Supplement for

Council

On **Monday 13 July 2026** At **5.00 pm**

Supplement: Questions on Cabinet Minutes

Contents

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

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Council**
Date:	**13 July 2026**
Report of:	**Director of Law, Governance and Strategy**
Title of Report:	**Questions on Cabinet Minutes**

Introduction

1. Council is invited to ask the Cabinet Member questions about the matters in the minutes from the meetings of Cabinet since the previous meeting of Council. The minutes are listed as appendices to this covering report.
2. As per part 11.11 (c) of the Council's Constitution, up to 15 minutes is reserved for this item.

Appendix 1 – Minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 15 April 2026

Appendix 2 – Minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 17 June 2026

Appendix 3 – Draft minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 8 July 2026

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Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 15 April 2026

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Committee members present:

Councillor Brown

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Munkonge

Councillor Linda Smith

Councillor Turner

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Railton

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Alistair Rush, Group Director Finance

Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive - Citizen and City Services

Tom Bridgman, Deputy Chief Executive – Place

Emma Jackman, Director of Law, Governance, and Strategy

Nerys Parry, Director of Housing

Jane Winfield, Director of Property and Assets

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager

Dr Brenda McCollum, Committee and Member Services

James Watkins, Housing Policy and Projects Officer

Emma Gubbins, Corporate Assets Lead

Bill Graves, the Landlord Services Lead

Michael Woods, Major Works Project Manager

Arome Agamah, Senior Planner

Also present:

Councillor Alex Powell, Chair of Scrutiny

Apologies:

Councillor Chapman sent apologies.

175. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Railton declared an interest in the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan item, due to her position as a Parish Councillor for this ward. She left the room during the discussion and voting on this item.

176. Minutes of the previous meeting

Cabinet resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2026 as a true and accurate record.

177. Addresses by members of the public

None received.

178. Councillor addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda

None.

179. Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None received.

180. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

181. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 07 April 2026 to consider the following items.

- Watercourses and Ditches
- Review of Ward Member Budget and Community Infrastructure Levy Councillor Applications
- Urgent Key Decisions End of Year Update 2025-2026

The Finance and Performance Working Group met on 26 March 2026 to consider the following items.

- Integrated Performance for Q3 2025/26

The Housing and Homelessness Working Group met on 31 March 2026 to consider the following items.

- Housing Performance 2025/26
- Selective Licensing Year 3 update

The Climate and Environment Working Group met on 01 April 2026 to consider the following items.

- Social Housing EPCC update
- Local Area Energy Planning update

Councillor Alex Powell, the Chair of Scrutiny, presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Watercourses and Ditches report.

- **Recommendation 1**: That there is greater urgency in drawing up local flood risk action plans for the identified areas, specifically but not limited to Lobelia Road and Campbell Road, as well as other high flood risk areas.
- **Recommendation 2**: That there is clear framework setting out:
    - the undertaking of routine clearances and ad hoc collection
    - relevant timelines and circumstances, including when litter can safely be removed from watercourses
    - a list of current equipment available to complete the clearance, together with any additional equipment that would be required to enable greater levels of removal.
- **Recommendation 3**: That Council work with ODS to start keeping records of the number of reactive repairs being undertaken to better inform any needs for maintenance plans.

Councillor Railton responded to the recommendations from Scrutiny. She said that there was confusion regarding flood action plans because of flood reports and funding coming from different organisations. She said that they did not have the remit in the Council to undertake a flood action plan and were thus not agreeing the first recommendation. She said that Cabinet agreed the second and third recommendation.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Review of Ward Member Budget and Community Infrastructure Levy Councillor Applications

report.

- That the annual pricing list of regular work also itemises the permissions required for each work in order to provide members with all, if not most, information needed to submit a complete application.

Councillor Brown responded to the recommendations from Scrutiny. She said that it would not be possible to do the work in the recommendation, but that the process they're undergoing will clarify some of the issues raised and will make it easier for members going forward.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Urgent Key Decisions End of Year Update 2025-2026 report. He noted that no recommendations arose from their consideration of the report.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Finance and Performance Working Group's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Integrated Performance for Q3 2025/26 report.

- **Recommendation 1**: That Cabinet, in the light of experience, reviews whether the current optimism bias remains appropriate, including whether a higher starting point (such as 50%) should be considered, with scope to reduce this (back to 45% or 40%) where delivery performance improves.
- **Recommendation 2**: That Cabinet considers whether recruitment and retention should be recognised and managed as a single corporate risk, rather than being reflected separately across individual service risk registers.
- **Recommendation 3**: That Cabinet reviews whether current and future budget assumptions for damp, mould and retrofit works are sufficient, in light of emerging experience, including whether higher baseline provision should be built into the MTFP.

Councillor Turner responded to the recommendations from the working group. He said that they accepted the first recommendation and that the second was covered in work already planned. He noted that there was an increase in the budget to address the third recommendation and that they would keep this under review.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Housing and Homelessness Working Group's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Housing Performance 2025/26 report.

- Officers to provide the Working Group with data relating to the number of homeless people being housed in hotel accommodation and the length of time those people have occupied hotel accommodation.

Councillor Linda Smith responded and said that the recommendation was accepted.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Housing and Homelessness Working Group's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Selective Licensing Year 3 update report. He noted that no recommendations arose from their consideration of the report.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Climate and Environment Working Group's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Social Housing EPCC update report.

- That Cabinet adopts a policy that makes air source heat pumps as the default heating system for all social housing properties going forward. In recognition that in emergency situations a gas boiler may still be required, installation of gas boilers should only be permitted in those circumstances.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Climate and Environment Working Group's discussions about and recommendations regarding the Local Area Energy Planning update report.

- That Cabinet assess whether action areas identified through LAEP that are not currently in the draft Local Plan 2045, could be incorporated, including a gap analyses to identify where the Local Plan does not yet reflect LAEP priorities, as well as a feasibility check on whether they can be integrated at this stage.

Councillor Railton responded to the recommendations from the working group. She said that they agreed with the principle of the first recommendation and that they did want the same end result. Regarding the LAEP, she said that this was more flexible than the Local Plan, and that the dependency should go the other way between the two.

Councillor Brown thanked Scrutiny Committee and the officers that support the committee for their work over the past year.

182. Disposal of Land

The Leader re-arranged the order of the agenda so that this item was taken as the first substantive report.

The Director of Property & Assets submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve the disposal of land outside the City.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He said that they were constantly reviewing how best to use the assets that the Council owns and that sometimes this required the disposal of an asset. He said that this decision would be beneficial for the Council and he commended the proposal.

Cabinet moved into private session, to consider the report's confidential appendix, for the remainder of the discussion of this item.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve the disposal of land at Grenoble Road;
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Property and Assets, in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and the Group Finance Director and Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management to agree the final terms and enter into the final agreement and any other documents necessary to effect the transaction provided that the disposal will meet the requirements of s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (which states that a council shall not dispose of land otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained).

Councillor Turner left the meeting after this item at 18:28.

183. Update on OCC Housing (HRA)Services

The Director of Housing submitted a report for Cabinet to note the progress made by Housing Services during 25-26 and note the key challenges going forward to 26-27.

Councillor Smith presented the report. She said that the report shows the work done over the past year and that it was really useful to see that and appreciate the work being done. She emphasised the achievements outlined in the report and thanked the housing team for their work over the past year.

Nerys Parry, the Director of Housing, emphasised the challenging environment that they had and would continue to operate in. She outlined the self-assessment that they had undertaken and the work being done to further strengthen their standards, including a new governance structure.

Councillor Arshad thanked the housing team for their admirable work in this area.

Councillor Hollingsworth asked about priority four and how this would impact voids. He asked how they were handling non-standard properties and turning them around.

The Director of Housing said that they were doing a significant piece of work on voids and would bring a new Voids policy to Cabinet in July. She said that this would cover how they manage standard and non-standard voids.

Councillor Brown noted that having a better stock condition survey would identify properties that need work before they are void and that there were a series of interlocking elements to consider in this area.

Bill Graves, the Landlord Services Lead, said that the proposals included flexibility to take into account these challenges. He said that there would be impacts on relay time but that this would be a worthwhile investment.

Councillor Hollingsworth said that it would be good to have a sense of how they convey having a longer void or larger void pool as a positive development.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Note the end of year report which highlights service improvements and services delivered by the Housing Service over the past 12 months (2025/26)
2. Note the challenges facing the Housing Service going forward and the priorities that it is seeking to deliver over the next 12 months (2026/27)
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Housing in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing and Communities to make any adjustments to service priorities and delivery

184. HRA Policies: Disposals, No Access, Mutual Exchange, and Aids and Adaptations

The Director of Housing submitted a report to request that Cabinet recommend that Council approve the following policies: aids and adaptations, disposals, mutual exchange, no access to ensure the maintenance and good management of the housing stock.

Councillor Smith presented the report. She said that the report represented four more HRA policies, part of the large suite of policies being reviewed and renewed to strengthen governance of the HRA. She said that having these policies reviewed and available to tenants helps tenants to hold the Council accountable.

James Watkins, the Housing Policy and Projects Officer, presented the policies. On the Aids and Adaptations Policy, he said that they had drawn information from the know your tenant program and that they had a growing population of tenants with mobility issues. He said that this would help to support those tenants. He noted the way that the policy was linked to other housing policies being decided in the current meeting.

The Housing Policy and Projects Officer presented the Disposals Policy and how this will structure how disposals could take place and how the impacts on communities will be considered. He said that this outlines their holistic approach to Disposals. On the Mutual exchange policy, he said that this relates to when a tenant wants to swap their tenancy with another social housing tenant. He said that this outlines a series of procedures for this to be effective and that the residents review group had influenced the shape of the policy. Regarding the no access policy, he noted that this was fundamental because of the implications on the safety of tenants and neighbours. He said that the policy takes a step-by-step approach on how the housing service will approach a tenant and how they would undertake the access with sensitivity.

Councillor Hollingsworth said that it was positive to see how the Disposals Policy was considering and approaching work to avoid gentrification.

Councillor Brown welcomed the work being done and said that it was helpful to have these steps set out so clearly in these important areas.

Cabinet resolved to recommend that Council approve:

1. The draft Aids and Adaptations Policy
2. The draft Disposals Policy
3. The draft Mutual Exchange Policy
4. The draft No Access Policy

185. Review of Ward Member Budget and Community Infrastructure Levy Councillor Applications

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) submitted a report for Cabinet to approve the decision-making route for Councillor applications for Ward Member Budget and Community Infrastructure Levy spend and approve amendments to with part 4 of the Council Constitution to reflect those arrangements.

Councillor Brown presented the report. She said that the report set out how decisions should be made about ward member budget spend and councillor CIL spend, including that they understand the pricing of different issues and who will be responsible for delivering projects.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Delegate the approval for Ward Member Budget applications to the Director of Communities and Citizens' Services, in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer), the Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Property and Assets (where appropriate)

2. Delegate the approval for Ward Member Community Infrastructure Levy spend applications to the Director of Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer), the Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Property and Assets (where appropriate)
3. Recommend full Council to amend parts 4.4 and 4.7 of the Constitution to reflect the updated delegations.

186. Controlled Entry Systems Replacement (HRA)

The Director of Housing submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve a contract for the programme replacement of the access control units across the HRA portfolio.

Councillor Smith presented the report. She said that this was an important investment for the Council and that this would matter for residents. She said that officers had assured her that they would be getting value for money.

Michael Woods, Major Works Project Manager, said that this proposal covered the cost of taking this decision for all of the HRA portfolio.

Councillor Brown asked what the timescale for delivery would be.

The Major Works Project Manager said that it was an 18-month program from the award of the contract.

Councillor Hollingsworth asked what the impact would be on leaseholders in shared blocks of flats.

The Landlord Services Lead said that this was an improvement, not a repair, so they would not pass the cost onto leaseholders.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve the planned programme to replace the access control units across the HRA portfolio.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Director of Group Finance, Director of Law & Governance, and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to award the contract and to agree the contracting mechanism (incl. any variation/ancillary agreement) and enter necessary documentation, subject to the Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

187. Procurement of a Housing & Asset Management System, including a mobile working solution

The Director of Housing submitted a report to seek project approval to procure ICT solutions for housing and housing asset management, including a mobile working solution and to seek delegated authority for the Deputy Chief Executive (City and Citizens' Services) to award the contract.

Councillor Smith presented the report. She said that this was an important investment which would have implications for several service areas. She said it was important to start this work now to imbed the new product before the current contract came to an end in 2028.

The Landlord Services Lead said that they had no choice to move forward to upgrade their systems to reflect new technology. He said that with Local Government Reorganisation this was essential continuation work.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Grant project approval for the procurement of a 10-year contract for ICT solutions for housing and housing asset management, including a mobile working solution, with an option to extend for a further five years.
2. Approve a contract value of up to £2million (inclusive of VAT).
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (City and Citizens' Services) in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, the Director of Housing, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies to award the contract and finalise contractual arrangements.

188. Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Railton left the meeting due to her declared interest as a sitting parish councillor at Littlemore Parish Council.

The Director of Planning Services and Regulation submitted a report to request that Cabinet recommend to Council to agree to “make” the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Hollingsworth presented the report. He noted that the neighbourhood plan had undergone the necessary process. He said that as they take the decision forward, the neighbourhood plan had to be compliant to the Local Plan. He noted that should there be any changes in the next local plan the Local Plan would take precedence over the neighbourhood plan.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Recommend that Council “Make” the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan (set out in Appendix 1 of this report). The Plan has been approved at referendum it and now forms part of the statutory development plan in helping to determine planning applications for the Littlemore Neighbourhood Area. The ‘making’ of the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan would formalise this process in line with the relevant legislation.
2. Recommend that Council delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture, to make any necessary editorial corrections to the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan prior to final publication. This will include a final desktop published version of the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan.

189. Dates of future meetings

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings.

Matters Exempt from Publication

If Cabinet wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for Cabinet to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Cabinet may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The meeting started at 18:00 and ended at 18:58.

Chair ………………………….. **Date: Wednesday 17 June 2026**

When decisions take effect:
Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired
Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued
All other committees: immediately.
Details are in the Council's Constitution.

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 17 June 2026

Committee members present:

Councillor Brown
Councillor Railton
Councillor Linda Smith
Councillor Rowley
Councillor Turner
Councillor Arshad
Councillor Lygo

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive - Citizen and City Services

Alistair Rush, Group Director Finance

Emma Jackman, Director of Law, Governance, and Strategy

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager

Dr Brenda McCollum, Committee and Member Services

Paula Redway, Culture and Community Development Manager

Annette Osborne, Strategic Procurement Manager

Apologies:

Councillor Chapman sent apologies.

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Cabinet resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2026 as a true and accurate record.

3. Addresses by members of the public

None received.

4. Councillor addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda

None.

5. Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None received.

6. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

7. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Committee met on the 9th of June to consider the following report.

- Establishment of Scrutiny Standing Working Groups and Review Group

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager, presented the report. He outlined the creation of the Scrutiny Working Groups and Scrutiny's gratitude for Officers' work over the previous year.

8. Delegation to purchase fleet vehicles 2026/2027

The Interim Group Finance Director submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet delegate authority to the Interim Group Finance Director for the 2026/27 financial year to award any fleet contracts valued in excess of £750k following a compliant procurement process.

Annette Osborne, Strategic Procurement Manager, presented the report. She noted that this was a similar report to the one which Cabinet had approved in the previous year. She outlined the recommendations of the report and the procurements they believe will be undertaken in the coming year.

Councillor Linda Smith asked what opportunities there were in the procurement process to buy British vehicles to support British manufacturing and the British economy.

The Strategic Procurement Manager said that procurements for fleet were mainly call off contracts from a range of frameworks. She said that supplier selection was dependant on suppliers listed on a framework. She said that the Council had specific requirements for vehicles which limited where they could procure them from. She said that where possible they would try to build this in, but this would not always be possible.

Cabinet resolved to:

Delegate authority, to the Interim Group Finance Director for the duration of the 2026/27 financial year to award contracts with values over the Key Decision threshold for the purchase of fleet vehicles.

9. Grant Allocations to Community & Voluntary Organisations 2024/25

The Director of Communities and Citizens' Services submitted a report to highlight to Cabinet the positive impact of Oxford Community Impact Fund 2024-25.

Councillor Linda Smith presented the report. She said that the report outlined how they had used the Community Impact Fund in 2024/2025. She said that this represented a big investment into communities each year and that the report outlines how they were distributed in the year under consideration. Councillor Smith noted the grant contributions from the fund to groups which have particularly positive impacts for people across the city.

Councillor Smith described how they had simplified the grant application process in 24/25 and how they had focused the grant awards to address inequality in the city. However, she said that they had not let up on their approach to monitoring organisations to ensure that they use grants in an impactful way. She thanked the Officers for their work in this area and the positive impact possible through their community grant programs.

Councillor Brown said that it was great to see the positive difference being made by such a range of organisations across the city with this funding.

Councillor Arshad asked how many new groups applied for funding each year. Paula Redway, Culture and Community Development Manager, said that they had a campaign to encourage new groups to come forward. She said that in the previous round over 20% of applicants were newcomers to the program.

Councillor Brown thanked the team for their work to make the process simpler and their integration of support for applicants.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the social value and economic impact of the fund – see appendices 1-4

10. Dates of future meetings

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting started at 18:00 and ended at 18:12.

Chair ………………………….. **Date: Wednesday 8 July 2026**

When decisions take effect:
Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired
Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued
All other committees: immediately.
Details are in the Council's Constitution.

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 8 July 2026

Committee members present:

Councillor Railton
Councillor Chapman
Councillor Rowley
Councillor Arshad
Councillor Linda Smith

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Uswah Khan, Committee and Member Services Officer
Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager
Alistair Rush, Interim Group Finance Director
Tom Bridgman, Deputy Chief Executive - Place
Mish Tullar, Transition Manager
Francesca Barr, Senior Rough Sleeping Officer
Courtney Bennett, Regulatory Services Manager
Stephen Cohen, Refugee and Resettlement Manager
Sarah Harrison, Team Leader (Planning Policy)
Nerys Parry, Director of Housing
James Watkins, Housing Policy and Projects Officer
Richard Wood, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Brown, Turner and Lygo sent apologies.
Substitutes are shown above.

11. Declarations of Interest

None.

12. Minutes of the previous meeting

Cabinet resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2026 as a true and accurate record.

13. Addresses by members of the public

None received.

14. Councillor addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda

None received.

15. Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

Cabinet received a Councillor address on Neighbourhood Issues from Councillor Henwood:

Is there or has there been any loan finance from Oxford City Council to OX Place/OCHL in respect of the land currently known as site SPS8 Land at Meadow Lane?

Allistair Rush provided the response from Cabinet to this address:

Yes, there has been loan finance provided by Oxford City Council to Ox Place/OCHL in respect of the land currently known as site SPS8 Land at Meadow Lane. This loan finance has been provided at a commercial rate so as not to distort the market, in line with other loan finance provided to other wholly owned companies.

16. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

17. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met 30 June 2026 to consider the following items.

- Annual Review of the Council of Sanctuary Framework
- Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy

- HRA policies

Councillor Powell, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding Annual Review of the Council of Sanctuary Framework.

- **Recommendation 1:** The updated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be published as part of the updated report and circulated to the Scrutiny Committee
- **Recommendation 2:** Further, localised data and information regarding the refugees housed in Oxford, to be included within the report next year and to be shared with the Scrutiny Committee
- **Recommendation 3:** To include Community Associations within the updated Action Plan
- **Recommendation 4:** A bench-marking exercise against similar authorities to the City Council have succeed in positive housing outcomes, linked to government data
- **Recommendation 5:** The No Recourse to Public Fund (NRPF) protocol, once finalised with Oxfordshire County Council, to be returned to the Scrutiny Committee for review
- **Recommendation 6:** Measure the impact of the Council comms team regarding myth busting against misinformation

Councillor Smith responded to Scrutiny's recommendations and discussion, noting that the recommendations had been agreed to and thanked the Committee for helping to strengthen the report.

Councillor Powell, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy.

- **Recommendation 1:** Tenants Unions to be involved in the evaluation of the implementation of the policy
- **Recommendation 2:** Further and regular data to be provided regarding the enforcement of the policy to be shared with the committee and included within future reports brought to the committee
- **Recommendation 3:** For further information to be brought to Councillors regarding Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, including a briefing to be scheduled

Councillor Rowley responded to Scrutiny's recommendations and discussion, noting that he was happy to accept all the recommendations.

Councillor Powell, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding the HRA policies.

- **Recommendation 1:** Within the Voids Policy, for there to be consideration for the wider community and social impact
- **Recommendation 2:** Within the Lifting Equipment and Lifting Operations Policy, to ensure complaints for Oxford Direct Services (ODS) have a robust oversight procedure and to ensure the timescales within the policy are clearly defined
- **Recommendation 3:** Within the Complaints Policy, to ensure there is clarity on repeated complaints and tightening the wording for public clarity

Councillor Smith responded to Scrutiny's recommendations and discussion, noting that the recommendations had been agreed to and thanked the Committee for the support.

18. Thames Valley Strategic Authority Proposal: Update and Implications for Oxford City

The Transition Director had submitted a report to request that Cabinet note Oxfordshire County Council's veto of the systemwide Expression of Interest to Government, which would enable the creation of a Thames Valley Strategic Authority with enhanced powers and funding for the region. Cabinet was further requested to reaffirm its commitment to working collaboratively with Thames Valley partners and Government to reassess devolution in light of the 'minded to' decision on Local Government Reorganisation, with the clear aim of advancing a renewed proposal that included Swindon and remained open to Buckinghamshire.

Councillor Brown attended the meeting remotely.

Councillor Brown presented the report and said the implications for the council and the whole of Thames Valley were significant. Work had taken place over almost two years and formerly 18 months with authorities across Thames Valley, but agreement on devolution proposal for government had not been secured after the leader of the County Councill vetoed the proposal. She said discussions had continued with key stakeholders, council leaders and council chief executives to maintain progress. The report recommended noting the current position while agreeing to continue progressing the work. Councillor Brown suggested an additional recommendation to ask Council to endorse the recommendations from Cabinet and to ask the Leader to write to the Leader of the County Council to that effect.

Mish Tullar, Transition Director, stated that the change in government could alter the devolution landscape. The existing government had set out plans for all areas of England to adopt devolved governance, initially through foundation strategic authorities before progressing to elected mayors. While future arrangements remained uncertain, government support for devolution was expected to continue and work should continue without delay.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** Oxfordshire County Council's decision to veto the Thames Valley Foundation Strategic Authority proposal;
2. **Agree** that the Council Leader and Council officers to work with counterparts in other Thames Valley councils to review the position following the Government's decision on Local Government in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire;
3. **Note** that officers will work with counterparts in the other 12 councils to further develop the Expression of Interest proposal against any updated policy position around devolution set out by the new Prime Minister
4. **Agree** the commitment to continue to support Swindon's involvement as a willing partner in a Thames Valley Strategic Authority – and keep the door open for Buckinghamshire's inclusion too, if they change their position.
5. **Ask** Council to endorse the recommendations from Cabinet and to **ask** the Leader to write to the Leader of the County Council to that effect.

19. Local Development Scheme 2026-2031

The Director of Planning and Regulation submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve the Local Development Scheme 2026-2031, which set out the work programme for the Oxford Local Plan 2045.

Councillor Railton said the project plan set out the timetable for Oxford's Local Plan, which was more than five years old and therefore technically out of date. As it was important to minimise the time spent with an up-to-date plan, the report proposed taking the matter to the meeting. Although the draft Local Plan 2045 had been approved in January this year, an injunction had delayed submission until a hearing in October, creating a risk of missing the 31 December deadline under the current planning system.

Sarah Harrison, Planning Policy Team Leader, noted the proposed programme included two scenarios. One allowed for submission this month, subject to the decision at council the following week. The alternative provided for a new or partial Regulation 19 publication if required, delaying subsequent milestones by several months.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Chapman seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Local Development Scheme 2026-2031;
2. **Authorise** the Director of Planning and Regulation Services to make any necessary minor corrections not materially affecting the document prior to publication.

20. Oxford Local Plan 2045 Next Steps

The Director of Planning and Regulation submitted a report to request that Cabinet recommend that Council approve the Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 for submission to the Secretary of State for formal examination.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Chapman seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Recommend** Council to authorise submission of the Oxford Local Plan 2045 to the Secretary of State for examination, including the minor amendments made according to recommendation 3;
2. **Recommend** Council to approve all the supporting statutory documentation including the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP), Policies Map, Regulation 18 Consultation Statement, Regulation 19 Consultation Statement and Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendices 2-7 & 9); 18 October 2019 .
3. **Recommend** Council to authorise the Director of Planning and Regulation, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to make any necessary minor editorial corrections to the Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045, IDP, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment, Policies Map, and to agree the supporting evidence base prior to submission;
4. **Recommend** Council to authorise the Director of Planning and Regulation, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to invite the examining inspector(s) to recommend any modifications considered to be necessary in accordance with section 20(7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

21. Local Authority Housing Fund Round 4

The Director of Housing submitted a report to seek the required budget provision and the necessary project approval and delegations to enable the Council to proceed with entering into the national Local Authority Housing Fund Round 4.

Councillor Smith noted that the report covered government funding available through the LAHF R4 scheme for both temporary accommodation and homes for refugees on government resettlement programmes. The funding presented an opportunity to meet housing needs, with grant passed to a registered provider of social housing to deliver the homes. As with previous funding rounds, once resettlement tenancies ended [after at least 3 years], the properties would become general social housing, with nominations rights retained for households on the local housing waiting list.

Councillor Rowley noted the Local Authority Housing Fund covered between 40-50% of the cost of acquiring the properties. Members were reminded that substantial borrowing for new temporary accommodation had been approved in March and that £808000 of grant funding reduced the borrowing requirement. Although the scheme did not deliver additional properties beyond those already planned, it improved the councils financial positions by reducing borrowing.

Stephen Cohen, Refugee and Resettlement Manager, added that round four built on the success of rounds one to three, during which 22 properties had been delivered with government grant funding.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Rowley seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** receipt of the Local Authority Housing Fund Round 4 (LAHF R4) funding of £1,719,354 to deliver 4 temporary accommodation units and 4 units for resettled Afghan families
2. **Recommend** to Council, to approve the allocation of £808,000 of the LAHF R4 grant funding in substitution of approved HRA borrowing for the delivery of the temporary accommodation element of LAHF R4.
3. **Recommend** to Council, to approve the allocation of £898,500 of the LAHF R4 grant funding to a new General Fund capital budget for the payment of a capital grant of 898,500 to a Registered Provider to deliver the 'resettlement' element of LAHF R4.
4. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Housing in consultation with; Cabinet Member for Regulation of the Private Rented Sector and Preventing Homelessness, the Group Finance Director and the Director of Law Governance and Strategy, to select a Registered Provider delivery partner and enter into a grant agreement with them to part fund the purchase of 4 units for resettled Afghan families.

22. Annual Review of the Council of Sanctuary Framework 2025-2028

The Director of Housing submitted a report and provided an update to Cabinet on the progress made in Year 1 of the Council of Sanctuary Framework 2025-28 and sought approval for the implementation of the Year 2 Action Plan.

Councillor Smith noted that she was proud of the councils Sanctuary status and noted that the report, framework, action plan and review demonstrated that the commitment extended beyond a slogan or ambition. She highlighted the scale of work undertaken across departments in the council to deliver the commitments and maintain Sanctuary status. She noted that the year 2 action plan included measures to tackle misinformation and hostility towards refugees and asylum seekers through myth busting, stressing the importance of addressing these issues alongside celebrating the work being carried out. She thanked officers for their work.

Councillor Chapman noted that there was significant hostility towards people seeking asylum and those granted the right to remain and said it was importance to do everything possible to mitigate this. He welcomed the action plans holistic approach, highlighting that it extended beyond housing to include a broad range of support.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Arshad seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the progress made in Year 1 to implement the Council of Sanctuary Framework and Action Plan and the emerging risks and challenges for delivery over the next year and beyond
2. **Approve** the adoption of the new Framework Action Plan for Year 2 (26-27); and
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to update the Action Plan when required to respond to emerging risks and challenges.

23. HRA Policies

The Director of Housing submitted a report to request that Cabinet recommend that Council approve the following policies: complaints, lifting equipment and lifting operations, voids.

Councillor Smith said the policies formed part of a wider governance framework approved to ensure compliance with expectations and strengthen transparency and accountability. The policies set out what tenants, leaseholders and shared owners could expect from the landlord and provided a basis for holding the service to account.

James Watkins, Housing Policy and Projects Officer, thanked the members of the resident's policy review group and introduced the three policies in the report. The Complaints Policy was designed to ensure complaints were welcomed positively, managed without a defensive approach and used to identify lessons learned to improve services. Developed in partnerships with the Housing Ombudsman Service, it set response targets of 10 working days for stage 1 complaints and 20 working days for stage 2 complaints, with arrangements for monitoring service improvements arising from complaints. The second policy was the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Policy, which covered passenger lifts and lift adaptions for those with mobility issues. It committed to rescuing anyone trapped in a lift within one hour and responding to lift breakdowns within four hours, subject to parts availability. The policy also set out requirements for qualified, competent and regularly trained staff. The final policy was the Voids Policy which aimed to minimise the time properties remained empty to help meet housing demand. Target response times for contractors were 5 working days for minor voids, 15 working days for standard voids and 25 working days for major voids, exceeding industry standards. The policy also ensured properties were upgraded, including insulation improvements, where possible to support net zero ambitions before reletting.

Councillor Arshad asked whether 15 working days was the maximum timeframe for a standard void. James confirmed it was the target for properties requiring moderate works, such as basic rewiring and noted it was more ambitious than the standards typically adopted by other registered social landlords.

Councillor Chapman clarified that the contractor targets related only to the time taken to complete works, rather than the full period from a property becoming vacant to being re-let but welcomed the publication of transparent performance target.

Councillor Smith was pleased with the significant reduction in void times achieved during the year through work with ODS and the council, expressing hope that performance would continue to improve to meet or exceed new targets.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Chapman seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Recommend** full Council to approve the draft Complaints Policy
2. **Recommend** full Council to approve the draft Lifting Equipment and Lifting Operations Policy
3. **Recommend** full Council to approve the draft Voids Policy

24. Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy

The Director of Planning and Regulation submitted a report to Cabinet to request approval of the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy for adoption.

Councillor Rowley noted that Renters Rights Act had come into force a couple of months earlier. The Act created new rights for private renters, consolidating existing landlord legation into a single legal framework and placed a specific duty on local housing authorities to enforce it. As a result, private rented sector housing enforcement would no longer sit with generic enforcement policy but would instead have its own policy reflecting the new statutory duties. The proposed policy reflected national legislation and guidance, alongside experience gained since the introduction of city-wide selective licensing. Councillor Rowley added that the councils work had influenced provisions within the Act that had yet to come into force, including the creation of the National Landlord Database

Courtney Bennet, Regulatory Services Manager, added that the policy was based on a national model, which had been adopted by a number of local authorities. It provided more transparency for landlords and tenants through a publicly available framework and reduced the risk of successful first year tribunal challenges by ensuring decisions aligned with policy.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Rowley seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy (at Appendix 1) for adoption.
2. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and the Portfolio Holder, to approve future updates to the policy where such changes are consistent with the overall policy approach and reflect changes to legislation or relevant case law.

25. Park and Ride Charges

The Director of Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability submitted a report to request that Cabinet introduce temporary discounted combined ticket charge funded by Oxfordshire County Council.

Councillor Railton noted that changes to charges on three Park and Ride sites were required after the County Council decided to reintroduce charges following the end of the free parking deal, avoiding price inconsistencies across the city. She highlighted paragraph 8 which clarified that, although the proposal reinstated charges at £3 with a contribution from the County, it did not constitute an endorsement of the wider bus fare policy.

Carolyn Polanski, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability, added that the £3 charge was fully funded by the County Council and remained a promotional fare, as it was still lower than the previous combined ticket prices of £4 and £5.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Chapman seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** amending the fees and charges schedule as it relates to the Park and Ride 16 hour combined bus and parking tickets as set out in Appendix 1 to be implemented as soon after this decision as practicable and to run until 31 March 2027.

26. Thames Valley Spatial Development Strategy (SDS)

The Director Planning & Regulation submitted a report to Cabinet to note the development of, and governance arrangements for, a Thames Valley SDS.

Councillor Railton noted that the same report was being presented to all councils in Thames Valley. The strategy covered around 30 years of spatial planning, compared with local plan and a strategic planning board through secondary legislations set out by MHCLG. Voting arrangements had yet to be determined, with only unitary and upper tier authorities currently expected to have voting rights. Councillor Railton added that lobbying would continue for successor authorities and a greater Oxford unitary to secure representation.

David Butler, Director of Planning and Regulation, added that this marked the start of an importance piece of work, providing an opportunity to help shape long term growth across a large area. With central government funding being held by Bracknell Forest Council, the framework would play a significant role in supporting Oxford's future development and contribution to the economy.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Smith seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the governance and development of the Thames Valley Spatial Development Strategy
2. **Agree** to officer and member involvement in the early programme stages as outlined in this report, in particular with regards to the governance model and assisting in the development of the Thames Valley SDS.

27. Development and Governance Decision to Direct Award OCC's Water Supply and Wastewater Contract

The Director of Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place to Direct Award the Council's Water Supply and Wastewater Contract to Anglian Water Business (National) Limited t/a Wave Utilities on a 2+1+1 contract term, subject to final contract price; and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place to make non-substantive changes to the framework should they become necessary.

Councillor Railton noted that the report concerned the procurement of water and wastewater services through a framework, enabling utility prices to be secured in advance. It recommended a 2+1+1 contract term, balancing price with avoiding long term commitment.

Carolyn Polanski, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability, added that the framework had been used previously following the deregulation of the water industry, while most costs remained payable to the infrastructure provider, the framework allowed direct awards and operated in a competitive market, with only a small proportion of costs subject to competition.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Chapman seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place to Direct Award the Council's Water Supply and Wastewater Contract to Anglian Water Business (National) Limited t/a Wave Utilities on a 2+1+1 contract term, subject to final contract price; and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place to make non-substantive changes to the framework should they become necessary.

28. Procurement of a high-support service for accommodation for single homeless individuals

The Director of Housing submitted a report to Cabinet to request approval of the commencement of a procurement exercise for accommodation with high support in Oxford from 1st April 2027.

Councillor Rowley noted that the existing high support homelessness service, delivered from a single location, required re-procurement as the current contract would end at the end of the financial year. Although part funded by surrounding district councils, the service needed to continue regardless of local government reorganisation. The proposal was for an initial 2-year contract, covering 2027-28 and 2028-29 with an option to extend for a further 3 years.

Francesca Barr, Senior Rough Sleeping Officer, added that the demand for high support services remained high, with long waiting lists and limited provision across Oxfordshire, highlighting the need for the service.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Rowley seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Give** project approval for the commencement of a procurement of an accommodation support service for individuals with multiple and complex support needs who are experiencing homelessness;
2. **Delegate** to the Director of Housing (following conclusion of the procurement) in consultation with the Group Finance Director, Director of Law Strategy and Governance and the Cabinet Member for Regulation of the Private Rented

Sector and Preventing Homelessness), the authority to award a contract within the relevant budget.

29. Appointments to Outside Bodies

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet agree appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2026/2027 Council Year.

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager, noted that the report listed appointments to Outside Bodies for 2026-27 and confirmed that details of all appointments would be circulated by email the following week.

Councillor Railton proposed.

Councillor Chapman seconded.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** appointments to charities, trusts, community associations and other organisations as set out in Appendices 1A – 1D; and note the appointments to partnerships as detailed in Appendix 1E;
2. **Note** the guidance for appointees in Appendix 2;
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and where appropriate with other group leaders, to make any changes to appointments to Outside Bodies as required during the council year 2026/2027.

30. Dates of future meetings

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6pm and ended at 6.50pm

Chair ………………………….. **Date: Wednesday 19 August 2026**

When decisions take effect:
Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired
Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued
All other committees: immediately.
Details are in the Council's Constitution.