Palestine hunger strikes (proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Mundy) [Amendment Proposed by Cllr Ottino, Seconded by Cllr Qayyum]
- c) Support for Mini Plant Oxford (proposed by Cllr Linda Smith seconded by Cllr Ottino) [Amended by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Mundy] [Amendment proposed by Cllr Smowton, seconded by Cllr Gant]
- d) Condemnation of Attempted Election Postponement (proposed by Cllr Smowton, seconded by Cllr Miles)

e) Stop the War in Iran (proposed by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Djafari-Marbini)
[Amendment proposed by Cllr Ottino, seconded by Cllr Turner)

a) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (proposed by Cllr Jupp, seconded by Cllr Miles) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Muddiman, seconded by Cllr Rawle]

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;
 - 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.

Green Group Amendment

Council notes:

- The cost of the Oxpens bridge has substantially increased since its original approval, and is Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldate's Oxford OX1 1BX 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.
- £8.8 million of the funding for the proposed Oxpens Bridge came from the Government Growth Deal via Oxfordshire County Council and £1.5 million of the funding came from Homes England.
- These 2 funds should be spent on unlocking affordable homes, which this bridge does not do.

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 all external funders to say that the bridge is not viable and to ask how the remaining funds could be reallocated.
- 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:
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If the amendment was approved, the motion would read:

Council notes:

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b) Prisoners for Palestine hunger strikes (proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Mundy) [Amendment Proposed by Cllr Ottino, Seconded by Cllr Qayyum

Council notes

1. Since September 2024 eight remand prisoners detained as a result of alleged activities with Palestine Action have participated in hunger strikes, including at least one individual from Oxford.¹
2. The prisoners are expected to be on remand for over a year before they face a trial², despite the CPS guidance suggesting the maximum time anyone should be held on remand is 182 days.³
3. Among the demands of the hunger strikers are:⁴
 - a. Immediate bail for the prisoners held on remand.
 - b. While they are imprisoned, for the prisoners to be able to send and receive communications without restriction, surveillance, or interference from the prison administration.
 - c. The right to a fair trial.
 - d. For Palestine Action to be de-proscribed.
4. All of those participating in the hunger strikes were detained for alleged activities with Palestine Action prior to parliament adding it to the list of proscribed organisations.
5. While some of the hunger strikers have ended their action, at the time of writing, four are still refusing food and are facing serious risk of long term health issues or death.⁵
6. 67 MPs - including Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran - have signed an Early Day Motion calling for the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure the treatment of the hunger strikers is “humane” and that their human rights are upheld.⁶

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/dec/16/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-may-die-without-lammy-intervention-lawyers-say>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/07/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-government>

³ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/prosecution-guidance/custody-time-limits>

⁴ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/demands/>

⁵ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/>

⁶ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/64800/palestine-action-hunger-strike>

7. A number of other councils, including Belfast⁷ and Derry⁸, have passed motions expressing solidarity with the hunger strikers and for the government to enter proper negotiations with the prisoners to bring an end to the strikes.

Council believes

1. It is extremely concerning that these prisoners have felt that they had no other recourse to protest against their prison conditions but to engage in hunger strikes.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the council:
 - a. Write to the Secretary of State for Justice and other relevant government ministers, requesting that they
 - I. Meet with the families and representatives of those on hunger strike.
 - II. Enter negotiations to bring the hunger strikes to an end and to prevent any loss of life or long term health complications.
 - III. Do everything they can to ensure that the prisoners on remand have their human rights respected and that they are treated humanely.
2. Write to local MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting that they work to ensure that government ministers carry out the requests in resolves 1.

Councillor Jarvis has submitted a self-amendment to the motion:

Council notes

1. Since September 2024 eight remand prisoners detained as a result of alleged activities with Palestine Action have participated in hunger strikes, including at least one individual from Oxford.⁹
2. The prisoners are expected to be on remand for over a year before they face a trial¹⁰, despite the CPS guidance suggesting the maximum time anyone should be held on remand is 182 days.¹¹

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<https://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=189&MId=2378&Ver=4>

⁸ <https://belfastmedia.com/belfast-city-council-backs-motion-supporting-palestine-action-hunger-strikers-in-england>

⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/dec/16/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-may-die-without-lammy-intervention-lawyers-say>

¹⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/07/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-government>

¹¹ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/prosecution-guidance/custody-time-limits>

3. In January 2026, the last hunger strike terminated their protest, bringing the hunger strikes to an end¹²
4. Among the demands of the hunger strikers are **were**:¹³
 - a) Immediate bail for the prisoners held on remand.
 - b) While they are imprisoned, for the prisoners to be able to send and receive communications without restriction, surveillance, or interference from the prison administration.
 - c) The right to a fair trial.
 - d) For Palestine Action to be de-proscribed.
5. All of those participating in the hunger strikes were detained for alleged activities with Palestine Action prior to parliament adding it to the list of proscribed organisations.
6. ~~While some of the hunger strikers have ended their action, at the time of publication of this motion, four are still refusing food and are facing serious risk of long term health issues or death.~~¹⁴
7. ~~67~~ 71 MPs - including Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran - have signed an Early Day Motion calling for the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure the treatment of the hunger strikers is “humane” and that their human rights are upheld.¹⁵
8. A number of other councils, including Belfast¹⁶ and Derry¹⁷, have passed motions expressing solidarity with the hunger strikers and for the government to enter proper negotiations with the prisoners to bring an end to the strikes.
9. **Since the hunger strikes ended, the proscription Palestine Action was ruled unlawful by the High Court.**

Council believes

1. It is extremely concerning that these prisoners have felt that they had no other recourse to protest against their prison conditions but to engage in hunger strikes.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the council:
 - a) Write to the Secretary of State for Justice and other relevant government ministers, requesting that they, **or officials representing them**
 - i. **Where written consent has been given by the prisoner**, meet with the families and representatives of those **who have been** on hunger strike **to discuss the conditions they have faced.**

¹² <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/strike-ends/>

¹³ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/demands/>

¹⁴ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/>

¹⁵ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/64800/palestine-action-hunger-strike>

¹⁶ <https://belfastmedia.com/belfast-city-council-backs-motion-supporting-palestine-action-hunger-strikers-in-england>

¹⁷

<https://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=189&MId=2378&Ver=4>

- ii. ~~Enter negotiations to bring the hunger strikes to an end and to prevent any loss of life or long term health complications.~~
 - iii. Do everything they can to ensure that ~~the prisoners on remand~~ **prisoners, whether they are on remand or serving custodial sentences**, have their human rights respected and that they are treated humanely.
 - iv. **Review, far more regularly and systematically whether any proscribed organisation still needs to be proscribed.**
 - v. **In light of the High Court ruling on Palestine Action, move to de-proscribe the group and cease attempts to overturn the ruling.**
 - vi. **Because it conflicts with an individual's right to free speech, review whether simply saying you support a proscribed organisation should be an arrestable offence.**
- b) Write to local MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting that they work to ensure that government ministers carry out the requests in resolves 1.

The motion now reads:

Council notes

1. Since September 2024 eight remand prisoners detained as a result of alleged activities with Palestine Action have participated in hunger strikes, including at least one individual from Oxford.¹⁸
2. The prisoners are expected to be on remand for over a year before they face a trial¹⁹, despite the CPS guidance suggesting the maximum time anyone should be held on remand is 182 days.²⁰
3. In January 2026, the last hunger strike terminated their protest, bringing the hunger strikes to an end²¹
4. Among the demands of the hunger strikers were:²²
 - a) Immediate bail for the prisoners held on remand.
 - b) While they are imprisoned, for the prisoners to be able to send and receive communications without restriction, surveillance, or interference from the prison administration.
 - c) The right to a fair trial.
 - d) For Palestine Action to be de-proscribed.
5. All of those participating in the hunger strikes were detained for alleged activities with Palestine Action prior to parliament adding it to the list of proscribed organisations.

¹⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/dec/16/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-may-die-without-lammy-intervention-lawyers-say>

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/07/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-government>

²⁰ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/prosecution-guidance/custody-time-limits>

²¹ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/strike-ends/>

²² <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/demands/>

6. 71 MPs - including Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran - ~~have~~ signed an Early Day Motion calling for the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure the treatment of the hunger strikers is “humane” and that their human rights are upheld.²³
7. A number of other councils, including Belfast²⁴ and Derry²⁵, passed motions expressing solidarity with the hunger strikers and for the government to enter proper negotiations with the prisoners to bring an end to the strikes.

Council believes

1. It is extremely concerning that these prisoners ~~have~~ felt that they had no other recourse to protest against their prison conditions but to engage in hunger strikes.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the council:
 - a) Write to the Secretary of State for Justice and other relevant government ministers, requesting that they, or officials representing them
 - i. Where written consent has been given by the prisoner, meet with the families and representatives of those who have been on hunger strike to discuss the conditions they have faced.
 - ii. Do everything they can to ensure that prisoners, whether they are on remand or serving custodial sentences, have their human rights respected and that they are treated humanely.
 - iii. Review, far more regularly and systematically whether any proscribed organisation still needs to be proscribed.
 - iv. In light of the High Court ruling on Palestine Action, move to de-proscribe the group and cease attempts to overturn the ruling.
 - v. Because it conflicts with an individual's right to free speech, review whether simply saying you support a proscribed organisation should be an arrestable offence.
 - b) Write to local MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting that they work to ensure that government ministers carry out the requests in resolves 1.

Labour Group Amendment to the Originally Proposed Motion

Council notes

1. Since September 2024 eight remand prisoners detained as a result of alleged activities with Palestine Action have participated in hunger strikes, including at least one individual from Oxford.²⁶

²³ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/64800/palestine-action-hunger-strike>

²⁴ <https://belfastmedia.com/belfast-city-council-backs-motion-supporting-palestine-action-hunger-strikers-in-england>

²⁵

<https://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=189&MId=2378&Ver=4>

²⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/dec/16/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-may-die-without-lammy-intervention-lawyers-say>

2. The prisoners are expected to be on remand for over a year before they face a trial²⁷, despite the CPS guidance suggesting the maximum time anyone should be held on remand is 182 days.²⁸
3. Among the demands of the hunger strikers were:²⁹
 - a) Immediate bail for the prisoners held on remand.
 - b) While they are imprisoned, for the prisoners to be able to send and receive communications without restriction, surveillance, or interference from the prison administration.
 - c) The right to a fair trial.
 - d) For Palestine Action to be de-proscribed.
4. All of those participating in the hunger strikes were detained for alleged activities with Palestine Action prior to parliament adding it to the list of proscribed organisations.
5. 67 MPs - including Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran - have signed an Early Day Motion calling for the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure the treatment of the hunger strikers is “humane” and that their human rights are upheld.³⁰
6. A number of other councils, including Belfast³¹ and Derry³², passed motions expressing solidarity with the hunger strikers and for the government to enter proper negotiations with the prisoners to bring an end to the strikes.
7. Since the hunger strikes ended, the proscription Palestine Action was ruled unlawful by the High Court.

Council believes

1. It is extremely concerning that these prisoners have felt that they had no other recourse to protest against their prison conditions but to engage in hunger strikes.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the council:
 - a) Write to the Secretary of State for Justice and other relevant government ministers, requesting that they, or **officials representing them:**
 - i. **Where written consent has been given by the prisoner**, meet with the families and representatives of those who have been on hunger strike to discuss the conditions they have faced.
 - ii. **Enter negotiations Where any form of protest within the prison and justice system occurs, reflect on that protest and engage with all**

²⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/07/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-government>

²⁸ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/prosecution-guidance/custody-time-limits>

²⁹ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/demands/>

³⁰ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/64800/palestine-action-hunger-strike>

³¹ <https://belfastmedia.com/belfast-city-council-backs-motion-supporting-palestine-action-hunger-strikers-in-england>

³²

<https://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=189&MId=2378&Ver=4>

- stakeholders to ensure that any issues including those relating to prisoner safety, health, care and the effectiveness and efficiency of the justice system are reviewed; in particular with these cases, with the aim of bringing any to bring hunger strikes to an end and thus preventing potential to prevent any loss of life or long-term health complications
- iii. Do everything they can to ensure that the prisoners, **whether they are on remand or serving custodial sentences**, have their human rights respected and that they are treated humanely.
 - iv. **Review, far more regularly and systematically whether any proscribed organisation still needs to be proscribed, and in the light of the number and make-up of the people being arrested in relation to Palestine Action, review the proscription of that particular organisation urgently.**
 - v. **Because it conflicts with an individual's right to free speech, review whether simply saying you support a proscribed organisation should be an arrestable offence.**
- b) Write to local MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting that they work to ensure that government ministers carry out the requests in resolves 1.

If approved, the motion would read:

Council notes

1. Since September 2024 eight remand prisoners detained as a result of alleged activities with Palestine Action have participated in hunger strikes, including at least one individual from Oxford.³³
2. The prisoners are expected to be on remand for over a year before they face a trial³⁴, despite the CPS guidance suggesting the maximum time anyone should be held on remand is 182 days.³⁵
3. Among the demands of the hunger strikers were:³⁶
 - a) Immediate bail for the prisoners held on remand.
 - b) While they are imprisoned, for the prisoners to be able to send and receive communications without restriction, surveillance, or interference from the prison administration.
 - c) The right to a fair trial.
 - d) For Palestine Action to be de-proscribed.
4. All of those participating in the hunger strikes were detained for alleged activities with Palestine Action prior to parliament adding it to the list of proscribed organisations.

³³ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/dec/16/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-may-die-without-lammy-intervention-lawyers-say>

³⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/07/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-government>

³⁵ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/prosecution-guidance/custody-time-limits>

³⁶ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/demands/>

5. 67 MPs - including Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran - ~~have~~ signed an Early Day Motion calling for the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure the treatment of the hunger strikers is “humane” and that their human rights are upheld.³⁷
6. A number of other councils, including Belfast³⁸ and Derry³⁹, passed motions expressing solidarity with the hunger strikers and for the government to enter proper negotiations with the prisoners to bring an end to the strikes.
7. Since the hunger strikes ended, the proscription Palestine Action was ruled unlawful by the High Court.

Council believes

1. It is extremely concerning that these prisoners ~~have~~ felt that they had no other recourse to protest against their prison conditions but to engage in hunger strikes.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the council:
 - a) Write to the Secretary of State for Justice and other relevant government ministers, requesting that they, or officials representing them:
 - i. Where written consent has been given by the prisoner, meet with the families and representatives of those who have been on hunger strike to discuss the conditions they have faced.
 - ii. Where any form of protest within the prison and justice system occurs, reflect on that protest and engage with all stakeholders to ensure that any issues including those relating to prisoner safety, health, care and the effectiveness and efficiency of the justice system are reviewed; in particular with these cases, with the aim of bringing any hunger strikes to an end and thus preventing potential to of life or long-term health complications
 - iii. Do everything they can to ensure that ~~the~~ prisoners, whether they are on remand or serving custodial sentences, have their human rights respected and that they are treated humanely.
 - iv. Review, far more regularly and systematically whether any proscribed organisation still needs to be proscribed, and in the light of the number and make-up of the people being arrested in relation to Palestine Action, review the proscription of that particular organisation urgently.
 - v. Because it conflicts with an individual's right to free speech, review whether simply saying you support a proscribed organisation should be an arrestable offence.
 - b) Write to local MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting that they work to ensure that government ministers carry out the requests in resolves 1.

³⁷ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/64800/palestine-action-hunger-strike>

³⁸ <https://belfastmedia.com/belfast-city-council-backs-motion-supporting-palestine-action-hunger-strikers-in-england>

³⁹

<https://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=189&MId=2378&Ver=4>

If the Amendment was approved, the motion would read:

Council notes

1. Since September 2024 eight remand prisoners detained as a result of alleged activities with Palestine Action have participated in hunger strikes, including at least one individual from Oxford.⁴⁰
2. The prisoners are expected to be on remand for over a year before they face a trial⁴¹, despite the CPS guidance suggesting the maximum time anyone should be held on remand is 182 days.⁴²
3. In January 2026, the last hunger strike terminated their protest, bringing the hunger strikes to an end⁴³
4. Among the demands of the hunger strikers were:⁴⁴
 - a) Immediate bail for the prisoners held on remand.
 - b) While they are imprisoned, for the prisoners to be able to send and receive communications without restriction, surveillance, or interference from the prison administration.
 - c) The right to a fair trial.
 - d) For Palestine Action to be de-proscribed.
5. All of those participating in the hunger strikes were detained for alleged activities with Palestine Action prior to parliament adding it to the list of proscribed organisations.
6. 71 MPs - including Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran - have signed an Early Day Motion calling for the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure the treatment of the hunger strikers is “humane” and that their human rights are upheld.⁴⁵
7. A number of other councils, including Belfast⁴⁶ and Derry⁴⁷, passed motions expressing solidarity with the hunger strikers and for the government to enter proper negotiations with the prisoners to bring an end to the strikes.

Council believes

⁴⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/dec/16/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-may-die-without-lammy-intervention-lawyers-say>

⁴¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/07/palestine-action-hunger-strikers-government>

⁴² <https://www.cps.gov.uk/prosecution-guidance/custody-time-limits>

⁴³ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/strike-ends/>

⁴⁴ <https://prisonersforpalestine.org/demands/>

⁴⁵ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/64800/palestine-action-hunger-strike>

⁴⁶ <https://belfastmedia.com/belfast-city-council-backs-motion-supporting-palestine-action-hunger-strikers-in-england>

⁴⁷

<https://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=189&MId=2378&Ver=4>

1. It is extremely concerning that these prisoners have felt that they had no other recourse to protest against their prison conditions but to engage in hunger strikes.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the council:
 - a) Write to the Secretary of State for Justice and other relevant government ministers, requesting that they, or officials representing them
 - i. Where written consent has been given by the prisoner, meet with the families and representatives of those who have been on hunger strike to discuss the conditions they have faced.
 - ii. Where any form of protest within the prison and justice system occurs, reflect on that protest and engage with all stakeholders to ensure that any issues including those relating to prisoner safety, health, care and the effectiveness and efficiency of the justice system are reviewed; in particular with these cases, with the aim of bringing any hunger strikes to an end and thus preventing potential loss of life or long-term health complications
 - iii. Do everything they can to ensure that prisoners, whether they are on remand or serving custodial sentences, have their human rights respected and that they are treated humanely.
 - iv. Review, far more regularly and systematically whether any proscribed organisation still needs to be proscribed, and in the light of the number and make-up of the people being arrested in relation to Palestine Action, review the proscription of that particular organisation urgently
 - v. In light of the High Court ruling on Palestine Action, move to de-proscribe the group and cease attempts to overturn the ruling.
 - vi. Because it conflicts with an individual's right to free speech, review whether simply saying you support a proscribed organisation should be an arrestable offence.
 - b) Write to local MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting that they work to ensure that government ministers carry out the requests in resolves 1.

c) Support for Mini Plant Oxford (proposed by Cllr Linda Smith seconded by Cllr Ottino) [Amended by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Mundy] [Amendment proposed by Cllr Smowton, seconded by Cllr Gant]

The UK automotive sector is in the midst of a low-volume crisis, and while different car plants are affected in different ways, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Mini Plant Oxford has been (and continues to be) one of the worst hit.

As one of the biggest employers in Oxford, a significant number of agency workers' jobs have been lost as the plant adjusts to the government reinstating the 2030 ban date on new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) models, the only models the plant currently builds.

In addition, and due to there being no Electric models being manufactured at Plant Oxford, the increased Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) target for 2026 will potentially create a situation whereby ICE production will be need to be artificially lowered to ensure BMW can hit the 33% via imports, or it will be subject to either a £12,000 fine per car or pushed into buying credits from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) such as Tesla.

Economic growth is the number one mission of the government. Growth will fund our public services, enable investment in our hospitals and schools, and, most importantly, raise living standards for everyone. So it is vital different government departments work in harmony to support UK jobs and industry. It's especially important that the Department of Transport understands the impact of policies like the ZEV mandate on jobs here in Oxford.

This council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander to ask her to:

1. Meet with Unite the Union and its representatives at the factory to hear their concerns and to support their work to make Oxford the future home of affordable EV production.
2. Engage to as full an extent as possible with BMW on the UK's transition to electric vehicles and policies which affect demand for new vehicles and investment and jobs in the UK automotive sector.

Green Group Amendment

~~The UK automotive sector is in the midst of a low-volume crisis, and while different car plants are affected in different ways, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Mini Plant Oxford has been (and continues to be) one of the worst hit.~~

Challenges for the automotive manufacturing sector have impacted countries including France, Italy and the UK, resulting in falling car production figures. This is driven by a number of factors, including competition from cheaper imports.

As one of the biggest employers in Oxford, a significant number of agency workers' jobs have been lost ~~as the plant~~ **at the Mini Plant Oxford.**

The plan needs to adjust to the ~~adjusts to the~~ government reinstating the 2030 ban date on new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) models, the only models the plant currently builds.

~~In addition, and~~ Also, due to there being no Electric models being manufactured at Plant ~~the~~ Oxford ~~plant~~, the ~~increased~~ Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) target for 2026 will potentially create a situation whereby ICE production will ~~be~~ need to be artificially lowered to ensure BMW can hit the 33% ~~targets~~ via imports, ~~or~~ This is to prevent it will ~~being~~ be subject to either a £12,000 fine per car or pushed into buying credits from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) such as Tesla.

~~Economic growth is the number one mission of the government. Growth will fund our public services, enable investment in our hospitals and schools, and, most importantly, raise living standards for everyone.~~

Growing the economy increases tax revenue, and is one way of funding improvements to public services.

~~So it~~ It is vital different government departments work in harmony to support UK jobs and industry. It's especially important that the Department of ~~for~~ Transport ~~and the~~ Department for Business and Trade understands ~~what support car plants including our Mini Plant need in order to adapt to the ZEV targets and be ready for the end of new ICE vehicle production.~~ the impact of policies like the ZEV mandate on jobs here in Oxford.

This council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander to ask her to:

1. Meet with Unite the Union and its representatives at the factory to hear their concerns and to support their work to make Oxford the future home of affordable EV production.
2. Engage to as full an extent as possible with BMW on the UK's transition to electric vehicles and policies which affect demand for new vehicles and investment and jobs in the UK automotive sector.

If approved, the motion would read:

Challenges for the automotive manufacturing sector have impacted countries including France, Italy and the UK, resulting in falling car production figures. This is driven by a number of factors, including competition from cheaper imports.

As one of the biggest employers in Oxford, a significant number of agency workers' jobs have been lost at the Mini Plant Oxford.

The plant needs to adjust to the government reinstating the 2030 ban date on new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) models, the only models the plant currently builds. Also, due to there being no Electric models being manufactured at the Oxford plant, the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) target for 2026 will potentially create a situation whereby ICE production will need to be artificially lowered to ensure BMW can hit the 33% target via imports. This is to prevent it being subject to either a £12,000 fine per car or pushed into buying credits from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) such as Tesla.

Economic growth is the number one mission of the government.

Growing the economy increases tax revenue, and is one way of funding improvements to public services.

It is vital different government departments work in harmony to support UK jobs and industry. It's especially important that the Department for Transport and the Department for Business and Trade understand what support car plants including our Mini Plant

need in order to adapt to the ZEV targets and be ready for the end of new ICE vehicle production.

This council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander to ask her to:

1. Meet with Unite the Union and its representatives at the factory to hear their concerns and to support their work to make Oxford the future home of affordable EV production.
2. Engage to as full an extent as possible with BMW on the UK's transition to electric vehicles and policies which affect demand for new vehicles and investment and jobs in the UK automotive sector.

Liberal Democrat Group Amendment

The UK automotive sector is in the midst of a low-volume crisis, and while different car plants are affected in different ways, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Mini Plant Oxford has been (and continues to be) one of the worst hit.

As one of the biggest employers in Oxford, a significant number of agency workers' jobs have been lost as the plant adjusts to the government reinstating the 2030 ban date on new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) models, the only models the plant currently builds.

In addition, and due to there being no Electric models being manufactured at Plant Oxford, the increased Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) target for 2026 will potentially create a situation whereby ICE production will be need to be artificially lowered to ensure BMW can hit the 33% via imports, or it will be subject to either a £12,000 fine per car or pushed into buying credits from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) such as Tesla.

Economic growth is the number one mission of the government. Growth will fund our public services, enable investment in our hospitals and schools, and, most importantly, raise living standards for everyone. So it is vital different government departments work in harmony to support UK jobs and industry. It's especially important that the Department of Transport understands the impact of policies like the ZEV mandate on jobs here in Oxford.

This council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander to ask her to:

1. Meet with Unite the Union and its representatives at the factory to hear their concerns and to support their work to make Oxford the future home of affordable EV production.
2. Engage to as full an extent as possible with BMW on the UK's transition to electric vehicles and policies which affect demand for new vehicles and investment and jobs in the UK automotive sector.
3. **Seek support for full economic re-integration with the EU, including pursuit of a customs union and European single market membership, in order to minimise friction to trade and employment.**

If approved, the motion would read:

The UK automotive sector is in the midst of a low-volume crisis, and while different car plants are affected in different ways, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Mini Plant Oxford has been (and continues to be) one of the worst hit.

As one of the biggest employers in Oxford, a significant number of agency workers' jobs have been lost as the plant adjusts to the government reinstating the 2030 ban date on new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) models, the only models the plant currently builds.

In addition, and due to there being no Electric models being manufactured at Plant Oxford, the increased Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) target for 2026 will potentially create a situation whereby ICE production will need to be artificially lowered to ensure BMW can hit the 33% via imports, or it will be subject to either a £12,000 fine per car or pushed into buying credits from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) such as Tesla.

Economic growth is the number one mission of the government. Growth will fund our public services, enable investment in our hospitals and schools, and, most importantly, raise living standards for everyone. So it is vital different government departments work in harmony to support UK jobs and industry. It's especially important that the Department of Transport understands the impact of policies like the ZEV mandate on jobs here in Oxford.

This council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander to ask her to:

1. Meet with Unite the Union and its representatives at the factory to hear their concerns and to support their work to make Oxford the future home of affordable EV production.
2. Engage to as full an extent as possible with BMW on the UK's transition to electric vehicles and policies which affect demand for new vehicles and investment and jobs in the UK automotive sector.
3. Seek support for full economic re-integration with the EU, including pursuit of a customs union and European single market membership, in order to minimise friction to trade and employment.

If both amendments were accepted, the motion would read:

Challenges for the automotive manufacturing sector have impacted countries including France, Italy and the UK, resulting in falling car production figures. This is driven by a number of factors, including competition from cheaper imports.

As one of the biggest employers in Oxford, a significant number of agency workers' jobs have been lost at the Mini Plant Oxford.

The plant needs to adjust to the government reinstating the 2030 ban date on new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) models, the only models the plant currently builds. Also, due to there being no Electric models being manufactured at the Oxford plant, the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) target for 2026 will potentially create a situation whereby ICE production will need to be artificially lowered to ensure BMW can hit the 33% target via imports. This is to prevent it being subject to either a £12,000 fine per car or pushed into buying credits from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) such as Tesla.

Economic growth is the number one mission of the government.

Growing the economy increases tax revenue, and is one way of funding improvements to public services.

It is vital different government departments work in harmony to support UK jobs and industry. It's especially important that the Department for Transport and the Department for Business and Trade understand what support car plants including our Mini Plant need in order to adapt to the ZEV targets and be ready for the end of new ICE vehicle production.

This council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander to ask her to:

1. Meet with Unite the Union and its representatives at the factory to hear their concerns and to support their work to make Oxford the future home of affordable EV production.
2. Engage to as full an extent as possible with BMW on the UK's transition to electric vehicles and policies which affect demand for new vehicles and investment and jobs in the UK automotive sector.
3. Seek support for full economic re-integration with the EU, including pursuit of a customs union and European single market membership, in order to minimise friction to trade and employment.

d) Condemnation of Attempted Election Postponement (proposed by Cllr Smowton, seconded by Cllr Miles)

This council notes that:

- On 18th December 2025, the Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness wrote¹ to council leaders requesting views on the potential postponement of their local election in May 2026.
- The Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission wrote² that they were “disappointed by both the timing and substance of [that] statement”, that it created “unprecedented” uncertainty, that “we do not think that capacity constraints are a legitimate reason for delaying long planned elections” and that “there is a clear conflict of interest in asking existing Councils to decide how long it will be before they are answerable to voters”.
- On 22nd January 2026, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced³ the postponement of 29 areas’ elections.
- The Secretary’s letter identifies “postponement was not sought”⁴ as a reason why an area’s elections would go ahead, implying that all authorities receiving a postponement had expressly sought one.
- There was a clear difference in political control between those councils whose elections would be postponed and those that would go ahead as scheduled, with the Local Government Chronicle reporting⁵ that 16 out of 19 Labour-controlled, 4 out of 9 Conservative-controlled, 1 out of 8 Lib Dem controlled and 8 out of 27 NOC councils were set for postponement.
- On 16th February 2026, the Secretary of State withdrew⁶ his decision to postpone elections citing “recent legal advice”.

This council believes that:

- As a matter of principle, elections should only be postponed in extraordinary circumstances.
- Any future foreseeable election postponement, whether due to local government reorganisation or any other cause, should be signposted as far as possible in advance, not floated for the first time immediately before the Christmas break and long after the proposed LGR timeline was announced.
- There is indeed a fundamental conflict of interest in inviting councils to substantially control whether their own election goes ahead, and so any future postponement should be determined by clearly set objective parameters, not whether councils choose to seek or not seek delay.
- The legal reasoning for the late withdrawal of the planned postponements should be published so as to reduce uncertainty about any further delays.

This council requests that:

- The Leader of the Council write to the Secretary of State expressing this Council’s condemnation of the timing and criteria for their proposed election postponements, attaching a copy of this motion.
- The Leader further request the publication of the legal advice that led to the late reversal of the Secretary’s decision.

e) Stop the War in Iran (proposed by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Djafari-Marbini) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Ottino, seconded by Cllr Turner]

Council notes

1. On February 28th 2026, the United States of America and Israel launched joint airstrikes on Iran.¹
2. That in response to these actions, Iran responded by utilising missiles and drone strikes against US military bases in the Persian Gulf including amongst others, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar.²
3. That there has not been any resolution of the UN security council or other lawful basis for these actions.
4. That the conflict has already resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians including hundreds of children at Minab school.³
5. That at this time of global uncertainty and trauma, caused by the actions of the US and Israel, the UK government is once again reneging on its international obligations by reducing the rights of people seeking asylum and introducing Trumpian “visa breaks”.⁴
6. That these attacks were launched while negotiations between the US and Iran had been heralded as yielding ‘significant progress’ just two days before the attack.⁵
7. That Iranian residents of Oxford City have raised their significant concern and anxiety for their family and Friends, many of whom they have been unable to make contact with.⁶
8. That Oxford is home to a diverse range of residents, many of whom are facing extreme anxiety regarding family and friends still located in Iran, as well as other neighbouring countries.
9. That both Oxford Universities have committed the University of Sanctuary scheme but their ability to offer spaces to talented international students has been undermined by policies such as the visa break.⁷

Council believes

1. That the aggression shown by the US and Israel do nothing to make the world safer and have already resulted in an unacceptable loss of life.
2. That as an accredited City of Sanctuary, Oxford has a moral and ethical obligation to speak against moves by the UK government to reduce the rights of people to seek sanctuary, particularly at this moment of global uncertainty.
3. That reducing the grant of leave to remain given to refugees to 30 months is cruel and, at this moment of global uncertainty, represents the UK turning its back on the international community.
4. That the introduction of “visa breaks” targeted at nationals of Afghanistan, Cameroon, Myanmar and Sudan as a result of a “surge in asylum claims from legal routes” is incompatible with the UK’s purported humanitarian commitments and undermines social cohesion in the UK.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the Council:

- a. Write to the Secretary of State for Defence and the Prime Minister, requesting that they:
 - I. Clearly condemn the unlawful aggression of the United States of America and Israel
 - II. Operationalise safe and managed routes for people to enter the UK in search of Sanctuary from the conflict.
 - b. Write to the Secretary of State for the Home department requesting that they:
 - i. Reverse the decision to reduce the period of refugee settlement to 30 months.
 - ii. Reverse the “Visa-break” policy
-

Labour Group Amendment

Council notes

2. On February 28th 2026, the United States of America and Israel launched joint airstrikes on Iran.¹
3. That in response to these actions, Iran responded by utilising missiles and drone strikes against US military bases in the Persian Gulf including amongst others, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar.²
4. That there has not been any resolution of the UN security council or other lawful basis for these actions.
5. That the conflict has already resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians including hundreds of children at Minab school.³
6. That at this time of global uncertainty and trauma, caused by the actions of the US and Israel, the UK government is once again renegeing on its international obligations by reducing the rights of people seeking asylum and introducing Trumpian “visa breaks”.⁴
7. That the these attacks were launched while negotiations between the US and Iran had been heralded as yielding ‘significant progress’ just two days before the attack.⁵
8. That Iranian residents of Oxford City have raised their significant concern and anxiety for their family and Friends, many of whom they have been unable to make contact with.⁶
9. That Oxford is home to a diverse range of residents, many of whom are facing extreme anxiety regarding family and friends still located in Iran, as well as other neighbouring countries.
10. That both Oxford Universities have committed the University of Sanctuary scheme but their ability to offer spaces to talented international students has been undermined by policies such as the visa break.⁷

Council believes

1. That the aggression shown by the US and Israel do nothing to make the world safer and have already resulted in an unacceptable loss of life.
2. That as an accredited City of Sanctuary, Oxford has a moral and ethical obligation to speak against moves by the UK government to reduce the rights of people to seek sanctuary, particularly at this moment of global uncertainty.
3. That reducing the grant of leave to remain given to refugees to 30 months is cruel and, at this moment of global uncertainty, represents the UK turning its back on the international community.
4. That the introduction of “visa breaks” targeted at nationals of Afghanistan, Cameroon, Myanmar and Sudan as a result of a “surge in asylum claims from legal routes” is incompatible with the UK’s purported humanitarian commitments and undermines social cohesion in the UK.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the Council:
 - a. Write to the Secretary of State for Defence and the Prime Minister, **expressing our strong endorsement for their decision not to join the US / Israeli strikes, offering our solidarity to the Prime Minister in the face of the unwarranted verbal onslaught from President Trump, and requesting that they:**
 - I. Clearly condemn the unlawful aggression of the United States of America and Israel **and the violent response from Iran directed at other nations in the region with no direct involvement**
 - II. Operationalise safe and managed routes for people to enter the UK in search of Sanctuary from the conflict.
 - III. **Reiterate the view that the resolution to all international disputes should be resolved by peaceful methods**
 - b. Write to the Secretary of State for the Home department requesting that they:
 - i. Reverse the decision to reduce the period of refugee settlement to 30 months.
 - ii. Reverse the “Visa-break” policy

If approved, the motion would read:

Council notes

1. On February 28th 2026, the United States of America and Israel launched joint airstrikes on Iran.¹
2. That in response to these actions, Iran responded by utilising missiles and drone strikes against US military bases in the Persian Gulf including amongst others, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar.²
3. That there has not been any resolution of the UN security council or other lawful basis for these actions.

4. That the conflict has already resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians including hundreds of children at Minab school.³
5. That at this time of global uncertainty and trauma, caused by the actions of the US and Israel, the UK government is once again reneging on its international obligations by reducing the rights of people seeking asylum and introducing Trumpian “visa breaks”.⁴
6. That these attacks were launched while negotiations between the US and Iran had been heralded as yielding ‘significant progress’ just two days before the attack.⁵
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Council believes

1. That the aggression shown by the US and Israel do nothing to make the world safer and have already resulted in an unacceptable loss of life.
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3. That reducing the grant of leave to remain given to refugees to 30 months is cruel and, at this moment of global uncertainty, represents the UK turning its back on the international community.
4. That the introduction of “visa breaks” targeted at nationals of Afghanistan, Cameroon, Myanmar and Sudan as a result of a “surge in asylum claims from legal routes” is incompatible with the UK’s purported humanitarian commitments and undermines social cohesion in the UK.

Council resolves

1. To request that the leader of the Council:
 - a. Write to the Secretary of State for Defence and the Prime Minister, expressing our strong endorsement for their decision not to join the US / Israeli strikes, offering our solidarity to the Prime Minister in the face of the unwarranted verbal onslaught from President Trump, and requesting that they:
 - I. Clearly condemn the unlawful aggression of the United States of America and Israel and the violent response from Iran directed at other nations in the region with no direct involvement
 - II. Operationalise safe and managed routes for people to enter the UK in search of Sanctuary from the conflict.

- III. Reiterate the view that the resolution to all international disputes should be resolved by peaceful methods
- b. Write to the Secretary of State for the Home department requesting that they:
 - i. Reverse the decision to reduce the period of refugee settlement to 30 months.
 - ii. Reverse the “Visa-break” policy

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