Agenda

Scrutiny Committee

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Tuesday 4 July 2023**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Long Room - Oxford Town Hall**

For further information please contact:

Lucy Brown, Committee and Member Services Officer,

☎ 01865 252784   ✉ DemocraticServices@oxford.gov.uk

Members of the public can attend to observe this meeting and.

- may register in advance to speak to the committee in accordance with the committee's rules
- may record all or part of the meeting in accordance with the Council's protocol

Information about speaking and recording is set out in the agenda and on the website

Please contact the Committee Services Officer to register to speak; to discuss recording the meeting; or with any other queries.

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

Committee Membership

Councillors: Membership 12: Quorum 4 substitutes are permitted.

Councillor Lucy Pegg (Chair)

Councillor Dr Christopher Smowton

Councillor Lizzy Diggins

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan

Councillor Lubna Arshad

Councillor Tiago Corais

Councillor Chris Jarvis

Councillor Edward Mundy

Councillor Mike Rowley (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Dr Sandy Douglas

Councillor Paula Dunne

Councillor Mark Lygo

Apologies and notification of substitutes received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting. Substitutes for the Chair and Vice-chair do not take on these roles.

Agenda

		Pages
1	**Apologies for absence**	
2	**Declarations of interest**	
3	**Chair's Announcements**	
4	**Minutes**	9 - 14

Minutes from 07 June 2023

Recommendation: That the minutes of the meeting held on 07 June 2023 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

5	**Work Plan and Forward Plan**	15 - 22

The work plan is driven to a very large extent by the Cabinet Forward Plan a summary of which is attached. The Scrutiny Committee agrees its priorities for items coming onto the Forward Plan, which then form part of its work plan.

The Committee is recommended to:

1. **Confirm** its agreement to the work plan, or agree any amendments as required.

6	**Report back on recommendations and from Scrutiny Panel meetings**	23 - 46

At its meeting on 14 June 2023, Cabinet considered the following reports from Scrutiny and made responses to the recommendations:

- Housing Management System Implementation
- Tenancy Agreement
- Recommendations of the Child Poverty Review Group

Since the Scrutiny Committee's previous meeting on 07 June 2023, the following Panels have met:

- Companies Scrutiny Panel (Shareholder and Joint Venture Group, 21 June 2023)

Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldate's Oxford OX1 1BX

- Climate and Environment Panel (27 June 2023)

The Committee is asked to:

1. Note Cabinet's responses to its recommendations.

2. Note any updates from Panel meetings.

7   **Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 12 July 2023, will consider a report from the Executive Director (Communities and People) on progress made on Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Action Plan for 2022/23 and presenting an updated Safeguarding Policy for 2023-26. Cllr Shaista Aziz, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Richard Adams, Community Safety Manager and Laura Jones, Safeguarding Coordinator, have been invited to present the report and answer questions. The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.

8   **Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 12 July 2023, will consider a report from the Executive Director (Development) seeking Cabinet approval to participate in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter and endorsement of a series of Oxford City Council pledges. Cllr Susan Brown, Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships, Clayton Lavallin, Economic Development Team Leader and Emma Coles, Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Manager, have been invited to present the report and answer questions. The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.

9   **Citizen Experience Strategy**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 12 July 2023, will consider a report from the Head of Business Improvement seeking approval for a new Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25. Cllr Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, Tom Hook, Executive Director (Corporate Resources), Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement and Vicki Galvin, Senior Programme Manager for Customer Experience, have been invited to present the report and answer questions. The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.

10   Dates of future meetings

Scrutiny Committee

- 01 August 2023
- 05 September 2023
- 10 October 2023
- 06 November 2023
- 04 December 2023
- 16 January 2024
- 06 February 2024
- 04 March 2024
- 11 April 2024

Standing Panels

Housing & Homelessness: 05 July 2023; 02 August 2023; 05 October 2023; 02 November 2023; 07 March 2024

Finance & Performance: 06 September 2023; 06 December 2023; 22 January 2024; 26 March 2024

Climate & Environment: 07 September 2023; 22 November 2023; 27 February 2024; 20 March 2024

Companies Scrutiny Panel will meet on the same dates as the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group (SJVG): 27 July 2023; 01 November 2023; 07 December 2023; 27 March 2024; 24 April 2024

All meetings start at 6.00 pm.

Information for those attending

Recording and reporting on meetings held in public

Members of public and press can record, or report in other ways, the parts of the meeting open to the public. You are not required to indicate in advance but it helps if you notify the Committee Services Officer prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best place to record.

The Council asks those recording the meeting:
- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's website
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Minutes of a meeting of the
Scrutiny Committee
on Wednesday 7 June 2023

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Committee members present:

Councillor Pegg (Chair)

Councillor Rowley (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Altaf-Khan

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Corais

Councillor Diggins

Councillor Douglas

Councillor Kerr (*substitute to Cllr Jarvis*)

Councillor Lygo

Councillor Mundy

Councillor Smowton

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services
Bill Graves, Landlord Services Manager
Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer
Celeste Reyeslao, Committee and Member Services Officer

Cabinet Members present:

Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services

Also present:

Councillor James Fry, Audit and Governance Committee Member
Councillor Roz Smith, Audit and Governance Committee Member

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Dunne and Jarvis sent apologies.

Substitutes are shown above.

1. Election of Chair for the Council year 2023/24

The Committee resolved to elect Cllr Lucy Pegg as Chair for the 2023/24 Council year.

2. Election of Vice Chair for the Council year 2023/24

The Committee resolved to elect Cllr Mike Rowley as Vice Chair for the 2023/24 Council year.

3.   Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

4.   Chair's Announcements

There were no announcements.

5.   Minutes

The Committee resolved to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2023 as a true and accurate record.

6.   Scrutiny Operating Principles 2023/24

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report which asked the Committee to approve the Scrutiny Operating Principles for the 2023/24 Council year, which were broadly similar to previous years.

It was proposed that the Standing Panel and Review Group arrangements from the previous year be re-established, including continuation of the revised arrangements for Companies Scrutiny Panel.

The Scrutiny Officer suggested that the Committee considered the proposed change to the meetings of standing panels and review groups to be held virtually, taking into account additional resources required for in-person and hybrid meetings.

The Chair reminded the Committee to send ideas for Scrutiny-commissioned reports or potential review groups to the Scrutiny Officer in the coming weeks to help formulate the work plan.

The Committee resolved to:
1. **Agree** the proposed Committee Operating Principles for the 2023/24 municipal year, as set out at **Appendix A**.
2. **Agree** to establish the following standing panels for the 2023/24 municipal year with the following remits and timeframes:
    i.   Finance and Performance Panel – finance and budgetary issues and decisions, annual review of the Council's budget, quarterly monitoring of finance and performance (including performance of the Council's companies);
    ii. Housing and Homelessness Panel – strategic housing and landlord issues and decisions, homelessness, housing services performance and interaction with the Tenant's Forum;
    iii. Climate and Environment Panel – climate and environmental issues and decisions, progress and performance monitoring, monitoring delivery of existing strategies, policies and projects;
    iv. Companies Scrutiny Panel - executive decisions made in relation to any companies wholly or partly owned by the Council.
3. **Agree** to establish a Budget Review Group, comprising the membership of the Finance & Performance Panel, noting that the proposed scope will be agreed at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.
4. **Agree** the schedule of meetings as presented within the report.

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5. **Agree** the allocation of seats on standing panels to political groups for 2023/24 (Finance and Performance Panel: 4, Housing and Homelessness Panel: 6, Climate and Environment Panel: 4, Companies Scrutiny Panel: 4 are recommended).

6. **Agree** to appoint members and chairs of the Finance and Performance, Housing and Homelessness, Climate and Environment and Companies Scrutiny Panels or any other panels as agreed by the Committee in accordance with nominations made by political groups.
    o **Housing and Homelessness Panel:** Cllr Lizzy Diggins (Chair), Cllr Dunne, Cllr Fouweather, Cllr Nala-Hartley, Cllr Rawle, Cllr Sandelson
    o **Finance and Performance Panel:** Cllr Fry (Chair), Cllr Djafari-Marbini, Cllr Jarvis, Cllr Smowton
    o **Climate and Environment Panel:** Cllr Hollingsworth (Chair), Cllr Dunne, Cllr Kerr, Cllr Miles
    o **Companies Scrutiny Panel:** Cllr Rowley (Chair), Cllr Miles, Cllr Morris, Cllr Walcott

7. **Agree** that the Chair of the Finance and Performance Panel will Chair the Budget Review Group.

8. **Agree**
    i. The preliminary Work Plan covering the period to September 2023 as detailed at Appendix B; and
    ii. That Committee members will send ideas for topics for Scrutiny-commissioned reports to the Scrutiny Officer by e-mail for consideration at the Committee's 04 July meeting.

9. **Note** the Scrutiny Guide for Councillors at Appendix D.

7. Report back on recommendations and from Scrutiny Panel meetings

The Committee noted the following Cabinet responses to its recommendations:

- Oxford City Council Corporate Business Plan 2023
- Integrated Care System Draft Strategy Update
- Integrated Performance Report for Q3 2022/23
- Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford
- Fleet Decarbonisation
- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28

The Committee noted that since the Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 06 March 2023, the Climate and Environment Panel had met on 09 March 2023, the Housing and Homelessness Panel had met twice on 13 March and 24 April 2023, and the Companies Scrutiny Panel had joined the meeting of the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group on 27 April 2023.

8. Reports for approval

The Committee resolved to approve the Tenancy Agreement report and recommend its submission to Cabinet for its meeting in June 2023.

9. Housing Management System Implementation

Cllr Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies presented the report which updated members on the lessons learned from the implementation of the Housing Management System and the outcome of discussions with the supplier in regard to potential settlement. The report requested Cabinet approval of additional budget for further development of the product after the move to 'business as usual' had been secured. He highlighted improvements surrounding the governance and leadership of the project and stated that the implementation of the system had now reached the stage where its capabilities could be fully exploited.

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee joined the meeting to participate in the discussion as non-voting members.

Cllr Corais arrived at the meeting.

Cllr Nigel Chapman, Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services, and Bill Graves, Landlord Services Manager responded to the Committee's queries as follows:
- In addition to a disaster contingency plan, strong cyber security measures were currently in place which would be further enforced by the recruitment of a new Cyber Security Specialist.
- A project manager with expertise in the housing management system had now been appointed alongside three dedicated staff. Further to ensuring experienced resources were sought, it was assured that further scrutiny had been applied to the range of IT projects undertaken and the prioritisation of gateway processes across all businesses of the Council as part of lessons learnt in mitigating potential risks in the future.
- In relation to the retrospective budget allocation, a review of the approvals revealed that there were aspects of expenditure which had not been brought to the Cabinet formally due to time constraints, however it was confirmed that all additional spend went through appropriate approval processes.
- On the question of Intellectual Property (IP) ownership and whether potential revenue could be benefited through this, it was confirmed that the supplier held the rights for the IP and therefore the Council would not have the ability to generate income.
- The supplier was considered the third biggest housing system provider with the core system being widely used by other local authorities nationally. In terms of the bespoke element relating to choice-based lettings functionality and enhanced housing options, the original intention was that the Council would lead the use of these elements and serve as a roadmap for other local authorities. The supplier had since concluded to partner with an alternative provider which already specialised in the ready-made solutions used by councils.
- The system reached its 'steady state' in November 2022. The intention now was to exploit the product by working closely with the supplier to develop and integrate certain robust features in order for both staff and tenants to further benefit by finding its use easier and more immediate such as mobility, online customer portal, stock and asset management, etc.

The Committee resolved to make the following recommendations to Cabinet:
1. That the Council ensures there is a contingency plan when reaching a critical point in future projects, so that project implementation can be reverted back to an earlier 'working' status if it becomes clear that there are issues and/or errors with implementation.

10. Dates of future meetings

The dates of future meetings were noted.

The meeting started at 6.03 pm and ended at 7.01 pm

Chair …………………………..   Date: Tuesday 4 July 2023

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

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Forward Plan

June 2023 to September 2023

Published on 01/06/23

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Cabinet - 12 July 2023

ITEM 39: ID: I033982	**City Centre Land Transaction**
To seek approval for a land transaction in the city centre.	

ITEM 40: ID: I033345	**Oxpens Car Park Lease Renewal**
To seek approval to renew the lease relating to the car park at Oxpens Road.	

ITEM 41: ID: I033745	**Review of the Street Naming and Numbering Policy**
To consider an updated Street Naming and Numbering Policy for the Council.	

ITEM 42: ID: I034108	**City Centre Land Regeneration Scheme**
To seek approval to contract with a development partner / operator consortium for a regeneration scheme on land owned by the Council, including approval for project budget; lease changes; and associated delegations to officers.	

ITEM 43: ID: I034156	**Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge**
To consider whether the Council should become a signatory to the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter and Pledge Scheme.	

ITEM 45: ID: I024507	**Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26**
To report on the progress made against the Oxford City Council Safeguarding Action Plan 2022/23 and seek approval for an updated policy and procedures for	

safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

ITEM 47: ID: I034196	**Citizen Experience Strategy**
To seek approval of the Citizen Experience Strategy.	

ITEM 48: ID: I034157	**Future Oxfordshire Partnership - Terms of Reference & Memorandum of Understanding**
To consider amended terms of reference and a Memorandum of Understanding for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.	

ITEM 49: ID: I034330	**Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families**
To seek approval for the provision of support for new refugee families in Oxford and budgetary approval for the commissioning of person centred support.	

ITEM 50: ID: I034365	**Letting of Cadogan House, Oxford**
To consider the letting (and associated terms thereof) of Cadogan House, an industrial property.	

ITEM 51: ID: I034519	**Bus shelter infrastructure and advertising concession contract**
To approve the tender of the contract to manage the bus shelter infrastructure and to delegate authority to the Head of Corporate Property to enter a long-term contract with selected supplier to maintain city bus shelters and manage advertising on these shelters.	

ITEM 52: ID: I034586	**Appointments to Outside Bodies**
A report to agree appointments to charities, trusts, community associations and other organisations for the 2023/24 Council year.	

Cabinet - 9 August 2023

ITEM 58: ID: I034282	**Housing First Acquisition Programme**
To request approval of an acquisition programme of 12 self-contained properties for use in the Council's Housing First programme. It is intended that these purchases will be part funded by a successful bid into DLUHC's Single Homelessness Accommodation programme	

ITEM 59: ID: I033601	**Central Conservation Area Appraisal**
To seek approval of the Central Conservation Area Appraisal.	

ID: I034588	**Fire Servicing and Maintenance Contract**
To seek approval for the award of a fire servicing and maintenance contract.	

Cabinet - 13 September 2023

ITEM 60: ID: I034030	**Redevelopment of Standingford House Enterprise Centre and site at Cave Street to provide managed workspace**
To seek approval to fund and enter into a construction contract for the redevelopment of Standingford House and site at Cave Street, to provide affordable managed workspace.	

ITEM 57: ID: I034075	**Delivery of New Burial Space**
To seek approval for a scheme, and a budget, to deliver new burial space on land owned by the Council, and associated delegations to officers.	

ITEM 61: ID: I033291	**Integrated Performance Report for Q4 2022/23**
To update Cabinet on finance, risk and corporate performance matters as at 31 March 2023.	

ITEM 62:	**Integrated Performance Report for Q1 2023/24**

ID: I033292	
To update Cabinet on finance, risk and corporate performance matters as at 30 June 2023.	

ITEM 63: ID: I033796	**Developing a Sustainable Building Control Service**
Approval is to be sought for the future direction and development of the Building Control Service following an options appraisal.	

ID: I034326	**Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25**

ITEM 65: ID: I034327	**Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23**
To set out the Council's Treasury Management activity and performance for the financial year 2022/23.	

ITEM 66: ID: I034328	**Grant Allocations to Community & Voluntary Organisations 2024/25**
A report to make decisions on the allocation of grants to community and voluntary organisations for 2024/25.	

Scrutiny Work Plan

June 2023 to September 2023

June 2023 – confirmed reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	07 June	Scrutiny Operating Principles 2023/24 Housing Management System Implementation
Housing and Homelessness	15 June	*No business – rescheduled to 05 July to consider the Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families*
Companies Scrutiny Panel	21 June – meeting of the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group	Business of the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group (members of the Companies Scrutiny Panel are invited to attend and participate)
Finance and Performance	26 June (*rescheduled from 08 June*)	*No business – cancelled*
Climate and Environment	27 June	Biodiversity Update (presentation) Technical Advice Note on Heritage Decarbonisation

July 2023 – provisional reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	04 July	Scrutiny work plan 2023/24 Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Charter/Pledge Citizen Experience Strategy
Housing and	05 July	Housing Performance Monitoring Q4

| Homelessness | (*rescheduled from 15 June*) | 2022/23

Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families

Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey |
| Companies Scrutiny Panel | 27 July – meeting of the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group | Business of the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group (members of the Companies Scrutiny Panel are invited to attend and participate) |

August 2023 – provisional reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	01 August	Central Conservation Area Appraisal
Housing and Homelessness	02 August	Housing First Acquisition Programme

Update on Customer Complaints and Feedback (Tenant Involvement)

Action Plan Update on the Housing and Homelessness Panel mini-review (Tenant Involvement and Empowerment) |

September 2023 – provisional reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	05 September	Grant Allocations to Community & Voluntary Organisations 2024/25

Developing a Sustainable Building Control Service

Delivery of a New Burial Space |
| Finance and Performance | 06 September | Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25

Integrated Performance Report for Q4 2022/23

Integrated Performance Report for Q1 2023/24

Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23

Scrutiny Performance Monitoring |
| Climate and | 07 September | Net Zero Masterplan |

Environment		Annual Air Quality Status Report

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**14 June 2023**
Report of:	**Scrutiny Committee**
Title of Report:	**Housing Management System Implementation**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Lucy Pegg, Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	All
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 07 June 2023 to consider a report concerning the Housing Management System Implementation. The report, which is due for Cabinet consideration on 14 June 2023, recommends that Cabinet notes the lessons learned from the system implementation; approves the proposed settlement terms offered by the supplier as referenced in Appendix 4 (exempt from publication) and delegates authority to the Executive Director (Communities and People) in consultation with the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Law and Governance to finalise the terms; recommends to Council the approval of additional budget of £236,000 in 2022-23 as detailed in paragraph 8 of the report; and recommends to Council the inclusion of an additional budgetary amount of £497,000 of capital and £97,000 of revenue over the next 4 year period for the further development of the system (paragraphs 9-11 of the report).

2. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Chapman (Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Financial Services) and Bill Graves (Landlord Services Manager) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

3. Members of the Audit and Governance Committee were invited to join the Scrutiny Committee meeting as non-voting members with speaking rights, given their particular interest in the implementation of the Housing Management System and in the interests of avoiding duplication at meetings. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Fry (Chair) and Councillor R Smith from the Audit and Governance Committee for attending the meeting to participate in discussion and ask questions.

Summary and recommendations

4. Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies introduced the report. Implementation of the Housing Management System had been subject to significant business disruption and delay before the system reached 'business as usual' in November 2022. An external 'lessons learned' report (exempt) had been produced, which was summarised in Appendix 2 to the report, and re-enforced the need for project managers to have regard to the lessons learned when embarking on a project. The report also detailed proposals for the Council to further exploit the Housing Management System and outlined the budgetary implications surrounding this further development.

5. The Committee asked a range of questions, including questions relating to the implementation of the lessons learned, the timescales for further system exploitation, whether any further delays in the system implementation were anticipated, procurement, budget, disaster recovery and software implementation processes.

6. In particular, the Committee noted the significant disruption to system implementation as a result of data migration issues and wanted to understand whether the Council had processes in place to capture the system at a fixed point in time when it was working, so that if/when issues were identified the Council could abort further implementation and revert back to that fixed point in time and then continue implementation from the point at which the system was working. The Committee noted the response from officers that this process was not possible during the implementation of the Housing Management System, however the Committee was conscious that, without such a process in place, reoccurrences of similar issues in future projects of this nature were inevitable, which was not desirable. The Committee was of the view that the Council should have a contingency plan in place that allowed for work to be 'undone' when issues were identified, which would allow systems to revert back to a working point in time, without the need to lose significant amounts of work already undertaken or 'muddle through' issues where it was felt that too much work had been undertaken to 'start again'.

    Recommendation 1: That the Council ensures there is a contingency plan when reaching a critical point in future projects, so that project implementation can be reverted back to an earlier 'working' status if it becomes clear that there are issues and/or errors with implementation.

Report author	Alice Courtney
Job title	Scrutiny Officer
Service area or department	Law and Governance
Telephone	01865 529834
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Appendix A
Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 07 June 2023 concerning the Housing Management System Implementation report. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That the Council ensures there is a contingency plan when reaching a critical point in future projects, so that project implementation can be reverted back to an earlier 'working' status if it becomes clear that there are issues and/or errors with implementation.	Yes	If a software product operates independently without any connections to other systems, managing its changes and upgrades is relatively straightforward. You can take a snapshot of the product at a specific point in time. If any issues arise due to a change or upgrade, you can restore the snapshot and continue operating from the exact moment the snapshot was taken. However, when software is interconnected with other systems as in the case of the housing management system, creating a rollback solution becomes more complex. To achieve this, you need to make copies of the entire suite of software products that are interconnected, along with the underlying infrastructure they rely on. In the case of cloud-hosted systems, you would create cloud copies. These copies serve as a separate environment for development and testing purposes. Whilst it can be done it can come with significant expense. This wasn't undertaken in the case of the housing management system given the complexity and after the first day roll back was not possible. Going forward each system change should have a roll back plan, which sets out the process to be followed and the date beyond which roll back will not be possible. Whilst we are not envisaging future changes of systems on the scale of the housing management system we will consider the scale of the plan for each system on its own merits.

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**14 June 2023**
Report of:	**Housing and Homelessness Panel**
Title of Report:	**Tenancy Agreement**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Panel of the Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Cllr Paula Dunne, Panel Chair
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	Deliver more, affordable housing; Support thriving communities
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Housing and Homelessness Panel met on 24 April 2023 to consider a report on the revised Tenancy Agreement for Council tenants. The report sought to inform panel members of the proposed changes to the updated Tenancy Agreement for secure and introductory Council tenants. The report recommended that the Panel consider the report and agree any recommendations.

Summary and recommendations

2. The Panel was grateful to Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing; Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services; Bill Graves, Landlord Services Manager; and Amie Rickatson, Strategy and Service Development Manager, for attending to

present the report and to answer the Panel's questions.

3. The Panel was advised that the approval of the revised agreement was a decision delegated to officers, but there was consensus on the benefits of it being considered by the Panel.

4. The Landlord Services Manager introduced the report and explained that the Tenancy Agreement had not been revised since 2014, largely owing to the challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new agreement took account of various legislative changes and expectations since then.

5. The Panel established that good practice was to consider revising a tenancy agreement every five years. The Panel considered it would be to the benefit of the Council and its tenants, should the Council commit to considering whether a revision of the agreement was necessary every three years.

Recommendation 1: That the Council considers every three years if it would be appropriate to revise the tenancy agreement.

Report author	Richard Doney
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Service area or department	Law and Governance
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Appendix A
Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of
the Housing and Homelessness Panel of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Housing and Homelessness Panel on 24 April 2023 concerning the report on the updated Tenancy Agreement. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That the Council considers every three years if it would be appropriate to revise the tenancy agreement.	Yes	N/A

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Appendix A
Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the responsible Cabinet Members to recommendations made by the Child Poverty Review Group. These recommendations were endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee on 08 June 2022. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

Recommendation	Responsible Cabinet Member	Agree?	Comment
1) That the Council discusses whether to adopt an Oxford Good Employers Charter as an expansion of the Oxford Living Wage and promote a Charter instead of the Oxford Living Wage alone.	Cllr Brown		With over 100 Oxford Living Wage (OLW) employers including both universities, there is a real opportunity to build on the OLW, in order to further embed better standards of prosperity and inclusion. This aim is highlighted within Oxford's Economic Strategy. There is already complementary activity underway that allows this recommendation to be adopted in significant form. The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP), which the City Council is taking a leading role on, is developing the **Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter** (alongside around 100 local partners including local authorities), which we will promote alongside the OLW. It is very similar in nature to what is proposed and has significant buy-in. The Charter is aimed at organisations and individuals who wish to demonstrate their targeted commitment to its principles and to making a thriving inclusive economy in Oxfordshire that works for local people and businesses alike. Inclusive economies increase the social benefits that flow from, and feed into, economic activity. By reducing inequality and improving opportunities for people and communities, they create tangible benefits for businesses. Signatories to the Charter will be able to

				make a range of pledges on ways in which they will support the aims of the OIEP Charter. These pledges are being devised across a number of inclusive employer themes, which organisations will be able to make. These can be cross referenced with the broader recommendations of the Child Poverty Review Group Report and adopted where appropriate.
2)	That the Council appoints a living wage/good employment champion.	Cllr Brown		This is currently the responsibility of the Leader of the Council so is held at the most senior elected level.
3)	That the Council appoints a child poverty champion.	Cllr Brown		This responsibility is held by the Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities.
4)	That the Council continues to communicate forcefully to central government the impacts of the current inadequate welfare system, and pushes for one which adequately meets the needs of those relying on it.	Cllr Rehman		The Council continues to use all opportunities in communications directly with Government and through representative bodies such as the Local Government Association (LGA) and District Councils' Network (DCN) to make the case for a welfare system that meets need locally, in particular the need to raise the local authority allowance for claimable housing benefit. This includes officers attending quarterly meetings with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) at which they regularly discuss the impacts of local and national welfare issues.
5)	That the Council commits to maintaining advice centre funding on, at minimum, an inflation-adjusted basis for the next four years.	Cllr Rehman		Our commitment to the advice centres has been well documented as part of the grants review. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) shows our overall commitment through the Community Impact Fund and commissioned services. Like all local authorities we are under increasing financial pressure, but will do all we can to protect our contribution to these valuable services. All decisions about the grant funding envelope are taken as part of the Council's usual budget process, with the availability of government funding a major factor which we cannot control, while decisions on individual grants to organisations are considered through the grant allocation process.

6) That the Council continues to resource challenges to viability assessments which, if accepted, would result in significant shortfalls from the Local Plan requirements.	Cllr Upton		The report states that "Whilst the Council's Local Plan states that for qualifying developments, 50% must be made available for social housing, typically developers seek to reduce this on the grounds that doing so makes the development unviable." This is incorrect, in two ways. First, the Oxford Local Plan 2036 policy H2 as adopted required that a minimum of 50% of qualifying developments should be for affordable housing, of which at least 80% should be social housing. The remainder could be provided as intermediate forms of affordable housing, which includes homes for rent, shared ownership and so on. However since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2020 the Government has introduced its First Homes policy, which has altered the percentages of different forms of affordable housing required by policy H2. As notified by the Council in a Technical Advice Note published in March 2022, the Government now requires that 25% of all affordable housing must be First Homes, which are a form of affordable housing for sale at a discounted price to first time buyers. The Government further required that the total value of affordable housing captured by the revised policy should be the same. As a result of this the requirement that a minimum of 50% of dwellings on qualifying developments be affordable remains, but the split of tenures is now a minimum of 25% First Homes, a minimum of 70% social housing and up to 5% intermediate tenures. Secondly, it is not "typical" that developers seek to reduce the percentage on viability grounds in Oxford. The Oxford Local Plan 2036 was adopted after changes in national planning policy guidance made clear that the viability of policies – including affordable housing policy requirements – should be tested as part of the plan

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			making process. There is a still an exceptional circumstances policy where there are exceptional costs to a develop a particular site, which uses a cascade approach that is set out in Appendix 3.3 of the Local Plan. To date only one application considered under the policies of the Local Plan 2036 has asked for that exceptional circumstances policy to be invoked. That application – Jericho Boatyard - was refused by the Planning Committee on the basis that the submitted viability evidence was flawed. The applicant appealed, and while the Inspector found that the submitted viability evidence underestimated the value of the development to a small extent, this wasn't sufficient to justify a refusal of the application.
			When an application seeks to invoke the exceptional circumstances policy in relation to viability the Council has always used, and will continue always to use, properly resourced independent expertise to robustly challenge the submitted figures and ensure that decisions are based on verified evidence rather than the untested claims of an applicant.
7) That the Council exerts all the influence it can to see developers building homes for social rent rather than shared ownership.	Cllr Upton		As the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Oxford 2023 to 2028 both make clear, there is a shortage of all forms of affordable housing in the city, whether for social rent, for shared ownership or for other forms of intermediate tenure. The priority for the Council is therefore to pursue all forms of affordable housing tenure not as alternatives to one another, but together. Recently completed shared ownership schemes built by the City Council's housing company OX Place have been highly successful, showing the demand that exists for them is substantial.
			The Council set out its minimum requirements for

| | | | affordable housing and the minimum requirements for particular types of tenures for all qualifying sites in policy H2 of the Local Plan. The mixture of tenures has been subsequently altered by the Government's First Homes policy, as outlined in the response to recommendation 6 above. In determining a planning application the Council can only take into account whether or not these minimum requirements are met; it cannot require a different mixture of tenures through the planning process.

However the Council is able, through direct delivery (with OX Place, the Council's wholly owned housing company, or otherwise), to increase the numbers of affordable housing units on particular sites through the use of Homes England grants or other forms of external financial support such as the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. While sites would still have to meet the minimum requirements in the Local Plan for affordable housing and social rented housing, using grant funding in this way allows additional units of affordable housing to be built, of all tenures. On larger schemes having a mixture of tenures is desirable from a place-making point of view, as well as helping to address the demand for all forms of different affordable housing tenure.

Recent schemes that have used additional or external funding in this way include Gibbs Crescent (developed by A2Dominion) - 140 homes; Elsfield Hall – 26 homes, and Cannons Court (OX Place) - 38 homes; Littlemore Park (Catalyst) - 273 homes; Barton Park (Places for People) - an additional 96 homes; and William Morris Close (L&G) - 86 homes. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8) That on top of the Council's prioritisation of retrofitting Council homes with the worst EPC ratings, vulnerability of the tenants is also used as a means of prioritisation. | Cllr L Smith | | As the Council is unlikely to have sufficient capital funds to meet the costs of retrofit of its housing stock, it is seeking all opportunities to secure additional funding for this purpose – particularly from Government. Each |

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| | | | Government retrofit funding round sets out detailed qualifying criteria which in some cases includes an assessment of means of the financial means of the tenant and in other cases focuses simply on the existing EPC rating of the property.

The Council will seek to ensure that vulnerable tenants benefit from retrofit programmes. As the criteria typically changes from one bidding round to the next, it is impossible for the Council to determine to what extent the financial needs of tenants will form part of the targeting approach for future retrofit programmes. Therefore our primary focus is on identifying those properties with poor EPC ratings and hence works that will achieve both the largest financial savings for the tenant and reduction in carbon emissions. As around 2,500 council homes are below EPC C rating and almost all 8,000 will require works to get to net zero carbon emissions – it is planned that all Oxford tenants will benefit in due course. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9) That the Council includes within its workforce equalities plan a specific section on developing opportunities for young people. | Cllr Chapman | | This is something we have already tackled with our apprentice programme and, budgets permitting, is something we have planned for next year. The work involves our new Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, our Recruitment Consultant and our Learning and Development Consultant. It's about attracting and developing local talent and meeting future workforce needs. |
| 10) That the Council includes within its staff survey questions about whether the Council is a family-friendly employer. | Cllr Chapman | | We are reviewing the staff survey questions and will consider this for inclusion. |
| 11) That the Council considers and agrees a cross-party motion committing to formally adopting the socio-economic duty and using its influence to encourage local partner institutions to do the same. | Cllr Brown | | On 03 October 2022 Council passed a motion requesting that the Head of Corporate Strategy submit a report to Cabinet with options to:

a. Implement the Socio-economic Duty within all Council policies over the next eighteen months; and |

			b. Encourage partnership institutions, including Oxford University, to adopt the Socio-economic Duty.
12) That the Council adopts the socio-economic duty within the next 12 months.	Cllr Brown		Any decision over adoption by the Council of the socio-economic duty - and if so, the associated timeframe - should be subject to the options set out in the report to Cabinet, including an assessment of resources needed. Cabinet should base any decision around adoption following an assessment of those options. Given the potential breadth of scope of the socio-economic duty, and potential need for additional budget to support the work, it is unlikely it could be adopted into all areas of Council policy within the next 12 months.
13) That the Leader of the Council's portfolio is expanded to include poverty prevention.	Cllr Brown		This is part of our work on encouraging the principles of an inclusive economy.
14) That the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive are identified as the lead councillor and officer for implementing the socio-economic duty.	Cllr Brown		Arrangements for any implementation of the socio-economic duty should be considered as part of the options report to Cabinet requested in the 03 October 2022 Council motion which was passed by Council.
15) That the Council develops clear metrics on tackling and preventing poverty, and includes those metrics within the KPIs it monitors in its Quarterly Integrated Performance Report	Cllr Rehman		As part of our Thriving Communities Strategy we have implemented a commitment to meaningful measures. We have created a meaningful and balanced approach to measurement, ensuring we can sensibly track our performance and progress, we will: • Use numbers so we are aware of how many people use our services. • Use metrics to demonstrate value for money. • We will targets and laid out in our action plan to increase inclusivity and address inequality. • Use techniques such as collecting and publishing the stories of our communities and their lived experience of living in the City, case studies and videos to bring outcomes to life and learn from people's lived experiences A progress update will be presented to Cabinet annually.
16) That the Council produces a Poverty Strategy within the next eighteen months.	Cllr Rehman		Following an extensive piece of work and two-month city conversation with hundreds of residents and partners the

			Council's Thriving Communities Strategy was agreed by cabinet in January 2023. This Strategy consumes our Children and Young Person's Strategy and continues our approach to use the Ready by 21 Framework. Ready by 21 Framework is a holistic approach to supporting young people, with a focus on young people who are the most disadvantaged. As such a separate strategy is not recommended as this will lead to duplication.
17) That the Council agrees, subject to securing funding, to hold a poverty truth commission within the next 12 months.	Cllr Brown		The impact of poverty on Oxford citizens and actions to prevent and alleviate poverty are a core focus of the Council's Thriving Communities Strategy, which was the subject of more than 100 separate engagement and consultation meetings with a very broad range of representative groups that reflect the diverse citizens of Oxford. As a result, tackling poverty and the impacts of poverty are at the centre of the *Thriving Communities Strategy* which is already adopted. It should be noted the Oxford Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change cost c£160,000 to stage. With limited budget and resources, any funding would better be directed at delivering the *Thriving Communities Strategy action plan on tackling inequalities* rather than on holding a poverty truth commission.
18) That the Council investigates options for securing external funding to support a poverty truth commission.	Cllr Brown		See response to recommendation 17 above. Work required to secure external funding would still require resources to be diverted from other programmes of work.
19) That the Council collects and publishes the stories of young people and their experience of living in the City.	Cllr Munkonge		Our Youth Ambition team produces an annual needs assessment; the lived experience of young people is central to how this is developed.
20) That the Council provides cash support for those receiving poverty-related support, not vouchers or support in kind.	Cllr Rehman		The Council's primary support comes through the Oxford Community Impact Fund (OCIF). This fund replaces all former funding programmes for communities including:

| | | | Culture Fund, Green Neighbourhood Scheme, Youth Ambition Fund, Youth Ambition Holiday Activities Fund, Small Grants and Open Bidding.

If after reading the webpage linked above you have any queries, please email the Grants Team: grants@oxford.gov.uk |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21) That the Council contacts shops listed as accepting Household Support Grant or Healthy Start vouchers to ensure that they are accepted, and provides a service whereby individuals or agencies can highlight where problems occur. | Cllr Rehman | | Our plan with this round of the Household Support Fund as with previous versions has been to work with suppliers directly to avoid this from happening by purchasing items on behalf of residents. We have encountered a small number of issues with energy vouchers which we worked with the local retailers to resolve. |
| 22) That the Council finds out what the planned governance arrangements are for the local ICB 'place' or 'sub-place' | Cllr Brown / Cllr Upton | | The Oxfordshire Place-Based Partnership has officer representatives from the county's Primary Care Networks, hospital trusts, Healthwatch, Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action (OCVA) and County Council. Mark Stone, Chief Executive South & Vale Councils was, up until recently, the representative for City and District Councils – however as of June 2023, this role has passed to Caroline Green, Chief Executive Oxford City Council. It is anticipated that Caroline will hold this role for at least a year, pending the outcome of a review of arrangements.

Caroline will engage with the City and the other District Councils through the Chief Executives group and through direct liaison with the City and District Health Liaison Officer – a role fulfilled by Oxford City Council.

As a result of inputs from City and Districts via the Place Based Partnership, changes were made to the initial draft BOB ICP strategy to better ensure linkage with the breadth of our work that helps address health inequalities – including our work in both housing and leisure provision – which are both determinants of health.

The Council has made good progress to connect with the |

			Integrated Care Board (ICB), this has included meetings with the Chair and CEO of the ICB and we have been involved in developing the new ICB Strategy. We attend the Health Inequalities Network and are represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board and the working group developing the new Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
23) That the Council lobbies appropriately to ensure it is included in any local ICB 'place' or 'sub-place'.	Cllr Brown / Cllr Upton		See response to recommendation 22 above.
24) That the Council agrees an executive member to represent the Council, preferably the Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth, Recovery and Partnerships and/or the Chief Executive as appropriate.	Cllr Brown		See response to recommendation 22 above. The Leader does represent the council on the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) and many other partnerships, and is joined by the Chief Executive on many of them.
25) That the Council's representatives seek the agreement of other Framework members to establish a sub-Group to the Recovery and Renewal Framework focusing on child poverty, or poverty prevention.	Cllr Brown		The countywide group that is taking forward work linked to the Recovery and Renewal Framework is the Communities Joint Working Group, which meets weekly. The Head of Community Services attends for Oxford City Council, and the City and District Health Liaison Officer also attends. The Group is currently focused on ensuring joined up responses to the cost of living crises. Consideration of the need to tackle Child Poverty is central in framing those responses.
26) That the Council requests that a number of KPIs which are both anti-poverty in nature and relate to the Framework's aims be developed and monitored on a quarterly basis.	Cllr Brown		There are existing recognised KPIs in place that relate to poverty, including some of those captured within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and in the Multiple Indices of Deprivation. These are used to ensure an accurate and holistic understanding of the nature of poverty and help design responses with other agencies. The creation of new KPIs that are not backed by ONS data are unlikely to be accurate or accepted by the wide range of partners that need to be engaged in work to address poverty.
27) That the Council proposes to OSP partners that the OSP adopts a new theme – embedding poverty	Cllr Brown		The new Chair of the Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP), Paul James, CEO River Learning Trust has proposed a

prevention in policy - and that for public sector organisations this is based around adopting the socio-economic duty.			key OSP theme should be tackling inequalities. The report requested for Cabinet on options to adopt the socio-economic duty will also consider, if adopted, how other stakeholders may be encouraged to follow suit.
28) That the Council proposes to OSP partners that they invite Graham Whitham for advice on how to take forward adopting the socio-economic duty.	Cllr Brown		See response to recommendation 27 above.
29) That the Council holds a discussion at its next Parish Council Forum to explore the issue of child poverty in Oxford, parish contributions and ways of integrating and improving efforts.	Cllr Brown		This sounds like a good idea, we would like to talk this through with the Forum to see how we best design this session.
30) That the Council seeks, in the Oxfordshire Food Strategy, that either food larders are made more accessible to those in poverty, or greater provision is made for them.	Cllr Rehman		The Council is an active member of the community food network, which the Council set up in partnership with Good Food Oxfordshire to support the system. This includes food banks, larders, fridges and other community food providers. We are working with partners to continue to strengthen the community food system through a variety of mechanisms including opening hours, volunteers, food quality, group buying, effective chilled/frozen storage and various other initiatives. A food strategy was endorsed by Cabinet in June 2022 and an action plan is now being developed. We are actively seeking to incorporate measures that ensure children have sufficient, healthy food into Oxford's Food Action Working Group's action plan.
31) That the Council provides support to 'cash first' or 'food first' organisations as less stigmatising support mechanisms for those in poverty.	Cllr Rehman		We provide funding for a wide range of local not-for-profit groups, including 'cash first' or 'food first' organisations, via Oxford Community Impact Fund. Like all local authorities we are under increasing financial pressure and our grant funding is limited, but we also offer bespoke funding advice sessions to support organisations to source additional external funding from other grant giving bodies.
32) That the Council seeks that the Oxfordshire Food Strategy gives full consideration to how parents in poverty can access formula and baby food.	Cllr Rehman		The Oxfordshire Food Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet in June 2022. An Action plan will be developed that will follow early next year. The Community Food Network

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			within the City is considering items such as closer ties with supermarkets, donations and crowdfunding that may help to support this.
33) That the Council leverages the relationships it has as a market host and landlord to explore how unsold food might be distributed to local organisations and people in need.	Cllr Rehman		The national picture is one at the moment where the amount of quality and healthy food surplus, such as what might be deemed 'staples' has reduced within the national and local systems. That said, in line with the above, we will continue to work with the community food system including SOFEA, food banks, larders and fridges to broker closer relationships with supermarkets. We will also look at (similar to what we delivered during the COVID-19 pandemic) where those that can afford, are able to donate specific food products.
34) That the Council donates its old iPads and laptops to Getting Oxfordshire Online.	Cllr Chapman		The Council will continue to donate old devices to Getting Oxfordshire Online to address digital poverty within the City, specifically in City schools. Circa 270 laptops and other devices were donated in 2021 and these were distributed though schools and to newly arrived migrants from Afghanistan and Ukraine. We will look at sharing some case studies with partners to encourage others to donate their old devices.
35) That the Council provides financial education as part of its Youth Ambition work	Cllr Munkonge		The Youth Ambition team and partners will look to evolve some of the youth work curriculum to include this.
36) That the Council briefs debt and benefit advisors and current tenants on the current potential downsides of not being on an electric meter.	Cllr L Smith / Cllr Chapman		The Council's Energy Advice Officers advocate credit meters and smart meters together. Briefings for commissioned advice centres can be organised.
37) That the Council adopts as a policy in its forthcoming Oxford Plan a position that parks and public space, particularly in less affluent areas, must be safeguarded from development.	Cllr Upton		The current Local Plan explains how policies for parks and public spaces are derived from strategic documents in the evidence base, such as the City Council's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy which sets out which sites are needed and which might be surplus to requirements. All Local Plans are required to balance the need for housing alongside a wide range of social, environmental and economic needs using policies derived from evidence, and that will continue to be the case. Individual sites are assessed against those policies and

			that evidence base, and a blanket policy in the new Local Plan that overrode that assessment is unlikely to be found sound when the Plan is submitted for examination in due course.
38) That the Council discusses with the local universities and the Colleges whether, in light of the reducing access to sports and recreational facilities amongst poorer young people, access outside of term time to these facilities can be broadened.	Cllr Munkonge		This is a key action within the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy which was approved at Cabinet in July 2022. There are currently some sports clubs that can gain access to facilities. Oxford Brookes for example allows full community access to its facilities in Headington and Oxford Cricket Club has very good access at OUP. The Head of Community Services and Active Communities Manager regularly meet with the Directors of Sport for Oxford University and Oxford Brookes University. Engagement with each of the Oxford Colleges is more challenging, although we are continuing to pursue this.
39) That as part of the Council's review of the working of its hubs, it makes specific reference to the opportunities for closer working between them and the City's advice centres.	Cllr Rehman		Our hubs were a COVID-19 response and we now have four locality managers who coordinate a local network of staff and partners. The advice centres are an important part of this local network and we will continue to work very closely with them to support residents.
40) That the Council adopts as a strategic grants priority for its next round of funding poverty prevention, including youth club provision in more deprived areas.	Cllr Rehman		A report will be submitted to Cabinet annually to enable a transparent discussion of the following years' grants criteria and how each criteria is weighted.
41) That the Council makes available long-term unused garages to voluntary and community groups for storage of food or baby products.	Cllr Turner		Where we have sufficient demand for garages, we have undertaken works to ensure that garages are wind and watertight and have re-let them. Of the remaining vacant garages, in areas where there is little or no demand, the majority of those garages are in need of works to ensure they are wind and water tight. These works will be costly and in their current condition the units are unsuitable for storage. A piece of work is underway to review the garage portfolio including investigating alternative uses for the sites. At present we have a number of garages let to charities, who do fund the full costs. The current weekly cost for a

			garage is £20.40, and this option would be open to others.
42) That the Council produces a specific communications strategy – leaflets, videos and social media, but also personalised text and email – promoting access to sources of financial and food support.	Cllr Chapman		There is already an ongoing communications and engagement programme involving leaflets and videos on the provision of support in response to the cost of living crisis. This includes information on financial and food support.

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**12 July 2023**
Report of:	**Executive Director (Communities and People)**
Title of Report:	**Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Policy 2023-26**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To report on progress made on Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Action Plan for 2022/23 and present an updated Safeguarding Policy for 2023-26
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Shaista Aziz, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities
Corporate Priority:	Supporting Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Note** the key achievements of the Safeguarding work delivered through Oxford City Council during 2022/23;

2. **Approve** the Safeguarding Policy 2023-2026;

3. **Note** the Safeguarding Action Plan 2023/24; and

4. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Communities and People), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, to make minor changes to the approved policy in order to continue its alignment with the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Policy 2023-26
Appendix 2	Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Action Plan 2023/24
Appendix 3	Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Procedures
Appendix 4	Risk Register
Appendix 5	EIA Full Assessment

Introduction and background

1. This annual report to Cabinet sets out how Oxford City Council fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties by:

    - Outlining the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Oxfordshire.

    - Sharing the results of the safeguarding self-assessment audit 2022.

    - Highlighting the key achievements and progress made in relation to the safeguarding work delivered by Oxford City Council.

    - Updating our Action Plan through the identification of areas to strengthen in 2022/23

    - Approving Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Policy 2023-26.

Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Responsibilities

2. Oxford City Council has a legal duty of care to ensure children and adults at risk are protected within the Council's facilities, services and activities. The Council has legal duties under the Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014 to:

    - promote the welfare and development needs of children and adults with care and support needs are met

    - protect them from harm, abuse and maltreatment

    - prevent harm to children's health or development and ensuring that they grow up with the provision of safe and effective care enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

3. Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Policy sets out how the Council fulfils these obligations and supports staff, Members and volunteers in all aspects of safeguarding. The Safeguarding Policy can be found at Appendix 1.

4. The Safeguarding Procedures set out how staff and contractors should respond to safeguarding incidents. The Safeguarding Procedures can be found at Appendix 3.

5. As of April 1st 2023, Oxford City Council's safeguarding coordination function moved from the Policy and Partnership Team to the Community Safety Service, within Regulatory Services and Community Safety. The Executive Director, Communities and People, is the accountable officer, and the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety is the responsible officer, for embedding these safeguarding duties within Oxford City Council.

6. There is a four-tiered approach to supporting staff with their safeguarding responsibilities:

    - Staff training

    - Line management support

    - Safeguarding Champions network

    - Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

7. Quarterly internal Strategic Safeguarding meetings and Safeguarding Champion meetings identify training needs, review trends in reporting, and monitor and coordinate delivery of the Safeguarding Action Plan.

8. All safeguarding incidents are recorded on MyConcern, a web-based reporting system conforming to GDPR requirements. Quarterly reports are published in Safeguarding newsletters to show staff across the organisation the current safeguarding themes and trends. Service area and trend reports are discussed at the Strategic Safeguarding Group.

Oxfordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)

9. Since the introduction of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Oxfordshire County Council, the Integrated Care Board and Thames Valley Police have had statutory responsibility and accountability of safeguarding arrangements in Oxfordshire. The MASA Executive Group consists of the Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council, the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police and the Chief Executive of the Integrated Care Board.

10. The development, delivery and quality monitoring of safeguarding service provision is the responsibility of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB). The governance framework can be found in the background papers.

11. In November 2022, Oxford City Council passed representation of the Oxfordshire district councils on OSCB and OSAB sub-groups to Cherwell District Council. Oxford City Council continue to attend the OSAB Full Board, OSCB Full Board, and OSCB Child Exploitation and Training sub-groups.

12. OSCB's priorities for 2022-2024 are:

    - Leadership and Governance

    - Direction on improving practice

    - Scrutiny and quality assurance

13. More details of the work of OSCB can be found here: https://www.oscb.org.uk/

14. The OSAB have developed a new strategic plan for 2023-2027 and the agreed priorities are:

    - Working in Partnership

    - Preventing harm occurring

    - Responding swiftly when harm occurs

    - Engaging effectively with people at risk

15. More details of the work of OSAB can be found here: https://www.osab.co.uk/

Oxford City Council safeguarding highlights in 2022/2023

Safeguarding Audit 2022

16. Section 11, Children Act 2004 requires Oxford City Council to complete an annual self-assessment of its safeguarding children activities. This has been developed into a joint self-assessment audit between the OSCB and OSAB. The full self-assessment is available as a background paper to this report.

17. Oxford City Council is required to evidence its standards in the following areas:

- Service Delivery, Development & Effective Practice

- Safer Recruitment, Staff Development & Effective Learning

- People's Experiences of Safeguarding

18. The evidence for each standard is assessed and given a rating:

- Green – Fully met and evidenced – Best Practice

- Amber – the standard/compliance point is not met but work has begun or work is underway but has experienced delays in completion

- Red – the standard/compliance point is not met, work is not underway and there are issues with commencing work

19. To inform the self-assessment Oxford City Council staff complete an annual safeguarding questionnaire. In October 2022, 423 responses were received, an increase from previous years of 201 and 198 responses.

20. 22 of 23 standards were rated Green with one standard rated Amber: Standard: 'How do you know that your organisation's complaints processes are effective and that children and adults with care and support needs are empowered to challenge services when expected standards/responsibilities are not met?'

21. Although services such as Anti-Social Behaviour and Youth Ambition empower their users to challenge services and make complaints, it was recognised that formal processes for complaints reporting were under review and improvements such as reporting on specific safeguarding complaints, are underway.

22. The Oxford City Council Safeguarding Audit 2022 can be found in the background papers to this report.

Support for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants

23. The Refugee and Resettlement Team was created in 2022 and lead Oxford City Council's strategic and operational response to asylum, refugee and migrant resettlement, and hosts and administers the countywide Homes for Ukraine Re-matching Team. The teams work in partnership with community groups to improve access to services for refugee, migrant and asylum seeker groups and the relevant safeguarding teams on a case by case basis.

24. Oxford City Council actively supported increasing access to interpreting services to ensure that residents from all nationalities are able to access appropriate services safely and the Council have a designated contract to offer translation services where required.

Child exploitation

25. Regular attendance at the OSCB CE Subgroup by the Community Safety Service Manager continues, sharing policy developments and delivering operational activities. ASBIT Officers attend the police Joint Tasking and Coordination meeting that identifies and support young people at risk, and coordinates activities to tackle their exploiters.

26. The relaunch of Hotel Watch is in development, working with hospitality providers to train staff, challenge and report incidents of concern regarding child and adult exploitation.

27. Oxford City Council staff have engaged with and are supporting the recommendations from the recent 'Jacob' serious case review and participate in all three work streams highlighted within the report in relation to Education, Child exploitation and System approach.

28. Oxford City Council's Youth Ambition team provide activities and groups for young people in high deprivation areas of the city. The Youth Ambition team are highly skilled in safeguarding and work in partnership with organisations across the city.

Adult homeless support in adverse weather

29. This winter saw the successful countywide approach to Severe Weather Emergency Provision that provided emergency accommodation to rough sleepers on 32 nights where the temperature was forecast to be below freezing.

30. During the long hot spells of summer 2022, the Council coordinated partnership working to ensure people who were rough sleeping were protected from extreme heat.

Adult exploitation

31. A New Oxfordshire Adult Exploitation Guidance and Pathways document, developed by Oxford City Council's Anti-Slavery Coordinator, was approved and adopted by partners across Oxfordshire. Since the launch of this new pathway, there has been a significant increase in adult exploitation alerts.

32. 60 cases of adult exploitation have been reported in the City since the data was recorded centrally. 43 of these were individual people, 7 were businesses of concern and 10 were premises of concern. 36 people have been removed from their exploitative situations and work continues to support other people in these situations.

33. Alerts received were from the Home Office, the Single Competent Authority responsible for the National Referral Mechanism, council departments, Adult Social Care and NGO's. Two of the alerts were identified through reports on the Council's MyConcern safeguarding database.

34. In 2022, Oxford City Council led the Violence Against Women and Girls: Safe Journey, Safe Destination partnership project to increase safety in the night-time economy. Core project group organisations included Thames Valley Police, University of Oxford, Brookes University and the City Council.

35. The project received £420k from the Home Office to develop local initiatives which centred on the development of the Oxford City NightSafe Network. This is a network of organisations operating in the night-time economy who, through sharing information and resources, have important roles to play in reducing the risk of violence and harassment to women and girls.

36. The project funded improvements in CCTV, lighting, and other situational crime reduction activities in Oxford and neighbouring towns. It introduced the Oxford City Angels who support vulnerable people during the evening period, set-up a network of Safe Places as respite locations for people in need and improved the management of Park End Street through a new taxi rank, taxi marshals and improved lighting.

Domestic abuse

37. A strategic, planned approach to domestic abuse continues to be taken forward with Oxford City Council's active contribution to the development and delivery of a countywide plan and continued delivery of bespoke services for victims of domestic abuse.

38. Oxford City Council's ASBIT Manager is the Council's domestic abuse lead and represented the District Councils in the commissioning process for the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service and the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Service. They are also heavily involved in the delivery of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy and the Safe Accommodation Strategy action plans.

39. Oxford City Council is working towards the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation which will take approximately 18 months to complete. Work continues towards the Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation which is currently in the 'Health Check Stage', identifying good practice, gaps and learning.

40. Two Domestic Abuse Housing Link workers were employed in 2022. The specialist team work closely with domestic abuse victims and survivors with complex needs to ensure that they are housed safely, and their needs are being met. Case examples form an agenda item at the quarterly safeguarding Champion meetings.

Learning and training

41. Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Coordinator joined the OSCB trainer pool and attends trainer workshops.

42. The safeguarding awareness briefing training evaluation form was moved online in July 2022, in line with the Safeguarding Boards' evaluation process. 113 responses have been received, 111 are marked as 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to each of the following questions:

    • I know who we are safeguarding

    • I know why we have this responsibility

    • I know who to seek support and advice from

    • I know how and when to report a concern

    • I know where to get further information

43. Two responses which state 'neither agree/disagree' were followed up by the Safeguarding Coordinator to ensure officers understood all of the above questions.

44. Feedback is used to inform future awareness training discussions and scenario discussions. Feedback comments are responded to, where appropriate, by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

45. The OSCB Neglect Strategy 2020/23 was developed in response to data that showed neglect was a primary reason for safeguarding referrals in Oxfordshire. Training was delivered to Council staff and in October 2022, the staff survey showed twenty officers had used the self-neglect policy and eight members of staff have used the Children's Neglect Toolkit.

46. Between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023, 239 MyConcern reports were recorded. Housing Services raised the most concerns followed by Business

Improvement and Regulatory Services and Community Safety. The most frequently reported concerns were:

- Domestic abuse/violence

- Mental ill health

- Suicidal thoughts

47. The increasing trend in suicidal threats, attempts and suicidal thoughts highlighted the need for further training and the republishing of Oxford City Council's suicide threat guidance for staff, including a section on staff welfare.

48. Twenty-nine safeguarding awareness briefings were held in 2022/23, an increase of 20% on the previous year. Trainers meet quarterly to review and update the training package in line with local and national updates and evaluation forms.

49. Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), and their national and local recommendations, are included in the safeguarding awareness briefings which are mandatory for all staff.

50. Five rapid reviews were returned to the CSPR subgroup in 2022. Rapid reviews inform Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews however, all returns from Oxford City Council were 'nil' returns as the Council had no contact with the child or family members.

51. Oxford Direct Services (ODS) training was updated and delivered throughout 2022 in partnership with Oxford City Council. Additional MyConcern training was provided to managers. ODS' MyConcern recording rate has increased by 420% since 2020 as a direct result of Oxford City Council's engagement.

52. Newsletters have been released quarterly throughout the year to all staff.

The key areas of focus for 2023/24

53. Operational areas of focus for the coming year can be found in the 2023-2024 Safeguarding Action Plan, Appendix 2:

- Increase communications, ensure trainer understanding of the Service Integration Project, Early Help and Locality Community Support Service tools including Strengths and Needs.

- Recruit additional safeguarding champions to ensure each service area has at least one representative

- Increased communications, visual aids

- Identify appropriate training for individual teams and promote uptake

- Identify current whistleblowing culture and areas for improvement

- Identify complaint management systems and data relating to safeguarding concerns

- Scope Safeguarding Audit 2023

54. The Council's 2023-2024 Business Plan includes the following strategic activities:

- Work with partners to continue to implement the countywide rough sleeping and single homelessness strategy to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping. Work with commissioning partners and the alliance of organisations

delivering services to evaluate the delivery of a housing-led approach – including supporting people through more flexible and responsive services to ensure that the new services are effective.

- With Oxfordshire County Council, which is now investing in youth service provision in Oxford, review our Youth Ambition programme and seek closer partnership working to achieve a more efficient and effective joint approach to support children and young people.

- Embed the new locality-based model for supporting our tenants and residents, shaped by their views and needs, and work with other landlords to improve engagement and service delivery.

- Chair the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership to tackle the city's community safety priorities - modern slavery, serious violence, and disruption of organised crime, violence against women and girls, and anti-social behaviour.

- Continue to work towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation - work started in December 2022 and may take up to two years for full accreditation.

Financial implications

55. Oxford City Council makes an annual contribution towards the running costs of OSCB £10,000, and OSAB £5,000. The Council has one member of staff who is a member of the OSCB training pool.

56. The safeguarding system annual licence fee is budgeted at £4,500.

57. The Safeguarding Coordinator post annual salary cost is £37,334.

58. Oxford City Council make an annual contribution to Cherwell District Council for their attendance at safeguarding board subgroup meetings, on behalf of all four district councils, including South and Vale, and West Oxfordshire.

Legal issues

59. Oxford City Council's legal responsibilities are set out in the Children Act 1989/2004, Care Act 2014, Modern Slavery Act 2015, Homelessness Reduction Act 2018, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Equality Act 2010 and Children & Social Work Act 2017. The Council has specific legal responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014 to make sure the welfare and development needs of children are met and that children are protected from harm.

60. Failure to meet these legal responsibilities would increase the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults, and cause significant reputational damage for the Council.

Level of risk

61. The Risk Register can be found in Appendix 4.

Equalities impact

62. The Council's Safeguarding Policy Equality Impact Assessment was carried out in May 2023, Appendix 5.

63. The Safeguarding Policy was developed to have a positive impact on each equality strand.

64. The monitoring arrangements for any adverse impact in future includes:

- Quarterly strategic safeguarding group meeting chaired by Head of Business Improvement
- Quarterly Safeguarding Champion and Designated Officer meeting
- Annual review in line with Safeguarding action plan
- Annual self-assessment

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

65. No carbon or environmental impacts have been identified. It is considered that the proposal does not affect the council's climate emergency commitments of pursuing a zero carbon Oxford.

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Background Papers:
1. Safeguarding Self-assessment 2022
2. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) Governance Structure

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Appendix 1

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Oxford City Council Safeguarding Policy 2023-26

Document	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Policy
Owner	Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Author	Laura Jones
Date Reviewed	May 2023
Review due	May 2024

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

1.1   This policy sets out the Council's approach to fulfilling its safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

1.2   The policy includes the Council's duties to its employees, Councillors and volunteers working for or on behalf of the Council in relation, and its role in promoting well-being and preventing, responding and supporting our citizen's in safeguarding matters, in particular safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

1.3   This policy applies to all City Council employees, which include contractors and agency staff, all elected Councillors and any person volunteering for Oxford City Council.

1.4   This policy should be read in conjunction with Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Procedures.

1.5   Safeguarding procedures, advice and contact details can be found on the Oxford City Council intranet page or website.

2. Legal Framework

2.1   Under the legal framework of the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Care Act 2014, the Council has specific duties to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and adults with care and support needs.

2.2   The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) is designed to protect and empower people who may lack the mental capacity to make their own decisions about their care and treatment. It applies to people aged 16 and over.

2.3   Oxford City Council must engage as appropriate in any reviews or information sharing in relation to the death of a child or vulnerable adult, as laid out in Chapter 5: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Section 43 and 44 of the Care Act 2014.

2.4   There are fundamental differences between the legislative framework for safeguarding for children and for adults, which recognise an adult's right to self-determination.

3. Oxfordshire's Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

3.1   The Children and Social Work Act 2017 established collective responsibility and accountability for safeguarding arrangements lies with Oxfordshire County Council, the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and Thames Valley Police: the three safeguarding partners.

3.2   The three safeguarding partners in Oxfordshire work together as an Executive Group and delegate the development, delivery and quality monitoring of safeguarding service provision is the responsibility of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB).

3.3   Oxford City Council will be an active member of both OSCB and OSAB, working with partners to develop and adhere to a collective approach to safeguarding in Oxfordshire.

3.4   Robust communication and escalation processes are in place that complements the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) strategies.

3.5   An annual Performance and Quality Assurance (PAQA) audit will be completed, as required by the OSCB PAQA Subgroup.

3.6   The use of pathways and awareness of joint protocols will be promoted, e.g. the Hoarding Protocol and the MARM process, we will develop toolkits and support and promote cooperation with boards, including joint funding and attending full board meetings.

3.7   We will ensure safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards requirements.

3.8   The OSCB and OSAB joint annual self-assessment will be completed. Standards which are reported on in the self-assessment and measured against in the annual safeguarding action plan are:

- Leadership, Strategy and Working Together

- Service Delivery, Development & Effective Practice

- Commissioning Arrangements

- Safer Recruitment, Staff Development & Effective Learning

4. Roles and responsibilities

Employees, members and volunteers

4.1   All employees, members and volunteers are responsible for carrying out their duties in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs. They must also act in a way that protects them from wrongful allegations of abuse. They must bring matters of concern about safety and welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs to the attention of their line manager or a Safeguarding Champion.

Heads of Service

4.2   All Heads of Service must ensure that their employees and volunteers are subject to appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and that their employees, members and volunteers comply with this policy and procedures.

Line Managers

4.3   All Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that their employees and volunteers have the appropriate training.

4.4   All Line Managers are responsible for safer recruitment of employees and volunteers in their service area and being aware of the policy on recruiting people with a criminal record.

4.5   All Line Managers are also responsible for adhering to the appraisal process and for including safeguarding in one to ones and team meetings, where appropriate.

5. Safeguarding governance

Executive Director of Communities and People

5.1   The Executive Director, Communities and People has accountability for safeguarding in Oxford City Council.
5.2   The Executive Director is the first point of contact for any deaths of children, young people or adults with care and support needs on council premises, in order that the Council ensures there is an effective response.

The Cabinet Board Member

5.3   The Cabinet member for Safer Communities holds political responsibility and accountability for Safeguarding, as set out in the Oxford City Council Constitution.

Head of Service, Regulatory Services and Community Safety

5.4   The Head of Service, Regulatory Services and Community Safety has responsibility for the delivery of the Council's safeguarding duties.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

5.5   All DSLs have responsibility for:

- promoting well-being and preventing, responding and supporting our citizen's in safeguarding matters, in particular safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

- Ensuring that the City Council procedures for dealing with allegations are in accordance with guidance from the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards

- Resolving inter-agency issues.

- Overseeing and reviewing the implementation of policy and procedures.

Community Safety Service Manager (DSL)

5.6   The Oxford City Council representative on the OSCB Full Board and OSAB Full Board meetings and responsible for ensuring relevant safeguarding information is provided to the Corporate Management Team, Councillors and staff.
5.7   The lead officer for escalations to partner agencies when necessary.
5.8   Responsible for the implementation and promotion of effective safeguarding policy and practice within Oxford City Council.
5.9   Responsible for implementing safeguarding training to all staff and Councillors.

Head of Business Improvement (DSL)

5.10   Responsible for embedding safeguarding recruitment procedures for posts with direct access to children, young people or adults at risk.

5.11　Chair of the Strategic Group.

5.12　Responsible for the recommendations and completion of safeguarding actions following a disciplinary hearing.

Head of Housing Services (DSL)

5.13　Responsible for the implementation and promotion of effective safeguarding policy and practice within Housing Services.

Safeguarding Coordinator

5.14　Ensures Oxford City Council have best practice in safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs, across all of the City Council services and within the community.

5.15　Leads on the development and implementation of Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Children and Adults with care and support needs policy and procedures.

5.16　Responsible for the completion of the annual safeguarding self-assessment and other reports and audits to the safeguarding boards.

5.17　Responsible for the coordination and dissemination of information across the authority, including that related to assessments, audits and learning from Serious Case Reviews.

5.18　Responsible for overseeing the internal safeguarding recording system, MyConcern.

5.19　Coordinate the delivery of internal safeguarding awareness briefings.

Strategic Safeguarding Group

5.20　Members include Heads of Services, managers and individuals who have named responsibility to oversee safeguarding activity within their team. The role of the group is to ensure safeguarding is strategically placed across service area business plans and to ensure that strategies and plans that include safeguarding are in line with the Council Strategy 2020-2024.

Safeguarding Champions

5.21　Safeguarding Champions are Council employees who have undertaken Specialist Safeguarding training and provide safeguarding advice to employees, members and volunteers on the appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and referral routes. Their responsibilities also include maintaining safeguarding as a standing agenda item at team meetings and disseminating information.

5.22　The Safeguarding Champion structure is promoted through regular communications and training.

6.　Safeguarding prevention

6.1　Promote wellbeing and early help interventions in line with the OSCB Early Help strategy.

6.2　Explore prevention opportunities prior to the requirement of statutory intervention.

6.3   Ensure whole-Council approach to safeguarding interventions, ensuring appropriate service areas provide appropriate services at the right time.

6.4   Promote use of early help tools available on the OSCB and OSAB websites.

7. Safeguarding practice and reviews

7.1   Oxford City Council will contribute to all reviews and associated information sharing into serious safeguarding incidents, including:

- Safeguarding Rapid Reviews to inform OSCB's Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs).

- Safeguarding Adult Reviews

- Homelessness Mortality Reviews

- Domestic Homicide Reviews

7.2   Following a review, lessons learned will be shared and embedded across the organisation.

8. Training

8.1   Oxford City Council will provide effective safeguarding training in order that employees, members and volunteers are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs.

8.2   All employees, members and volunteers are required to complete the internal safeguarding awareness briefing every two years.

8.3   Employees, members and volunteers working directly with children are required to complete OSCB and/or OSAB levels two and three, appropriate to their role.

8.4   Training information will be kept up-to-date, accessible and underpin the OSCB and OSAB training requirements.

8.5   Training delivered by staff will be assessed through an evaluation process to ensure it is current and effective.

8.6   The Safeguarding Coordinator will attend OSCB and OSAB Training Subgroups and workshops to develop training programmes and learning events that meet the safeguarding needs of Council staff.

9. Volunteers

9.1   Volunteers will complete the internal safeguarding awareness briefing, in addition to further training appropriate to their role.

9.2   Volunteers will report safeguarding concerns to volunteer line manager who will record the concern on MyConcern.

9.3   Volunteers are required to comply with Safer Recruitment procedures in regard to DBS checks, as appropriate to their role.

9.4   Volunteers will adhere to the service Code of Conduct.

10. Reporting concerns

10.1 Oxford City Council employees use the Threshold of Need matrixes for adults and children and report safeguarding concerns to the appropriate agencies, including:

- The police
- Local Community Support Service (LCSS)
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Adult Safeguarding triage team
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

10.2 Where the threshold for safeguarding duties is not met, concerns will be managed internally or signposted to support agencies.

10.3 All safeguarding incidents are recorded on an externally provided case management system.

10.4 New cases are reviewed and triaged by trained Designated Safeguarding Officers within one working day.

10.5 Guidance on reporting and recording concerns is detailed in the Oxford City Council Safeguarding Procedures document.

11. Supervision and pastoral support

11.1 Oxford City Council will support its employees by providing access to the Mental Health Fist Aid team.

11.2 Oxford City Council will support its employees, volunteers and members by providing access to the Employee Assistance Programme.

11.3 Line managers will provide the opportunity to staff to discuss safeguarding concerns at one-to-one meetings or debriefings.

11.4 Safeguarding champions' contact details are available for staff to use for advice and support.

12. Commissioned services and contractors

12.1 Oxford City Council require all organisations working on behalf of Oxford City Council to have their own safeguarding policies and procedures.

12.2 The Council will review the safeguarding policies of commissioned services to check they meet local and national standards. The Safeguarding Coordinator obtains annual Commissioned Services Safeguarding Self Assessments from each service.

12.3 Council grant funded voluntary organisations must comply with the standards set by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

12.4 Safeguarding guidance is included in the Council's procurement and grant funding processes.

12.5 Where relevant to the post, all employment agencies that provide the Council with contracted staff must have procedures in place to safeguard young people and adults with care and support needs in accordance with the requirements of Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

13. Staff recruitment

13.1 The Council uses a structured Safer Recruitment process to ensure all necessary checks and vetting are in place to minimise the risk of appointing unsuitable people to work with children or vulnerable adults.

13.2 Recruiting managers are required to undertake safeguarding training and will adhere to the Recruitment and Selection policy.

13.3 Oxford City Council will adhere to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA 74) and ensure all necessary checks are undertaken for exempt positions.

14. Whistle-blowing

14.1 The Whistle Blowing Policy encourages employees who have serious concerns about any aspects of the Council's work to come forward and voice those concerns.

14.2 The Policy applies to illegal, improper, unethical, or wrong conduct, including safeguarding concerns. The policy applies to the behaviour or actions of staff, councillors, co-opted committee members, anyone representing the Council, partner organisations, contractors, consultants or other suppliers.

14.3 Whistleblowing procedure and the Council's response can be found in the Whistleblowing Policy.

14.4 When a safeguarding allegation is made, the Head of Business Improvement must be informed and, in their absence, another Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed. The 'Policy and Procedure for Managing Allegations against Employees and Volunteers Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults' must be followed.

15. Other relevant policies and codes of practice

15.1 The following documents support the aims of this policy and should be read alongside it:

- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Criminal Records Policy
- Employee Code of conduct
- Whistle blowing Policy
- Policy and Procedure for Managing Allegations against Employees and Volunteers Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults
- Relevant risk assessments and health and safety codes of practice

16. Information sharing

16.1 Oxford City Council encourages employees, members and volunteers to share information appropriately as part of good safeguarding practise and do so confidently, whilst ensuring personal data is always treated fairly, lawfully and appropriately and that the rights of individuals are upheld.

16.2 Oxford City Council is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018.

16.3   To meet the statutory requirements of The Care Act 2014 and The Children's Act 1989 and 2004, all employees, members and volunteers must comply with the following policies, guidelines and protocols:

- Safeguarding Information Sharing Protocol OSCB
- Oxford City Council Internet Usage Policy and E-mail Policy internal use only
- Oxford City Council IT Security Policy
- Oxford City Council Data protection policy
  Oxford City Council recognises that all information regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults with care and support needs should be kept confidential. However, in order that children, young people and adults with care and support needs are protected from harm, in some circumstances, usual considerations of confidentiality that might apply to other situations within Oxford City Council may be overridden.
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers

17. Monitoring and Review

17.1   The Council will complete an annual safeguarding self-assessment to measure the organisation's performance against standards set by the local safeguarding boards.

17.2   The Council's safeguarding action plan contains actions in support of the self-assessment, safeguarding policy development, OSCB and OSAB's requirements and other local and national safeguarding priorities. Progress on the action plan is reviewed every six months and reported to the Strategic Safeguarding Group.

17.3   Monthly updates are provided to the Corporate Management Team.

17.4   An externally provided case management system is used to identify emerging safeguarding trends and themes and inform the safeguarding action plan.

17.5   This policy will be reviewed annually. All changes will be discussed with the Cabinet Member.

17.6   This policy is presented to Cabinet for approval every three years and more frequently if required by the Cabinet Member or Scrutiny process.

Appendix 2: Oxford City Council Safeguarding Action Plan July 2023 – July 2024

Key Influences/inputs
- Corporate Plan
- The Safeguarding Self-Assessment Audit
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) Business Plan
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults (OSAB) Business Plan
- Oxford City Council's Thriving Communities Strategy

The annual Safeguarding Self- Assessment Audit is a joint audit between the OSCB and OSAB.

The Action Plan Framework is based on the Self-Assessment Standards and it is aimed at maintaining best practice across Oxford City Council
1. Leadership, Strategy and Working Together
2. Service Delivery, Development & Effective Practice
3. Commissioning Arrangements
4. Safer Recruitment, Staff Development & Effective Learning
5. People's Experiences of Safeguarding

Standard	Objective	Action	Input	Desired outcome	Lead	Timescale	Bi-annual update Jan 24
Service Delivery, Development & Effective Practice	Promote Early Help pathways	Increase communications, ensure trainer understanding of Service Integration Project, Early help, LCSS, tools including Strengths and Needs.	Understanding and awareness of Early Help across organisation.	Preventative measures in place to support children and vulnerable adults before requirement of statutory intervention	Safeguarding Coordinator	May 2024	
Leadership, Strategy and Working Together	Safeguarding champion representative	Recruit additional safeguarding champions to ensure each service area has	Service head delegation	Safeguarding advice and support available and embedded in every service area across organisation	Safeguarding Coordinator	December 2023	

	from each service area	at least one representative					
Leadership, Strategy and Working Together	Increase Safeguarding Champion and DSL awareness	Increased communications, visual aids	Team managers' distribution of communications to staff. Safeguarding Coordinator attendance at team meetings.	Increase in positive responses to the annual staff safeguarding questionnaire question: "Can you name a Safeguarding Champion or Designated Safeguarding Lead at Oxford City Council?"	Safeguarding Coordinator	October 2023	
Safer Recruitment, Staff Development & Effective Learning	Promote specialist safeguarding training	Identify appropriate training for individual teams and promote uptake	Team managers identify most appropriate training and encourage participation	Increase in uptake of relevant training in appropriate teams	Safeguarding Coordinator	May 2024	
Leadership, Strategy and Working Together	Promote open culture of safeguarding whistleblowing	Identify current whistleblowing culture and areas for improvement	Work with investigations team to understand current whistleblowing data and culture	Embed culture change, staff feel comfortable to challenge behaviour and report safeguarding concerns	Safeguarding Coordinator	May 2024	
People's Experiences of Safeguarding	Complaints process reflects safeguarding complaints	Identify complaint management systems and data relating to safeguarding concerns	Collaboration with OCC complaints and performance team	Identify complaints relating to safeguarding concerns ensure safeguarding procedures are followed, alongside complaints procedures.	Safeguarding Coordinator	December 2024	
Service Delivery, Development & Effective Practice	Internal audit of safeguarding response across organisation	Scope audit	Engagement from service areas and associated managers to review current systems and practice	Improvement in consistency of practice across service area/organisation Embed safeguarding best practice across organisation	Safeguarding Coordinator	May 2024	

2022-2023 completed actions

Objective	Action	Input	Desired outcome	Lead	Timescale
2022-2023 Neglect Strategy Actions monitored	Peer review feedback from quarterly neglect strategy meeting to be an agenda item for safeguarding champions meeting quarterly strategic safeguarding group	Staff to use neglect practitioner tool to support with assessment and decision making.	Identify neglect early and evidence appropriate signposting and referrals though MyConcern. Staff survey shows a more confident understanding of the issue.	Dani Granito/ Laura Jones	Quarterly meetings
Safeguarding policy and procedures remain current	Annual review and update	Cabinet sign off and circulated to all staff. Referred to in safeguarding briefing.	Easily accessible procedural guidance and support for all staff.	Laura Jones	Apr 2023
Raise awareness of safeguarding SCR points cascaded throughout organisation.	Produce a Newsletter containing MyConcern data, circulated every three months via intranet news page and email. Let's Talk session. Leadership Conversation session. Case examples	Engagement across organisation offering opportunity for learning and accessing information	Visual representation of the safeguarding work cross City Council Greater understanding. Dissemination of learning from Serious Case Reviews	Laura Jones	All year
Promote the Safeguarding Champion structure	Use internal communications to publish profiles of champions.	Use case management examples to share with staff.	Embed positive safeguarding culture	Laura Jones	All year
Coordinate external communication plan with Districts and County to ensure coordinated response to key dates and themes.	Quarterly district meetings.	Communication Strategy for safeguarding and key messaging throughout the year	Clear communication plan for key messages for maximum impact county wide.	Laura Jones	All year
Support Oxford Direct Services in delivering safeguarding.	Share training materials, information and updates from Safeguarding Boards.	Coordinated safeguarding approach from city and Council and ODS	Increase knowledge and awareness across ODS and increased reporting rates.	Laura Jones	All year

	Update SLA				
Promote and support maintenance of Champions Network at ODS	Champions network to provide support and guidance to ODS colleagues	Improve reporting standards and referral times	Raising standard of referrals	Laura Jones/ Jon Childs	June 2023
Increase the centrally recorded data on modern slavery cases	Where Modern Slavery is suspected on a premises, disclosed or person is at risk of MS details are recorded by Anti-Slavery Coordinator	Identify training need and reporting trends in service areas.	Raise awareness of risks and signs that MS is present	Nicola Bell	All year
Support the implementation of new legislation following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021	Implement and coordinate domestic abuse County strategy in City and Districts. Keep all staff and champions up to date with the changes with regular briefings and at safeguarding officers meeting.	Membership of Domestic Abuse Strategic Group and Domestic Abuse Partnership Group	Improve outcomes for victims, children and families, and perpetrators. Progress Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA) DAHL support for victims fleeing domestic abuse. Scrutiny review implementation.	Liz Jones	July 2023
Continue to work with OSCB Child Exploitation Sub-group and JTAC multi-agency process.	Multi-agency information sharing and guidance.	Regular attendance at CSE sub-groups and associated meeting and carry out any agreed actions	Joint response to reduce crime and protect children exploitation and serious harm	Richard Adams	Ongoing
Hotel Watch scheme to continue. Statement of intent for all hotels in City.	All hotels to be contacted by city and council.	Raise awareness of safeguarding and exploitation in all of city's hotels.	Reduce opportunity for safeguarding and exploitation in the city.	Nicola Bell/Richard Adams	Ongoing
Ensure all grant and commissioned services completed annual	Request completed commissioned services audits prior to Oxford City Council submission of S11 audit	Annual audit of commissioned services	All commissioned services have safe practises	Laura Jones	Ongoing

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			Written evidence in procurement process, contracts and contract monitoring visits		
safeguarding audit and any outstanding action from previous year			Written evidence in procurement process, contracts and contract monitoring visits		
Service providers notify City of all safeguarding incidents referred under Section 42 Care Act and Section 47 Children's Act.	Serious safeguarding incidents centrally recorded.	Monitor through contract meetings across service areas.	Improve practise and information sharing	Laura Jones	Ongoing
Support delivery of Countywide Homelessness Strategy	Monitor countywide homelessness service and prioritise safeguarding actions	Participation in formal meetings and work streams	Improved system wide approach to homelessness across county	Paul Wilding	June 2023
Participate in Homelessness Mortality Review Group	Share learning report from HMRG at strategic group and in safeguarding communications	Contribute to review groups	Reduction in premature deaths of people experiencing homelessness	Paul Wilding	June 2023
Measure training outcomes in practice and assess effectiveness of training staff	Review evaluation forms, referrals and staff survey	Accurate picture of effectiveness of safeguarding training.	Ability to capture staff views and improve service.	Laura Jones	All Year
Deliver internal safeguarding awareness briefings throughout the year. Ensure training information is up-to-date and accessible	Deliver minimum of 12 online awareness sessions in 2022 Deliver four (plus additional for any missed) for Councillors Review training package 6 monthly	Quarterly sub training group meeting – plan and support the delivery and development of internal training packages.	All employees able to meet safeguarding training requirements.	Laura Jones	All year
Attend all OSCB and OSAB Training Groups/ workshops to develop training programmes and learning events that meet	Represent on training sub-group and attend meetings regularly.	Provide a collective report to safeguarding training sub group to continually improve our training by listening to staff feedback.	Effective partnership working.	Laura Jones	Ongoing

the needs of our staff arranged for 2022/23					
All identified Young carers are referred to support services. YA to run non-formal sessions of what it means to be a young carer and upskilling staff to refer accordingly.	Details to be recorded on MyConcern	Younger carers are referred to Carers Oxfordshire and young carer's needs assessment completed.	Measurable identification and classification of young carers and use of support service.	Leonard Sackey	All year
Promote use of pathways and awareness of joint protocols e.g. Adults who don't engage, multi-agency self-neglect policy and Hoarding Protocol	Offer training and guidance to all safeguarding champions. Support Locality HUBS though connecting champions to each and attending complex case meetings. Escalate wider concerns through board process.	Engage partner agencies to provide outcomes and options for individuals who don't engage or use services	Improve partnership working.	Dani Granito	All year

Document Control

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Owner	Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Author	Laura Jones Safeguarding Coordinator
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Procedures for reporting, referring and recording safeguarding concerns

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

1.1.   These procedures set out the range of work that supports the implementation of the safeguarding policy and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

2. Training

2.1.   Guidance for staff on how to access training is available on the Oxford City Council Safeguarding intranet page. Members and volunteers will be invited to attend relevant training.

2.2.   The following procedures are in place to ensure employees, members and volunteers complete the appropriate safeguarding training. There are different levels of training available to employees, volunteers and members, defined by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards.

2.3.   All new employees, members and volunteers will be briefed on their responsibilities towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs during their induction.

2.4.   All employees, members and volunteers are required to complete the internal safeguarding awareness briefing. This must be refreshed every two years.

2.5.   Volunteers' line managers should contact the Safeguarding Coordinator to arrange to book volunteers on to a briefing.

2.6.   Employees, members and volunteers working directly with children will be required to complete OSCB levels two and three, appropriate to their role.

2.7.   Employees, members and volunteers working directly with adults with care and support needs will be required to complete OSAB levels two and three, appropriate to their role.

2.8.   Recruiting managers should follow the Oxford City Council Recruitment and Selection Procedures and undertake the required Oxford City Council Recruitment and Selection training.

2.9.   Designated Safeguarding Leads, Designated Safeguarding Officers and Safeguarding Champions will be required to attend the OSCB Designated Lead training and OSAB Leader/Manager training course.

2.10.   When it is uncertain whether an employee fits into any of these categories, line managers should discuss the issue with the Human Resources team or Safeguarding Coordinator.

2.11.   Specialist training courses are available on the Board websites and participation is strongly encouraged. All courses are free, non-attendance will incur a £50.00 fee. Courses can be booked via the Board websites:
OSCB training courses
OSAB Training courses

3. Safer Recruitment

3.1.   To ensure safeguarding is embedded in our recruitment and selection procedures this procedure operates in conjunction with following Oxford City Council polices and guidelines:

- [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
- [Criminal Records Policy](#)
- [Safer Recruitment guidelines](#) – internal use only

3.2.   The Head of Business Improvement is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate recruitment procedures are in place and compliance with the Disclosure and Barring legislation through the Disclosure and Barring Service ['DBS'].1

3.3.   The following statement is included in all job descriptions:

- 'Oxford City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.'

4.   Information Sharing

4.1.   Oxford City Council understands the importance of ensuring that personal data is always treated fairly, lawfully and appropriately and that the rights of individuals are upheld. Oxford City Council is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations.

4.2.   To meet the statutory requirements of The Care Act 2014 and The Children's Act 1989 and 2004, all employees, members and volunteers must comply with the following policies, guidelines and protocols:

- [Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#)
- [Safeguarding Information Sharing Protocol OSCB](#)
- [Oxford City Council Internet Usage Policy and E-mail Policy](#) internal use only
- [Oxford City Council IT Security Policy internal use only](#)
- [Oxford City Council Data protection policy](#)

4.3.   Oxford City Council recognises that all information regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults with care and support needs should be kept confidential. However, in order that children, young people and adults with care and support needs are protected from harm, in some circumstances, usual considerations of confidentiality that might apply to other situations within Oxford City Council may be overridden.

4.4.   It is important that employees, members and volunteers can share information appropriately as part of good safeguarding practise and do so confidently.

4.5.   [The OSCB 7 golden rules for information sharing](#) provide advice on the sharing of information.

5. Emergencies

5.1.   Call police using 999 if:

5.2.   There are immediate concerns for the person's safety or urgent welfare checks where there are serious concerns for the individual.

5.3.   You witness a crime (such as physical abuse) or if you are a victim of crime e.g. public order offences. You don't have to be the intended victim; you can be caused harassment, alarm or distress by someone's actions towards another.

5.4.   Someone discloses to you that they have just been the victim of crime and the perpetrator is still in the vicinity.

5.5.   **Inform your line manager and a safeguarding lead at the earliest opportunity. Make a written record of the incident.**

6. Raising a concern

6.1.   **Step 1**. Inform your line manager

6.2.   If you have concerns about a person's welfare you must inform your line manager and keep them updated about subsequent action.

6.3.   **Step 2.** Consult a safeguarding champion

6.4.   Safeguarding champions have completed advanced level safeguarding training. They will guide you through the referral process. Safeguarding champions will not take ownership of the concern or make referrals on your behalf; they are a resource for support and guidance. Details of Safeguarding champions can be found on the Safeguarding intranet page.

6.5.   **Step 3**. If necessary make a referral

6.6.   In Oxfordshire there are different referral pathways for adults and children. A safeguarding champion will advise on the most appropriate action. See sections 6 and 7 for guidance.

6.7.   **Step 4**. Record your concern and the action taken

6.8.   All safeguarding and welfare concerns should be recorded on the externally provided case management system, currently MyConcern.

7. Adult Safeguarding

7.1.   **Adult Safeguarding Triage Team**

7.2.   If you've encountered an issue and are unsure if it is a safeguarding issue or not you can call and request a consultation with the Safeguarding Triage Team.

- Tel: 01865 328232

7.3.   **Adult Safeguarding Enquiry Criteria**

7.4.   The criteria for a Section 42 (S42) safeguarding enquiry under the requirements of the Care Act 2014 are as follows:

- The adult is reported as having or appears to have needs for care and support.
- The adult is reported or appears to be experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

- As a result of care and support needs is the adult unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

7.5.   Safeguarding Referral

7.6.   Safeguarding referrals go to Adult Social and Health Care. You can report:

- Online: Safeguarding referral form

7.7.   When a concern is raised with the Social and Health Care team, they will pass this information to the Adult Safeguarding Team. The wishes of whoever is the subject of the concern will always be listened to and acted upon, and then a decision will be made about what needs to happen next.

7.8.   Safeguarding Champions and line managers should consult The Adult Safeguarding Threshold of Need Matrix before advising on a referral pathway.

7.9.   Consent

7.10.   Unless there is a risk to the person's safety you should gain the person's consent before making a referral. Always advise the person of your concern and explain the steps you will take. It is important that the person's wishes are known, when making a referral you will be asked if you have the person's consent and what they want to happen.

7.11.   You can make a referral without the person's knowledge if you have good reason to. The person making this decision must make a written record of their decision. If you are unsure seek advice from the Safeguarding Triage Team.

7.12.   Urgent concerns

7.13.   If you have urgent concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a person (that do not require police) contact Social and Health Care during office hours

- Tel: 0345 050 7666
- 8.30am - 5pm Monday - Thursday
- 8.30am - 4pm Friday
- In an emergency, out of hours please contact 0800 833408.

7.14.   Care needs assessment

7.15.   If your concern is not about abuse or neglect but someone not receiving care when you think they should, you should request a Care Needs Assessment using the: Assessment Form for Professionals.

7.16.   Concerns for people without care and support needs

7.17.   If the person does not fit the criteria for safeguarding duties, there will still be help available and staff should always seek advice from a safeguarding champion about the most appropriate referral pathway.

7.18.   People who may fall within this category include:

- Adults who may be at risk of harm or exploitation due to their circumstances or other vulnerabilities e.g. age, social isolation

- Adults who are at risk of harm or victimisation due to their lifestyles or specific needs e.g. sex workers, homelessness, drug users, personality disorder
- Adults who repeatedly come to the attention of local services.
- Adults who go repeatedly missing.
- Care leavers who are over 18.
- Adult survivors of child abuse including child sexual exploitation

7.19. Referrals within the City Council

7.20. To keep someone safe, staff should always consider what actions the Council can take and ensure everything that can be done has been. Line managers should advise on who should be alerted about the concern.

7.21. Multi Agency Risk Management framework

7.22. Where an adult's needs do not meet the threshold for safeguarding but there is a high level of risk and a multi-agency response would be beneficial, officers can refer in to the MARM Framework. This can be used for any adult but will particularly helpful for those who hoard, self-neglect or are homeless. All attempts should have been made to reduce or minimise risk prior to referring to MARM.

7.23. Escalation

7.24. Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for handling escalation processes and inter-agency disputes. If there is a need for escalation, the line manager must be contacted in the first instance.

8. Extremism/Radicalisation

8.1. Protecting those vulnerable to extremism is a safeguarding issue: similar to protecting people with care and support needs from other harms e.g. neglect or exploitation.

8.2. If you are concerned about an individual being drawn into extremism you should follow safeguarding procedures.

8.3. Inform your line manager

8.4. Get advice from a safeguarding champion

8.5. Refer Social and Health Care Team Tel: **0345 050 7666**

8.6. For more information see the PREVENT intranet page.

9. Child Safeguarding

9.1. Early Help

9.2. Early help intervention can prevent the requirement for statutory intervention and promote the wellbeing of a child and their family.

9.3. When a child or family is identified as benefiting from early help, a whole family, multi-agency Strengths & Needs form should be completed. This can be completed by:

9.4.   the professional identifying the need of the family

9.5.   by any professional who knows/has a relationship with the family or is part of a network that supports the child/family

9.6.   a professional identified by the family as the most appropriate person to support them with the Strengths & Needs conversation

9.7.   Strengths and Needs forms and other Early Help tools can be found on the OSCB website.

9.8.   Local Community Support Service

9.9.   For emerging concerns that do not require an immediate safeguarding response contact LCSS on Tel: 0345 050 7666 or email LCSS.Central@oxfordshire.gov.uk

9.10.   Contact the LCSS if you wish to complete a No Names Consultation. This means you can discuss the issue and get help and advice without giving the name of the child or family.

9.11.   Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

9.12.   For urgent safeguarding concerns contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on Tel: 0345 050 7666

9.13.   You should call MASH immediately if there is an urgent safeguarding concern, for example:

- allegations/concerns that the child has been sexually/physically abused
- concerns that the child is suffering from severe neglect or other severe health risks
- concern that a child is living in or will be returned to a situation that may place him/her at immediate risk
- the child is frightened to return home
- the child has been abandoned or parent is absent

9.14.   Following a conversation with the MASH team you may be asked to submit a referral form.

9.15.   The Oxfordshire MASH Referral Form for professionals only to refer children to social services.

9.16.   Or you can email a report to MASH on the secure email on: mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

9.17.   Consent

9.18.   When gaining advice or making a referral you should ideally do so with the families knowledge and consent. The MASH and LCSS will ask you if you have parental consent to share the child's details. If you wish to discuss a concern without a family's knowledge or consent you can do so via a No Names Consultation only.

9.19.   There will be situations where it is not appropriate to ask for consent e.g. if the parent is suspected of abuse and doing so may put the child at increased risk.

9.20.   For further information sharing guidance please see the document below:

- [Information sharing for practitioners](#)

9.21. Child sexual exploitation

9.22. If a child has made a disclosure regarding sexual exploitation, or if you think a child may be at risk of being sexually exploited, please contact MASH on 0345 050 7666.

9.23. Radicalisation

9.24. If you are concerned that a child or young person is being radicalised;

9.25. Make safe, call 999 if you have concerns for the safety of the child, young person or the public.

9.26. Follow child safeguarding procedures

9.27. For more information see Oxford City Council [PREVENT](#) intranet page

9.28. Position of trust

9.29. If you have a concern about a professional or person in a position of trust you should speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to report an allegation or concern.

- Tel: 01865 810603
- Email: LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

9.30. Further information

9.31. Visit the [OSCB Themes page](#) to find out more about topics such as:

- private fostering
- child sexual exploitation
- female genital mutilation
- disabled children
- forced marriage
- children missing education
- preventing extremism

9.32. Escalation

9.33. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are responsible for handling escalation processes and inter agency disputes. The Council has signed up to the OSCB Escalation process

9.34. .DSL with overall escalation responsibilities is:

- Community Safety Service Manager

10. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

10.1. The Council has additional responsibilities to report incidents of human trafficking and modern slavery.

10.2. For procedures on reporting and referring Modern Slavery and Exploitation at Oxford City Council, completing and NRM and Duty to Notify, contact Oxford City Council's [Anti-Slavery Coordinator](#) and refer to this document:

- [Oxfordshire's response to Adult Exploitation and Modern Slavery](#)

10.3. Under Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, Oxford City Council prepares a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year. A Section 54 Statement must detail the steps taken during the previous financial year to ensure that no slavery or human trafficking is taking place in any part of its business or in any of its supply chains (or a declaration that no such steps have been taken).

- [Oxford City Council Modern Slavery Statement 2021-22](#)

11. Allegations against a council employee or volunteer

11.1. The Council has additional policy for managing allegations involving council employees or volunteers.

- [Policy and Procedure for Managing Allegations against Employees and Volunteers](#)

11.2. Allegations of abuse against an employee, member or volunteer will be reported to Oxfordshire County Council Children's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by the Head of Business Improvement and the initial consultation will be to determine whether the allegation is so serious that it should immediately be referred to Social Services and/or the Police.

11.3. The Council recognises that it may be difficult to inform on colleagues but assures all employees, members and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concerns about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child, young person, or adult at risk may be being abused or bullied.

11.4. The Council's [Whistle Blowing Policy](#) is available on the Council's web pages.

12. Procedure for reporting of child deaths

12.1. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board is required to review deaths of children where there is at least a suspicion that the death resulted from abuse or neglect. The Board will also review serious cases of abuse or neglect of children.

12.2. If you become aware of a child death on Council premises, you should immediately contact:

- The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
- Otherwise you should contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads

13. Procedure for reporting deaths or serious abuse of adults with care and support needs

13.1. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board is required to review deaths of adults with care and support needs where there is at least a suspicion that the

death resulted from abuse or neglect. The Board will also review serious cases of abuse or neglect of adults with care and support needs.

13.2. If you become aware that an adult with care and support needs has died or been seriously harmed on Council premises, you should immediately contact:

- The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
- Otherwise you should contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads

13.3. If the death of a young person aged 16-17 or adult with care and support needs has or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person they are related to or who they have been in an intimate personal relationship or who is a member of the same household, this will trigger a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR). If appropriate the DHR will be carried out jointly with a Serious Case Review. In such circumstances, you should contact:

- Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
- Domestic Abuse Lead
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead

14. Recording concerns

14.1. MyConcern

-
14.2. MyConcern is the current central reporting system for safeguarding concerns raised by Oxford City employees and Councillors. The system is monitored by a group of Designated Safeguarding Officers and each new concern is triaged by a member of the group. Where there are outstanding actions they will direct actions to be completed to the case owner and notify the relevant teams to follow up. Once referrals are completed (internally or externally) the report can be closed.

14.3. Accurate reporting on MyConcern is essential to correctly interpret the data, complete lessons learnt and identify trends and training issues.

14.4. User information

14.5. MyConcern training forms part of the internal Safeguarding Awareness briefing which is mandatory for all staff.

14.6. Account set up and further training is available from the [Safeguarding Coordinator](#).

14.7. Recording concerns

14.8. Recording and reporting of concerns should be:

- Factual – Who are you concerned about, where do they live, what happened? Why are they at risk?

- Have context – what was the purpose of the visit/interaction? Are they a council tenant? Are they known to other departments?
- **Remember**: If making an external referral, record reference numbers and names of professionals spoken to. You can add more than one person to a concern. If you don't know the name put 'unknown' this can be updated later.

14.9. Referral details

14.10. Always apply referral details to the concern. This can be done through the 'Update Concern' option. Click on the concern you wish to update and go to the referral tab. Enter the date of the referral and choose from the list of agencies. Choose the outcome which is most appropriate.

14.11. No referral required

14.12. You may have discussed your concern with a safeguarding champion and decided that no further action needs to be taken. E.g. the situation is already being managed internally or by another agency.

14.13. If there are no new concerns or information to give to the primary agency you should not repeat the same information. If there are new or escalating concerns about an on-going situation then you should record your concern on MyConcern and inform the primary agency.

Appendix 4: Safeguarding Policy Risk Assessment

Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence	Date Raised	Owner	Gross I	Gross P	Current I	Current P	Residual I	Residual P	Comments	Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Safeguarding Policy	Poor staff awareness of safeguarding indicators	Threat	Lack of access to training and support.	Ineffective response to safeguarding incidents.	23/05/2023	Richard Adams	4	4	4	3	4	2	Training programme in place delivered by a staff pool that needs expanding.	Training programme in place delivered by a staff pool that needs expanding.	31/03/2024	On-going		Laura Jones
Safeguarding Policy	Poor staff awareness of reporting procedures	Threat	Lack of access to training and support.	Ineffective response to safeguarding incidents.	23/05/2023	Richard Adams	4	3	3	3	3	2	Training programme in place delivered by a staff pool that needs expanding.	Training programme in place delivered by a staff pool that needs expanding.	31/03/2024	On-going		Laura Jones
Safeguarding Policy	Poor safeguarding recording levels on MyConcern	Threat	Lack of access to training and support.	Lack of insight and response into safeguarding trends.	23/05/2023	Richard Adams	3	3	3	2	2	2	Newsletters and reminders to record on MyConcern. Regular review of data.	Newsletters and reminders to record on MyConcern. Regular review of data.	31/03/2024	On-going		Laura Jones

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Form to be used for the Full Equalities Impact Assessment

Service Area:	RS& CS	Section: Community Safety	Date of Initial assessment: 10/05/2023	Key Person responsible for assessment: Richard Adams	Date assessment commenced: 21/05/2023	
Name of Policy to be assessed:			Safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs Policy			
1. In what area are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact			*Race*	*Disability*	*Age*	
			Gender reassignment	*Religion or Belief*	*Sexual Orientation*	
			Sex	*Pregnancy and Maternity*	*Marriage & Civil Partnership*	
Other strategic/ equalities considerations			*Safeguarding/ Welfare of Children and vulnerable adults*	*Mental Wellbeing/ Community Resilience*	*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022*	
			Countywide Homelessness Strategy	*Thriving Communities Strategy*		
2. Background: Give the background information to the policy and the perceived problems with			1. Oxford City Council's Business Safeguarding policy sets out publicly the Council's response and commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. 2. The Safeguarding policy is guided by the national safeguarding legislation and references the Care Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 and the Children's Act 2004.			

the policy which are the reason for the Impact Assessment.	3. The Oxford City Council Safeguarding Policy was developed in conjunction with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult's Board policies and is supported by the Oxford City Council Safeguarding procedures and action plan. 4. The Safeguarding Policy has been benchmarked against other district Council safeguarding policies. The Safeguarding Policy sets out: Legal framework Multi agency safeguarding arrangements Roles and responsibilities Safeguarding governance Safeguarding prevention Safeguarding practice and reviews Training Volunteers Reporting concerns Supervision pastoral support Commissioned services and contractors Staff recruitment Whistleblowing Other relevant policies Information sharing Monitoring and review Service areas involved and impacted include: Corporate Strategy Housing Services Regeneration Financial Services Regulatory Services and Community Safety Corporate Property Business Improvement Planning Services

	OX Place ODS Community Services Law and Governance
3. Methodology and Sources of Data: The methods used to collect data and what sources of data	To inform and guide the assessment, key variables and determinants have been taken from: National legislation Local safeguarding boards' priorities and requirements Review of district Council policies Data from the externally provided, confidential case management system, currently 'MyConcern' is used to identify themes and trends of safeguarding concerns. HR records identify themes and trends of safeguarding concerns relating to staff.
4. Consultation This section should outline all the consultation that has taken place on the EIA. It should include the following. • Why you carried out the consultation. • Details about how you went about it. • A summary of the replies you received from people you consulted. • An assessment of your proposed policy (or	Consultation was carried out to ensure the safeguarding policy is comprehensive, relevant to and understood by each service area and to provide opportunity for collective input into the policy development. 1) In May 2023, A meeting was held with eight officers from a range of service areas who are experienced in safeguarding and policy development. 2) During the meeting, additional relevant officers were identified and the draft policy was subsequently shared with sixteen officers form seven service areas, including Heads of Service, for review and comment. 3) Safeguarding procedures were shared with the Safeguarding Champions, a team of 14 officers from a range of service areas, to allow identification of any gaps, ensure procedures are understood in lay terms and enable opportunity for an organisational-wide, joint approach to developing procedures. 4) The safeguarding policy will go through the Cabinet clearing process and therefore reviewed and agreed by: The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety The Director of Communities and People Legal representative Head of Financial Services

policy options) in the light of the responses you received. • A statement of what you plan to do next	Cabinet member for Safer Communities 5) Citywide conversations (strand 1, 2 and 3) for TCS which provides various action for Priority 3, Thriving Communities. As a result of the meeting which was held with officers from a range of service areas who are experienced in safeguarding and policy development, and subsequent further sharing of the draft policy, feedback was received and the policy amended to align with other relevant policies. Benchmarking against other local district council safeguarding policies was undertaken. OSCB and OSAB undertake consultation with vulnerable adults and young people and their families in the creation and adoption of their policies and procedures. These policies and procedures inform the Oxford City Council safeguarding policy and procedures. Subsequent reporting will use data collated from the Census and BIU (Business Intelligence Unit). Other independent sources of data, such as reporting from local police, will also be used for a more comprehensive consultation exercise.

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5. Assessment of Impact: Provide details of the assessment of the policy on the nine primary equality strands. There may have been other groups or individuals that you considered. Please also consider whether the policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and /

Race	Disability	Age
Positive	Positive	Positive

Gender reassignment	Religion or Belief	Sexual Orientation
Positive	Positive	Positive

Sex	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage & Civil Partnership
Positive	Positive	Positive

or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults	The Safeguarding policy was developed and subsequently updated with the aim to have a positive impact on each equality strand. The internal safeguarding awareness briefing includes legislation relevant to safeguarding, including the Equality Act 2010. Safeguarding duties and the Council's response to safeguarding applies to all children and adults with care and support needs. The Council's duties and response will be maintained irrespective of any of the above equality strands. • Race - PREVENT training is promoted throughout organisation and available through the safeguarding boards. Support for asylum seekers, migrants and refugees is provided by a dedicated team. Partnership work is undertaken in line with the anti-racism charter and Race Action Plan. The annual self-assessment background paper details consultation with ethnic minority groups. • Disability – disabilities are recognised as a care and support need for which safeguarding duties apply to adults. This legislative framework forms part of the safeguarding policy. • Age – the safeguarding policy sets out the legislation relating to safeguarding duties for children and adults and how these differ. The safeguarding procedures detail different referral pathways depending on the age of the person the organisation intends to safeguard. • Gender Reassignment - Hate crime has increased since the end of pandemic restrictions, this may result in increased reports of safeguarding. The policy ensures that the Council will use the appropriate referral pathways and work with appropriate organisations to ensure victims get the support that they need. • Religion or belief – Honour based abuse training is available through the OSCB. Oxford City Council works in partnership with countywide organisations in line with the anti-racism charter and Race

	Action Plan.
	• Sexual orientation – Hate crime has increased since the end of pandemic restrictions, this may result in increased reports of safeguarding. The policy ensures that the Council will use the appropriate referral pathways and work with appropriate organisations to ensure victims get the support that they need.
	• Sex – Our approach to domestic and sexual abuse ensures our services are flexible to the needs of the sex of the victim.
90	• Pregnancy or maternity – Women are at heightened risk of abuse and violence during this period. DASH risk assessments are completed by domestic abuse housing link workers, this includes pregnancy and maternity. The DA lead was consulted in the development of the updated policy and procedures.
	• Marriage and civil partnership – We can respond and ensure those who need a safeguarding response because they are a victim, will be able to access a suitable response.
	Impacts on each strand are proportionately positive. Any disproportionate impacts will be monitored within safeguarding processes.
6. Consideration of Measures: This section should explain in detail all the consideration of alternative approaches/mitigation of adverse impact of the policy	There is no alternative approach. Oxford City Council have a statutory duty to comply with local safeguarding boards' requirements and national legislation. Mitigation of adverse impact is ensured upon consideration of actions within the safeguarding action plan. Training and awareness of safeguarding and associated policies and procedures exceeds annual targets, this mitigates any impacts where the policy and procedures may not be fully understood.

	The 23-24 annual safeguarding action plan includes an internal audit of safeguarding practices within the organisation. This will also mitigate any impacts of non-compliance due to lack of awareness or training. The Safeguarding policy has been developed with reference to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Thriving Communities Strategies, grants reviews and the service integration project. These include mitigation of impact and associated EIAs; using a whole system approach and collaborative, collective working Other associated strategies and consideration of measures: Easy read documents mitigate negative impacts emerging from visual impairment or where English is not a first language.
6a. Monitoring Arrangements: Outline systems which will be put in place to monitor for adverse impact in the future and this should include all relevant timetables. In addition it could include a summary and assessment of your monitoring, making clear whether you found any evidence of discrimination.	The Council will complete an annual safeguarding self-assessment to measure the organisation's performance against standards set by the local safeguarding boards. The safeguarding risk register identifies areas of risk and associated impacts. Identification of these risks creates an awareness to help mitigation of negative impacts. The Council's safeguarding action plan contains actions in support of the self-assessment, safeguarding policy development, OSCB and OSAB's requirements and other local and national safeguarding priorities. Progress on the action plan is reviewed every six months and reported to the Strategic Safeguarding Group. Monthly updates of recorded safeguarding concerns to Corporate Management Team. Using externally provided case management system to identify emerging safeguarding trends and themes and inform safeguarding action plan. This policy will be reviewed annually. All changes are discussed with the Cabinet Member.

	This policy is presented to Cabinet for approval every three years and more frequently if required by the Cabinet Member or Scrutiny process.				
7. Date reported and signed off by Cabinet:					
8. Conclusions: What are your conclusions drawn from the results in terms of the policy impact	1. Keep monitoring the protected characteristics. Prompt service heads when next collecting data for any risks to protected characteristics. 2. Ongoing plans of delivering equalities training which will help. 3. Training and awareness raising through service planning, focussing on frontline services.				
9. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	YES Training and awareness	**10. Date the Service Plans will be updated**	On-going	**11. Date copy sent to Equalities Lead Officer**	
13. Date reported to Scrutiny and Cabinet:		**14. Date reported to Cabinet:**		**12. The date the report on EqIA will be published**	

Signed L Jones   Signed

Please list the team members and service areas that were involved in this process:

Safeguarding Coordinator, Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Community Safety Service Manager, Regulatory Services and Community Safety
EDI Lead, Community Services

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**12 July 2023**
Report of:	**Executive Director (Development)**
Title of Report:	**Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek Cabinet approval to participate in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter and endorse a series of Oxford City Council pledges
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council, Leader - Inclusive Economy and Partnerships
Corporate Priority:	Enable an inclusive economy
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan 2020-24

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

Appendices	
Appendix 1	OIEP Charter
Appendix 2	Risk Register
Appendix 3	Equalities Impact Screening / Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) is a county-wide group that brings together employers, business, education, community groups and local government, including Oxford City Council ("the Council").

   - OIEP's aim (quoting from public web page) is:

   To work together to create a more equal region that creates opportunities and benefits for all people in Oxfordshire, making use of everyone's potential, so that we can all benefit from Oxfordshire's success. We are focused on four areas to deliver our vision: education, employment, social value and procurement, and place shaping. We aim to work with projects across Oxfordshire that the OIEP can support, grow or amplify their work. We are also building a repository of resources, case studies and signposting to support organisations working towards a more inclusive economy.

   - The mission of OIEP is:

   Working together to create a more equal region that creates opportunities and benefits for all people within the county. We are working to tackle some of our region's biggest problems to create a fairer environment where everyone can contribute and share in our success.

2. The partnership is co-chaired by Baroness Jan Royall (Somerville College) and Jeremy Long (former OxLEP Chair) and the Future Oxfordshire Partnership provides oversight to the work of the OIEP. The Council contributes project management and secretariat functions to the OIEP through the role of the Partnership Manager and contributions by other officers within the Economic Development team.

Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter

3. OIEP has developed an Inclusive Economy Charter (at Appendix 1) which is a way for employers to show their commitment and support to making Oxfordshire a fairer and more inclusive place to live and work, by signing up to specific pledges. When organisations sign up to the charter, they are creating a better working environment for their staff, while also generating a clear signal to potential staff, partners and customers that this is a good organisation to deal with. The charter brings additional benefits for the participating organisations by providing an opportunity to better communicate and raise the profile at a countywide level of the social impact they are creating as part of their organisation's pledges.

4. Employers can choose pledges that are relevant for their own organisations from 6 groups:

   - Provide fair wages – *ensuring employees have a fair and decent wage*
   - Support local and social economy – *using our buying power to support the local economy and maximise social value*
   - Opportunities to work – *supporting those furthest from the labour market on their journey towards secure employment*
   - Sharing resources, skills and assets – *practical ways to ensure goods and services are accessible to all*
   - Recruit inclusively – *making jobs accessible for all residents and hiring from diverse communities*

- Improve training and educational attainment – *creating workplaces where employees can thrive and grow and supporting education programmes for children*

5. OIEP held a charter launch event on 24 January 2023 with presentations from key stakeholders in the inclusive economy across Oxfordshire as well as businesses that are already implementing inclusive practices. A recording of the event is available here: https://boxcast.tv/view/oxfordshire-inclusive-economy-charter-launch-pf2bwne4anplvaeh3u9d

Oxford City Council Pledges

6. Oxford City Council is committed to creating a more inclusive economy through its Corporate Plan priorities and Economic Strategy commitments and delivery plan. Oxford City Council is therefore already engaging in activities to deliver the following pledges by respective service area and will continue to do so in 2023. It is recommended that the Council should commit as an organisation to these thirteen pledges (out of an available thirty nine) under five (of the available six) themes:

a. *Support local and social economy - Using our buying power to support the local economy and maximise social value*

Pledge	Oxford City Council Lead	Related policy or strategy
As a buyer we pledge to continue to buy goods and services from purposeful local organisations, including SMEs, social enterprises and cooperatives, wherever possible	Procurement Manager, service area lead	Procurement Strategy
As a buyer we pledge to continue to assess and account for the social value that a supplier can offer the local community, alongside our assessment of the economic value/financial cost of the contract.		
As a buyer we pledge to buy from organisations who pay the Oxford Living Wage and who request this of organisations in their own supply chains wherever possible		
As a supplier we pledge to use local SMEs in our supply chain wherever possible and to record the percentage of the total spend.		
We pledge to support our employees to volunteer on local community projects	Head of Community Services, service area lead	Volunteering Policy

b. *Opportunities to work - Supporting those furthest from the labour market on their journey towards secure employment*

Pledge	Oxford City Council Lead	Related policy or strategy
As an employer we pledge to continue to be a Disability Confident Employer and support people with health conditions and disabilities	Head of People, service area lead	People Strategy
As an employer we pledge to improve the diversity of our workforce through more inclusive recruitment practices		
As an employer we pledge to offer work experience to local school/college students from areas where they may experience disadvantage through referrals from partner organisations, where appropriate		
As an employer we pledge that every member of our workforce has the opportunity to share how they contribute to the organisation's success and have opportunities to speak up about concerns and issues.		

c. Improve training and educational attainment - Creating workplaces where employees can thrive and grow and supporting educational programmes for children

Pledge	Oxford City Council Lead	Related policy or strategy
As a levy paying business we pledge up to 25% of our unused Levy to help grow apprenticeships in Oxfordshire	Head of People, service area lead	People Strategy

d. Sharing resources, skills and assets - Practical ways to ensure goods and services are accessible to all

Pledge	Oxford City Council Lead	Related policy or strategy
As an employer we will continue to work with the local food systems	Head of Community Services, service area lead	Food Strategy and Action Plan
As an organisation we pledge to ensure that our community centres are accessible and inclusive		Thriving Communities Strategy

e. Provide fair wages - Ensuring employees have a fair and decent wage

Pledge	Oxford City Council Lead	Related policy or strategy
As an employer we pledge to pay the Oxford Living Wage	Chief Executive	

Rationale to support the recommended pledges:

7. The recommended pledges were arrived at after engagement with all the heads of service in the Council and engagement with all staff and the unions. The Council can commit to deliver against all thirteen pledges within existing resources. Doing so would mean that the Council is setting a clear example to everyone in the county about how much every organisation can do to foster a more inclusive economy. If a local authority facing significant resource constraints can commit to thirteen OIEP pledges, then it should raise expectations of what can be done by other organisations, especially those with greater financial capacity.

Alternative options for the Council:

8. The Council could endorse fewer pledges. However, this would undermine the impact and significance of the inclusive economy work which though currently already being undertaken by the Council has not up until now been elevated to become a pledge. If we were to reduce the number of pledges we sign up to it might suggest that some elements of the Corporate Plan or Economic Strategy were relegated to being less important than others, because these areas of activity were charter pledges.

9. The Council could endorse more pledges and indeed may in the future. However, by initially focusing on a range of identified and targeted pledges (within an agreed timescale and currently financed period), capacity and resource to deliver more pledges can be assessed and reviewed in a sustainable and responsible way before agreeing further commitments.

10. The Council could decide not to make pledges or sign up to the charter. However, this is reputationally inadvisable for a founding member and project coordinator of the county-wide OIEP. It would hamper our ability to deliver on one of our four main corporate objectives and prevent us from developing further best practice of inclusive economy as an organisation.

Other implications

11. In asking Cabinet to agree to approve participation in the Charter and endorse the related pledges, officers have considered the following other implications that are relevant:

   - Consultation and communications-The charter brings additional benefits for the participating organisations by providing an opportunity to better communicate and raise the profile at a countywide level of the social impact they are creating as part of their organisation's pledges. Oxford City Council have arranged for extensive staff and union engagement prior to the Cabinet Report being signed off so that we can incorporate staff member's ideas and involvement in the Charter and its pledges.

   - Human resources-The Charter has been informed by the People Team and members of HR as well as a range of HR specialists from across the participating member organisations of the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP). At Oxford City Council the People Team and HR are leading on pledges that will enhance our inclusivity as an employer.

- Governance - Officers from each service area will meet quarterly to review progress and we will publish a report annually for at least the next two years setting out progress and performance against the pledge commitments.

Financial implications

12. No financial implications identified due to the fact that the OCC (Oxford City Council) Charter Pledges do not present new or additional service commitments that would require new or additional financial resource during the period of the medium-term financial strategy. The commitment to the pledges and to the charter can then be reviewed if required.

Legal issues

13. No legal implications identified due to the fact that the OCC Pledges do not present new or additional corporate or service commitments that would require assessment from the perspective of legal issues or statutory or non-statutory obligations. Positive opportunities are presented to Oxford City Council of participating in the charter include furtherance of our Public Sector Equality Duty as outlined in the Equalities Impact Full Assessment and Screening.

Level of risk

14. Oxford City Council's participation in the Charter is considered, post Risk Assessment to present Low risk as while the OCC Charter Pledges do not present new or additional service commitments, they will help us to better direct and use our existing funds to secure enhanced impacts and inclusive economy outcomes Therefore participation in the charter presents opportunities and not threats as it will not require additional capacity/resource for participating service areas.

15. Other risks in terms of management or operational implementation have been considered and also present low to no risk with identified mitigations for the areas of risk assessed. Consideration has been given to how currently resourced priorities may change throughout the identified period and/or potential clashes between pledges and future decisions. Mitigation in place is to plan to time-limit the pledges to the current medium term financial strategy-which is fully funded-and then review where required.

16. Lack of wider awareness and understanding of the charter and its pledges may undermine the value of council signing up to the pledges. This may also pose a risk which is being mitigated by ongoing communications and extensive staff engagement, as identified.

17. The Risk Register is included as Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

18. The OIEP and its Charter and Pledge scheme contribute to our Oxford City Council Corporate Plan and our Economic Strategy and each of the pledges build on or are explicitly existing commitments of service delivery but will enhance the inclusivity with which our services are offered to Oxford's citizens.

19. The aims and objectives of our inclusive economy commitments present positive equalities implications-The OIEP and its Charter supports an inclusive economy and

is committed to improving all aspects of social mobility and increased prosperity for communities and residents, particularly if they are from disadvantaged or minority groups or communities.

20. Both an Equalities Screening and Impact Assessment have been undertaken with advice from the Council's Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead officer. Each service will be encouraged to tailor their implementation of pledges to their respective service and the needs of service users so as to maximise opportunity for best practice in terms of EDI, presenting positive opportunity while overall the conclusion is that no adverse impacts are identified.

21. Equalities Impact Assessment included as Appendix 3.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

22. While the pledges of the charter are not explicitly related to Environmental or carbon reduction outcomes, they do indirectly present positive opportunity through the support of local businesses and related local supply chains, local food system and networks as well as quality of life benefits which can lead to lower carbon lifestyles and reduced carbon consumption.

Conclusion

23. The officer recommendation to Cabinet is to approve participation in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter (Appendix 1) and endorse the specific list of pledges for Oxford City Councils (paragraph 6). These pledges are recommended because they are affordable (para 12), the alternatives are poor options (paragraphs 8-10) and because they will raise the profile of the Council's good practice, seeking to inspire others in the county (paragraph 7).

Report author	Clayton Lavallin
Job title	Principal Regeneration and Economic Development Officer
Service area or department	Regeneration & Economy
Telephone	01865 252323
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Background Papers:
1   None

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Appendix 1: Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter

Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter

Actively supporting inclusivity across Oxfordshire's economy will generate real benefits for your organisation. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors are increasingly being considered by employees, customers, funders, investors, and partners. Participating in the work of the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership, through the pledges you make within this Charter, provides a way of demonstrating your commitment to social issues:

• Promoting your role in Oxfordshire's inclusive economy work will help you to attract people to work with you.

• Accessing the widest pool of talent will support growth and productivity within your company or organisation.

• Purchasing from local suppliers and supporting your staff to undertake volunteering activities within the community will contribute to well-being and a sense of loyalty among your employees, differentiating your organisation from competitors.

Joining the work of the Partnership is not only a good thing to do, but it will make a difference to your business too.

By signing this Charter, you are demonstrating your support for and commitment to making Oxfordshire a fairer and more inclusive place to live and work.

Charter pledges

As a group of employers, we recognise the importance and value of supporting an inclusive Oxfordshire. We are committed to improving all aspects of social mobility and increasing shared prosperity for both our communities and residents by taking action on these pledges:

Improve training and educational attainment
Creating workplaces where employees can thrive and grow and supporting educational programmes for children

Recruit inclusively
Making jobs accessible for all residents and hiring from diverse communities

Offer opportunities into work
Supporting those furthest from the labour market on their journey towards secure employment

Support local and social economy
Using our buying power to support the local economy and maximise social value

Provide fair wages
Ensuring employees have a fair and decent wage

Sharing resources, skills and assets
Practical ways to ensure goods and services are accessible to all

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Appendix 2 - Risk Register

OIEP Charter (OCC Pledges)

As at: June 2023

Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current			Target		Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
									P	I	P	I	Score	P	I						
INF	Service / corporate plans, strategies and objectives	Risk additional capacity / resource needed to meet pledge commitments. Considered low risk as the OCC Charter Pledges do not present new or additional service commitments. Therefore presents opportunity to promote existing commtiments rather than a threat to delivery of existing priorities.	Opportunity	OCC Charter Pledges represent an opportunity to further promote and ehance existing service priorities	Opportunity to enhance inclusivity and profile of OCC service delivery	Accept	14/06/23	CMT/Service leads	2	3	3	2	6	2	3	Mitigation-No new additional commitments posed by pledges to OCC resource or capacity					
SRF	Management incompetence / inadequte adoption of management policies	Risk pledge commitments are not delivered due to management failings and inability to carry out actions.	Threat	Management failing to adopt and implement actions.	Failure to delivery againt the committed pledges actions could result in reputational risk - considered unlikely given existing commitments and thereore low risk	Reduce	14/06/23	CMT/Service leads	2	3	2	3	6	2	3	Mitigation-CMT and Management sign off and adoption of actions prior to Cabinet approval					
HRP	Lack of Operational support	Staff unaware of or have insufficient ownership of pledge commitments	Threat	Staff unaware of or have insufficient ownership of pledge commitments due to lack of commitment.	Staff failing to own and implement actions, resulting in failure to delivery aganist the committed pledges actions. This could result in reputational risk. Considered low risk due to pledges commitment being embedded within existing priorities.	Reduce	14/06/23	Service Staff	2	3	2	3	6	2	3	Mitigation-CMT and Management outline responsibilities to their respective staff teams. 'Let's Talk' session to be held for all staff in June 23 to inform and engage staff Council wide					

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Appendix 3

Initial Equalities Impact Assessment screening form

Prior to making the decision, the Council's decision makers considered the following: guide to decision making under the Equality Act 2010:

*The Council is a public authority. All public authorities when exercising public functions are caught by the Equality Act 2010 which became law in December 2011. In making any decisions and proposals, the Council - specifically members and officers - are required to have **due regard** to the **9** protected characteristics defined under the Act. These protected characteristics are: **age, disability, race, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage & civil partnership***

The decision maker(s) must specifically consider those protected by the above characteristics:
(a) To seek to ensure equality of treatment towards service users and employees;
(b) To identify the potential impact of the proposal or decision upon them.

The Council will also ask that officers specifically consider whether:
 - *(A) The policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and / or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults*
 - *(B) The proposed policy / service is likely to have any significant impact on mental wellbeing / community resilience (staff or residents)*

If the Council fails to give 'due regard', the Council is likely to face a Court challenge. This will either be through a judicial review of its decision making, the decision may be quashed and/or returned for it to have to be made again, which can be costly and time-consuming diversion for the Council. When considering 'due regard', decision makers must consider the following principles:

1. ***The decision maker is responsible for identifying whether there is an issue and discharging it**. The threshold for one of the duties to be triggered is low and will be triggered where there is any issue which needs at least to be addressed.*
2. ***The duties arise <u>before</u> the decision or proposal is made, and not after and are ongoing**. They require **advance** consideration by the policy decision maker with conscientiousness, rigour and an open mind. The duty is similar to an open consultation process.*
3. *The decision maker must be <u>**aware**</u> **of the needs of the duty**.*
4. *The **impact of the proposal or decision must be <u>properly understood</u> first**. The amount of regard due will depend on the individual circumstances of each case. The greater the potential impact, the greater the regard.*
5. ***Get your facts straight first!** There will be no due regard at all if the decision maker or those advising it make a fundamental error of fact (e.g. because of failing to properly inform yourself about the impact of a particular decision).*
6. *What does 'due regard' entail?*
   - a. ***Collection and consideration of data and information;***
   - b. ***Ensuring data is sufficient to assess the decision/any potential discrimination/ensure equality of opportunity;***
   - c. ***Proper appreciation of the extent, nature and duration of the proposal or decision.***

7. ***Responsibility*** *for discharging can't be delegated or sub-contracted (although an equality impact assessment ("EIA") can be undertaken by officers, decision makers must be sufficiently aware of the outcome).*

8. ***Document the process*** *of having due regard! Keep records and make it transparent! If in any doubt carry out an equality impact assessment ("EIA"), to test whether a policy will impact differentially or not. Evidentially an EIA will be the best way of defending a legal challenge. See hyperlink for the questions you should consider* *http://occweb/files/seealsodocs/93561/Equalities%20-%20Initial%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20screening%20template.doc*

1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or strategy which group (s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) and its Charter and Pledge scheme contribute to our Oxford City Council Corporate Plan and our Economic Strategy and each of the pledges build on or are explicitly existing commitments of service delivery but will enhance the inclusivity with which our services are offered to Oxford citizens.

The aims and objectives of our inclusive economy commitments present positive equalities implications-The OIEP and its Charter supports an inclusive economy and is committed to improving all aspects of social mobility and increased prosperity for communities and residents, particularly if they are from disadvantaged or minoritised groups or communities.

---

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

   Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

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Oxford City Council's participation in the scheme does not involve a new or changed policy but rather is an opportunity to enhance and add value to existing offers across Oxford City Council's services to celebrate and give visibility to our best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion at a countywide level.

The Charter was launched in early 2023 and the pledge scheme is long term and will be reviewed annually with progress reports given on an annual basis focusing on the positive impacts for participating employers, employees and residents which will inform resulting action plans. These action plans will be reviewed by the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) manager in dual role as Oxford City Council member of staff, reporting on behalf of OIEP to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

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3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

   Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

The OIEP as a strand of work prioritised by our Economic Strategy was taken to broad public consultation in 2022 prior to the Strategy being approved by Cabinet in June 22 and the wider countywide work of the OIEP has been approved and signed off by all Oxfordshire councils under the governance and accountability of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

Working groups of OIEP intend to further engage residents with focus groups formed of the key stakeholders impacted by the emerging initiatives and delivery on behalf of their respective thematic priorities.

The charter itself is an engagement tool as part of the OIEP's wider communications strategy and approach to inclusivity.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

   Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

No groups are potentially disadvantaged by the proposals and no adverse impacts are identified based on previous consultation, however each service will tailor their pledges to their respective service and service users needs and target audiences so as to maximise opportunity for best practice in terms of EDI.

Future engagements and consultation will aim to build on the range and diversity of stakeholders identified whilst ensuring a proactive engagement of any target group identified as potentially at risk of adverse impact.

Any adjustments that are identified by those potentially at risk of adverse impact will be accommodated by the service area and inform the wider learning at annual review.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

   Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

> Any unexpected equality impacts that are identified will be accommodated and acted upon at point of delivery by the respective service area and then escalated to the wider OIEP steering group in order to inform the wider learning at annual review

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Clayton Lavallin

Role: Principal Regeneration & Economic Development Officer

Date: 18.04.23

Note, please consider & include the following areas:

- Summary of the impacts of any individual policies
- Specific impact tests (e.g. statutory equality duties, social, regeneration and sustainability)
- Consultation
- Post implementation review plan (consider the basis for the review, objectives and how these will be measured, impacts and outcomes including the "unknown")
- Potential data sources (attach hyperlinks including Government impact assessments or Oxfordshire data observatory information where relevant)

Form to be used for the Full Equalities Impact Assessment

Service Area:	Regeneration & Economy	Section:	Date of Initial assessment: April 2023		Key Person responsible for assessment: Clayton Lavallin	Date assessment commenced: June 2023
Name of Policy to be assessed:			OIEP Charter and OCC Pledges			
1. In what area are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact		*Race*		*Disability*		*Age*
		Gender reassignment		*Religion or Belief*		*Sexual Orientation*
		Sex		*Pregnancy and Maternity*		*Marriage & Civil Partnership*
Other strategic/ equalities considerations		*Safeguarding/ Welfare of Children and vulnerable adults*		*Mental Wellbeing/ Community Resilience*		
2. Background: Give the background information to the policy and the perceived problems with the policy which are the		The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) and its Charter and Pledge scheme contribute to our Oxford City Council Corporate Plan and our Economic Strategy and each of the pledges build on or are explicitly existing commitments of service delivery but will enhance the inclusivity with which our services are offered to Oxford citizens.				

reason for the Impact Assessment.	The aims and objectives of our inclusive economy commitments present positive equalities policy opportunities because the OIEP and its Charter supports an inclusive economy and is committed to improving all aspects of social mobility and increased prosperity for communities and residents, particularly if they are from disadvantaged or minoritised groups or communities.
3. Methodology and Sources of Data: The methods used to collect data and what sources of data	The data informing the work of the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) is drawn from a wide range of sources national and regional such as Census data, strategy and policy and regional and local data of community and ward level profiles. In addition, the OIEP were supported by a Brookes University internship to undertake community mapping identifying groups by protected characteristic to engage and recruit into the partnership.
4. Consultation This section should outline all the consultation that has taken place on the EIA. It should include the following. • Why you carried out the consultation. • Details about how you went about it. • A summary of the replies you received from people you consulted. • An assessment of your proposed policy (or policy options) in the light of the responses you received. • A statement of what you plan to do next	The OIEP as a strand of work prioritised by our Economic Strategy was taken to broad public consultation in 2022 prior to the Strategy being approved by Cabinet in June 22 and the wider countywide work of the OIEP has been approved and signed off by all Oxfordshire councils under the governance and accountability of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. Working groups of OIEP intend to further engage residents with focus groups formed of the key stakeholders impacted by the emerging initiatives and delivery on behalf of their respective thematic priorities. The charter itself is an engagement tool as part of the OIEP's wider communications strategy and approach to inclusivity. The summary of the consultation responses informed revisions to the wider Economic Strategy and particularly the inclusive economy pillar and the OIEP related actions of the delivery plan. This and the work of the OIEP partnership will continue to be assessed annually and the policy options reviewed by extension. The OIEP reports to Future Oxfordshire Partnership on behalf of the councils of Oxfordshire and the Economic Strategy delivery reports back to the Economic Growth Steering Board in terms of progress to deliver.

5. Assessment of Impact: Provide details of the assessment of the policy on the six primary equality strands. There may have been other groups or individuals that you considered. Please also consider whether the policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and / or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults			
	Race Neutral	**Disability** Neutral	**Age** Neutral
	Gender reassignment Neutral	**Religion or Belief** Neutral	**Sexual Orientation** Neutral
	Sex Neutral	**Pregnancy and Maternity** Neutral	**Marriage & Civil Partnership** Neutral

The Oxford City Council participation in the OIEP Charter and pledge scheme relate to adults and not children but has considered that a proportion of the adults supported may fall under the category of vulnerable. Policies and Procedures are therefore in place to inform the support if and where required.

Each of the respective service areas of OCC signing up to pledges work within corporate policies and procedures in this regard and have budget allocated where relevant and required.

6. Consideration of Measures: This section should explain in detail all the consideration of alternative approaches/mitigation of adverse impact of the policy	No adverse impacts of participation in the OIEP Charter and pledge scheme have been identified that would require mitigation, however several positive impacts in terms of the enhanced ability of services to be delivered in ways which proactivity support EDI outcomes are explicit in participation in the Charter and Pledge scheme by extension of the inclusive economy focus of the OIEP.
6a. Monitoring Arrangements: Outline systems which will be put in place to monitor for adverse impact in the future and this should include all relevant timetables. In addition it could include a summary and assessment of your monitoring, making clear whether you found any evidence of discrimination.	Each respective service area of Oxford City Council participating in the OIEP charter and pledge scheme have their own systems in place for monitoring and responding to any issues relating to discrimination and or exclusion, subject to Oxford City Council's shared standards and practice, including policy and procedure and structures and systems. In addition, any discrimination and or exclusion identified as well as being acted upon at point of delivery by the respective service area and then escalated to the wider OIEP steering group in order to inform the wider learning at annual review
7. Date reported and signed off by City Executive Board:	14th June 2023
8. Conclusions: What are your conclusions drawn from the results in terms of the policy impact	The conclusion of the policy impact assessment is that while the initiative provides positive opportunities to enhance inclusivity and promote equality a consistent consideration of public sector equality duty should be maintained throughout the lifecycle of the initiative and inform how policies or decisions that affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.

9. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	NO	10. Date the Service Plans will be updated	In line with Services participating	11. Date copy sent to Equalities Lead Officer	18/04/23
.13. Date reported to Scrutiny and Executive Board:	June 23	14. Date reported to City Executive Board:	June 23	12. The date the report on EqIA will be published	June 23

Signed (completing officer)   Signed (Lead Officer)

Clayton Lavallin   Mili Kalia

Please list the team members and service areas that were involved in this process:

- Equalities Lead Officer: Mili Kalia Equality, Diversity & Inclusion-Lead, Communities
- Service Manager: Ted Maxwell, Economy, City Centre and Green Transport Lead, Regeneration & Economy
- Lindsey Cane, Legal Services Manager

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**12 July 2023**
Report of:	**Head of Business Improvement**
Title of Report:	**Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek approval for a new Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	All
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24

Recommendation: That Cabinet resolves to:
1.   **Approve** the Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25 (at Appendix 1).

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Citizen Experience Strategy
Appendix 2	Consultation Findings
Appendix 3	Risk Register
Appendix 4	Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. This Citizen Experience Strategy ("the Strategy") outlines the approach the Council will be taking to provide a positive experience for all of Oxford's citizens in accessing its services and engaging with it as a provider of them.

2. This Citizen Experience Strategy is more wide ranging than our previous customer contact strategy which were more transactional in nature and more focused on the first point of contact. This strategy will ensure that all of the City Council Services are in tune with the approach, and also embraces other organisations and

community groups so that together, we provide the right support for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.

3. Since its last Customer Contact Strategy which covered the period 2019 to 2022, the impact of digital technology in day-to-day life has grown significantly, and driven further improvements in the way we deliver services. In addition, the Council's response to the Covid Pandemic has taught it much about the ways it can interact with its citizens, and that citizens rightly expect to be able to engage in a range of ways including using more digital channels.

4. The Council has taken this learning to review its approach and consulted with all of its stakeholders to present the Citizen Experience Strategy, which can be found at Appendix 1.

Current Context

5. It is important to understand the key demographics of the citizens the Council is serving, to ensure that any strategy we develop is relevant in addressing the city's needs.

6. Oxford is a changing city that is becoming more diverse. According to the ONS Census 2021 data the population of Oxford is 162,040. The population is made up of 15.4% (24,991) Asian, 4.7% (7,535) Black, 5.6% (9,005) Multiple Ethnic groups, 70.7% (114,561) White and 3.7% (5,948) 'other' Ethnic groups.

7. The census also shows the profound health inequality that continues to exist in our city. Those aged 65+ years make up for 12% of the population in the city. 3.3% (5,415) of the population are living with either 'Bad or very bad health'. 14.5% (23,491) of the population identify as being disabled under the Equality Act.

8. Inequality also exists in significant parts of the city experiencing extreme poverty. The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 results show Oxford has one Lower Layer Super Output Area within the 10% most deprived areas nationally (Northfield Brook) and there are 9 areas in total among the 20% most deprived nationally, which are located in The Leys, Barton, Littlemore, Rose Hill and Carfax.

9. Digital disadvantage is also widespread. The Oxford Internet Institute recently conducted a survey of local residents to explore the impact of the digital divide in the city. The results revealed that almost a quarter of Oxford residents lack access to the internet, and this lack of access disproportionately affects those from lower-income households and minority ethnic backgrounds.

10. There are 4,580 registered businesses within the Oxford boundaries that provide approximately 113,900 jobs, each of whom will have a high expectation about how they engage with the city to be successful employers.

11. Visitors to the city also want a positive experience, and Oxford remains a key destination attracting approximately 7-million-day time and staying visitors per year.

Current Service

12. The scale of our current front line business activity is significant. In 2022/23, the Council's customer contact centre handled just under 140,000 telephone calls (with over 96% of these calls resolved without recourse to the back office), the Customer

Service Officers handled over 4,000 face to face enquiries, and there were over 30,000 online form submissions on its website. For 2022/23 customer satisfaction with the Council's face to face service was over 97%, for its contact centre was over 80% and for the website was 41%.

13. The City Council has been accredited with the Customer Service Excellence quality mark since 2013. This standard recognises organisations that deliver efficient and effective services that place customers at the heart of service provision. The Council's most recent assessment was in March 2023, where it passed with flying colours with only one partial compliance across the 57 criteria. Additionally, this year the assessors awarded 11 Compliance Plus ratings where the Council were judged to have gone "above and beyond" what was expected.

14. The Council's face to face service relocated to the Westgate Library in January 2022, operating for 3 days each week alongside Citizens Advice Oxford. The benefits of this way of working are so much more than co-location. Working together has delivered speedier advice for citizens, joining up access to all Council services (particularly Council Tax, Benefits and Housing). The City Council has been able to signpost more directly to Citizens Advice for specialist debt advice.

15. The City Council's Covid response introduced locality hubs to ensure communities received the support and advice they needed during the pandemic. The City Council has built on that approach, creating locality networks in its communities, joining up service delivery across the Council and working with the County Council, other organisations and community groups to ensure it is supporting citizens to get access to the best support and advice.

16. The development of these locality networks will specifically help to tackle the health and poverty inequalities communities are experiencing. These networks will also help to bridge the digital divide which is a key enabler to improving quality of life.

17. Understanding the changing demographics as highlighted above, the organisation has access to a comprehensive range of language support services including telephone interpreting, face to face interpreting (Including British Sign Language Interpreters), video calls and document translation services. The current supplier for these is Word360, but we are currently re-tendering for this service, looking for a like-for-like offer which will be in place by the end of August.

18. Insight shows that Google Translate is widely used by non-English speaking citizens when accessing the internet and so site-specific translation services are not always required.

Consultation process

19. The draft Citizen Experience Strategy was taken to the Leader's meeting on 25/01/23 and approved as a draft for consultation.

20. Citizens have been consulted in a number of ways. These opportunities were used to test objectives and language, and also to understand what barriers are faced in getting access to services. Officers visited existing Community Larders in Rose Hill and Barton and attended a Community Champions Forum at the Museum of Oxford and an online Diversity Forum. In addition, citizens using the contact centre and visiting the front-line service at the Westgate were surveyed on their views.

21. The Council commissioned a special session for advice providers to understand how the strategy and its objectives would affect their services.

22. A session was also held with the Director for Customer Experience and Cultural Services at Oxfordshire County Council, to ensure that the partnership approach suggested aligns with their direction of travel.

23. Individual discussions were held with every Service Head and representatives of their teams, to seek their feedback on the proposed strategy, its objectives and language. This feedback has been used to develop the Citizen Experience action plan and for services to consider their own more specific actions.

24. Staff were given the opportunity to share their views again on the objectives and language of the strategy, and also on what they would need to help them embrace and deliver against the proposed principles of the strategy. This was achieved using a series of online and in person sessions.

25. Different dimensions of the strategy were further tested with the Policy Officer Group and Equalities Steering Groups, in addition to their feedback on objectives and language. The Policy Officer Group were asked to consider alignment with other existing City Council policies, whilst the Equalities Steering Group has supported the development of the Equalities Impact Assessment.

Data and Insight Summary

26. The insights gathered has been used to enrich the action plan, ensuring priorities already underway are still relevant. They have significantly shaped the language used. It has also been a valuable exercise to ensure that all Council services are fully aligned to the strategy principles. The full consultation findings can be found in Appendix 2.

27. There will be a greater emphasis on supporting those in digital poverty or with lower literacy skills. The action plan includes a review of the Community Involvement Policy, a commitment to explore how the new Resident's panel can be better used and how young people can be more formally engaged.

28. The Council also found a clear opportunity to work closely with its commissioned advice providers to ensure they are able to champion the benefits of digital access and are included in the locality network approach.

29. Improving the website was unsurprisingly a big priority in the feedback. There was a widespread demand for it to be more user-friendly, with better quality information that is updated regularly. A new approach to the content management of our website is being developed, and citizens will be engaged as part of this process.

30. The digital divide reported by the Oxford Internet Institute is concerning and persistent. Work has already begun with Activate Learning at the Blackbird Leys Technology Campus. We will be working together using their resources to provide digital skills and employability support for citizens. They will also be helping the City Council to be seen as a viable employer in the community and supporting citizens to apply for roles with us, in particular for the forthcoming apprenticeship scheme.

31. Better use of data and insight was another key theme. This is reflected in our priority to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the customer feedback and insight we

gather from a range of sources including member enquiries, comments and complaints and freedom of information requests. Internally, we also need to ensure that the organisation understands and uses that insight to support decision making and policy formulation.

32. Through the consultation process, services have also committed to undertake a range of actions to improve their offerings in line with the Strategy principles. These include policy reviews, improving web content, reviewing processes and service standards.

33. In terms of the language of the Citizen Experience Strategy itself, there was some debate regarding the use of "citizen" or "customer". Comments included "customer" having a transactional or consumer meaning but may be a friendlier term. Some feedback said "citizen" may be a word that may exclude some of our communities; visitors for example may not feel they are citizens. There was no clear preference overall, or other more suitable suggestions but a strong feeling that whatever word is chosen, a definition is included in the strategy. A strap line to the Citizen Experience Strategy has been added to provide further clarity.

34. A definition has been included to say "citizens" are those who live, work in and visit the City Council.

35. A strap line to the strategy has been added to say "For everyone that lives in, works in or visits the City of Oxford".

36. There was feedback over the vision which used the term "putting at the heart of everything we do", which was said to be overused. In addition, the citizen feedback said that what was really important to them was knowing they had been listened to and understanding what the Council had done with any feedback given. The vision has therefore been amended to say "Put communities and citizens at the heart of how we work, ensuring they actively shape our services and that the right support is available for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford."

37. Staff feedback also had clear themes. They were clear they need a better staff directory as well as development in customer service and equalities skills to support citizens and fulfil the ambitions of the Strategy. Staff also wanted to set clearer expectations for citizens of the service standards that the Council is working to. This feedback is reflected in the action plan to develop the citizen experience "culture" in the organisation.

Strategy Summary

38. The shaping of and the emerging priorities of this new "Citizen Experience Strategy" differs from previous customer contact strategies. Wherever and however our citizens touch the Council's business and services, it aims to ensure its promises and aspirations are always met. Work has been done to ensure alignment to the Thriving Communities, Equalities, Inclusive Economy and People Strategies.

39. The Citizen Experience Strategy sets a vision for modern, inclusive and accessible services. Embracing the benefits of digital technology and automation to make the experience quicker and easier whilst also meeting the needs of Oxford's diverse communities, with access to the appropriate specialisms for more complex interactions.

40. The Council is equally committed to ensure that no-one gets left behind, utilising a range of access channels including face to face options to make that possible.

41. The Council will make the most of its data and insight, whether that is using customer feedback to improve processes, involving citizens in service design, or utilising data to spot trends and support business policy and decisions.

42. Strengthening support within communities and working collaboratively with partners, agencies and community groups will give holistic, right first-time solutions and advice. This is not just about solving short term day to day issues but ensuring early intervention, improving resident outcomes overall and reducing the call on council services, so it can focus on the most complex needs. The locality model is intrinsic to stimulating this approach.

43. The Citizen Experience Strategy has 4 pillars that accord with the Customer Service Excellence Standard. They are:

- Citizen focused
- Positive Citizen Experience
- Inclusive Access
- Get it right first time

Delivery

44. The action plan for delivery of the Strategy, showing how each of the 4 pillars are addressed can be found within the Strategy.

45. Delivery of the Citizen Experience Strategy action plan is overseen by the Fit for the Future Board. An Annual update on progress will be drawn up for the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to share more widely.

46. We will be improving digital access to services for citizens and improving back-office automation that will mean less manual intervention by staff. We will be measuring how successfully citizens use these new digital processes. We will also continue to measure satisfaction with our web, contact centre and face to face services. These will be stretching targets that sit alongside clear plans for improvement.

Financial implications

47. Implementing this strategy will contribute to savings already included in the medium term financial plan (MTFP) and currently requires no additional funding beyond that already identified in the MTFP, such as for the website redevelopment.   Should any additional requirements or savings surface over time, they will be included in the budget process in the usual manner.

Legal issues

48. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. In delivering services the Council must be mindful of the public sector equality duty to consider how its policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services, including internal policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.

Level of risk

49. This can be found at Appendix 3.

Equalities impact

50. This can be found at Appendix 4.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

51. One of the central themes of the Citizen Experience Strategy encourages citizens that can to access services to use digital channels. It also promotes early intervention by using our locality networks. This all helps to minimise travel which reduces the impact on the environment.

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Service area or department	Business Improvement
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Background Papers: None

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CITIZEN EXPERIENCE

STRATEGY 2023 – 2025

For everyone that lives in, works in or visits

the City of Oxford

1

Foreword

Everyday hundreds of the city's citizens engage with Oxford City Council, whether as individuals or as part of organisations and businesses. In addition, Oxford welcomes thousands of students and visitors a year who use our services. All those contacts help create Oxford City Council's reputation and done well, encourage investment in the city as well as making it a great place to live, work and visit.

That is why Citizen Engagement matters, and why we need a robust and forward-looking strategy which will help shape the right priorities for our city. This strategy outlines a vision which is richer and more relevant than the narrower transactional nature of our current Customer Services strategy. It commits us to a more systematic engagement with all our citizens to ensure your feedback makes all we do of the highest possible quality.

We are facing a profound digital revolution with Councils like ours expected to meet higher standards than ever in terms of ease of use and access to services. For many citizens, interacting with the Council digitally and on the move is now the default expectation.

But we also must continue meet the needs of citizens who are digitally disadvantaged. There are stark differences in the city in terms of access to technology and broadband. We will continue to invest in telephony and face to face services so that no one is left behind, and in widening digital access.

We will continue to listen and work collaboratively with you to understand and make the changes we need to continually improve our services.

Change in an area like Citizen Engagement is a given; we must be at our best to meet and stay ahead of your changing demands.

And we will measure our performance, with clear targets which stretch to meet our collective ambition. We will celebrate our meeting them and explain and improve where we fall short, as we work hard to deliver this exciting vision.

Councillor Nigel Chapman

Cabinet member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies

Introduction

This Citizen Experience Strategy outlines the approach we will be taking to provide a positive experience for all of our citizens in accessing our services and engaging with us as a provider of them.

This Citizen Experience Strategy is more wide ranging than our previous customer contact strategies which were more transactional in nature and more focused on the first point of contact. This strategy will ensure that all of the City Council Services are in tune with the approach, and also embraces other organisations and community groups so that together, we provide the right support for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.

Since our last Customer Contact Strategy which covered the period 2019 to 2022, the impact of digital technology in day-to-day life has grown significantly, and driven further improvements in the way we deliver services. Alongside this, our response to the Covid Pandemic has taught us much about the ways we can interact with our citizens, and quite rightly the expectation is to be able to engage in a range of ways including using more digital channels.

Current Context

It is important to understand the key demographics of the citizens the Council is serving, in order to ensure that any strategy we develop is relevant in addressing the city's needs.

Oxford is a changing city that is becoming more diverse. According to the ONS Census 2021 data the population of Oxford is 162,040.

Population of Oxford
(162,040)

Asian (24,991)	Black (7,535)	Multiple Ethnic Groups (9,005)	White (114,561)	Other Ethnic Groups (5,948)
15.4%	4.7%	5.6%	70.7%	3.7%
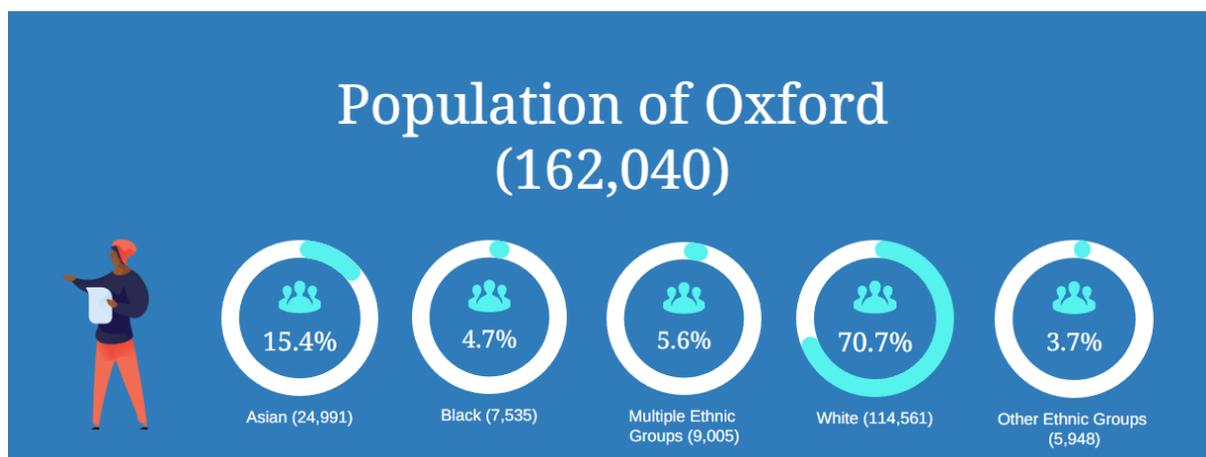
The census also shows an ageing population and the profound health inequality that continues to exist in our city.
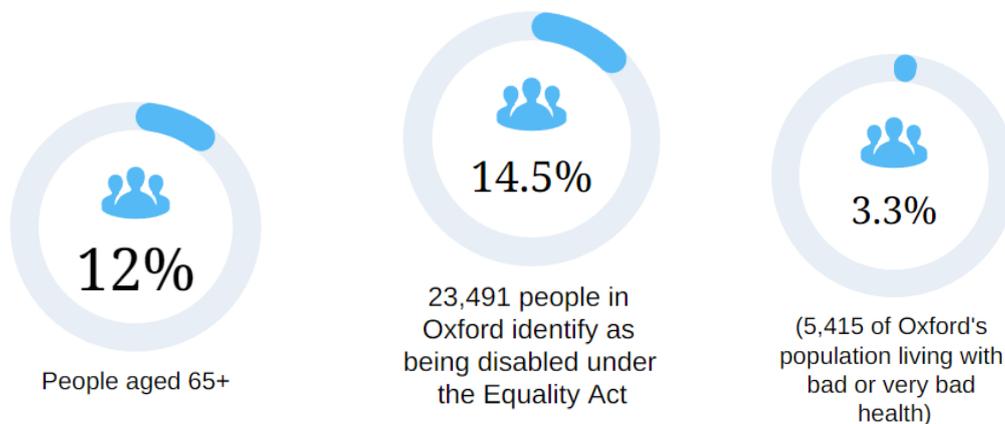
12%

People aged 65+

14.5%

23,491 people in Oxford identify as being disabled under the Equality Act

3.3%

(5,415 of Oxford's population living with bad or very bad health)

Inequality also exists in significant parts of the city experiencing extreme poverty. The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 results show Oxford has one Lower Layer Super Output Area within the 10% most deprived areas nationally (Northfield Brook) and there are 9 areas in total among the 20% most deprived nationally which are in The Leys, Barton, Littlemore, Rose Hill and Carfax.

Digital disadvantage is also widespread. The Oxford Internet Institute recently conducted a survey of residents to explore the impact of the digital divide in the city. The results revealed that almost a quarter of Oxford residents lack access to the internet, and this lack of access disproportionately affects those from lower-income households and minority ethnic backgrounds.

There are 4,580 registered businesses within the Oxford boundaries that provide approximately 113,900 jobs, each of whom will have a high expectation about how they engage with the city to be successful employers.

Visitors to the city also want a positive experience, and Oxford remains a key destination attracting approximately 7-million-day time and staying visitors per year.

Current Service

The scale of our current front line business activity is significant.

Council's Customer Service
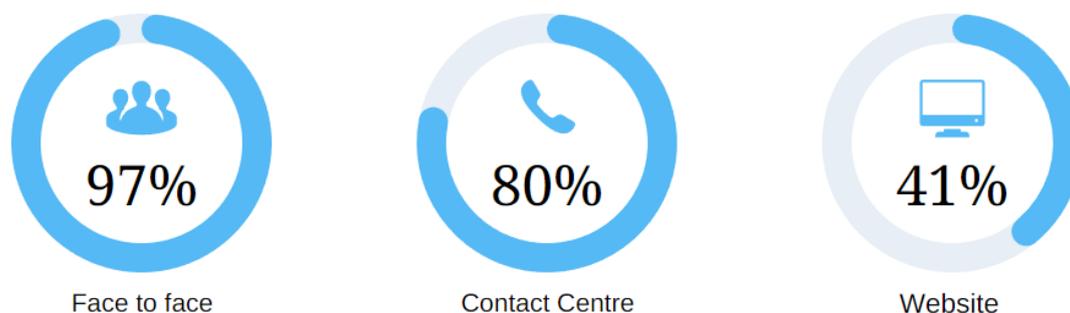
In 2022/23, we handled:

- Online form submissions: 30,000
- Face to face enquiries: 4,000
- Telephone Calls: 140,000

Customer Satisfaction

Face to face	Contact Centre	Website
97%	80%	41%

The City Council has been accredited with the Customer Service Excellence quality mark since 2013. This standard recognises organisations that deliver efficient and effective services that place customers at the heart of service provision. The Council's most recent assessment was in March 2023, where it passed with flying colours with only one partial compliance across the 57 criteria. Additionally, this year the assessors awarded 11 Compliance Plus ratings where the Council were judged to have gone "above and beyond" what was expected.

The Council's face to face service relocated to the Westgate Library in January 2022, operating for 3 days each week alongside Citizens Advice Oxford. The benefits of this way of working are so much more than co-location. Working together has delivered speedier advice for citizens, joining up access to all Council services (particularly Council Tax, Benefits and Housing). The City Council has been able to signpost more directly to Citizens Advice for specialist debt advice.

The City Council's Covid response introduced locality hubs to ensure communities received the support and advice they needed during the pandemic. The City Council has built on that approach, creating locality networks in its communities, joining up service delivery across the Council and working with the County Council, other organisations and community groups to ensure it is supporting citizens to get access to the best support and advice.

The development of these locality networks will specifically help to tackle the health and poverty inequalities communities are experiencing. These networks will also help to bridge the digital divide which is a key enabler to improving quality of life.

Understanding the changing demographics as highlighted above, the organisation has access to a comprehensive range of language support services including telephone interpreting, face to face interpreting (Including British Sign Language Interpreters), video calls and document translation services. The current supplier for these is Word360, but we are currently re-tendering for this service, looking for a like-for-like offer which will be in place by the end of August.

Insight shows that Google Translate is widely used by non-English speaking citizens when accessing the internet and so site-specific translation services are not always required.

How we consulted

Citizens have been consulted in a number of ways. These opportunities were used to test objectives and language, and also to understand what barriers are faced in getting access to services. Officers visited existing Community Larders in Rose Hill and Barton and attended a Community Champions Forum at the Museum of Oxford and an online Diversity Forum. In addition, citizens using the contact centre and visiting the front-line service at the Westgate were surveyed on their views.

The Council commissioned a special session for advice providers to understand how the strategy and its objectives would affect their services.

A session was also held with the Director for Customer Experience and Cultural Services at Oxfordshire County Council, to ensure that the partnership approach suggested aligns with their direction of travel.

Individual discussions were held with every Service Head and representatives of their teams, to seek their feedback on the proposed strategy, its objectives and language. This feedback has been used to develop the Citizen Experience action plan and for services to consider their own more specific actions.

Staff were given the opportunity to share their views again on the objectives and language of the strategy, and also on what they would need to help them embrace and deliver against the draft principles of the strategy. This was achieved using a series of online and in person sessions.

Different dimensions of the strategy were further tested with the Policy Officer Group and Equalities Steering Groups, in addition to their feedback on objectives and language. The Policy Officer Group were asked to consider alignment with other existing City Council policies, whilst the Equalities Steering Group has supported the development of the Equalities Impact Assessment.

How we have used our findings

The insights gathered have been used to enrich the action plan, ensuring priorities already underway are still relevant. They have significantly shaped the language used. It has also been a valuable exercise to ensure that all Council services are fully aligned to the strategy principles.

There will be a greater emphasis on supporting those in digital poverty or with lower literacy skills. The action plan includes a review of the Community Involvement Policy, a commitment to explore how the new Resident's Panel can be better used and how young people can be more formally engaged.

The Council also found a clear opportunity to work closely with its commissioned advice providers to ensure they are able to champion the benefits of digital access and are included in the locality network approach.

Improving the website was unsurprisingly a big priority in the feedback. There was a widespread demand for it to be more user-friendly, with better quality information that is updated regularly. A new approach to the content management of our website is being developed, and citizens will be engaged as part of this process.

The digital divide reported by the Oxford Internet Institute is concerning and persistent. Work has already begun with Activate Learning at the Blackbird

Leys Technology Campus. We will be working together using their resources to provide digital skills and employability support for citizens. They will also be helping the City Council to be seen as a viable employer in the community and supporting citizens to apply for roles with us, in particular for the forthcoming apprenticeship scheme.

Better use of data and insight was another key theme. This is reflected in our priority to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the customer feedback and insight we gather from a range of sources including member enquiries, comments and complaints and freedom of information requests. Internally, we also need to ensure that the organisation understands and uses that insight to support decision making and policy formulation.

Through the consultation process, services have also committed to undertake a range of actions to improve their offerings in line with the strategy principles. These include policy reviews, improving web content, reviewing processes and service standards.

In terms of the Citizen Experience Strategy itself there was some debate regarding the use of "citizen" or "customer". Comments included "customer" having a transactional or consumer meaning but may be a friendlier term. Some feedback said "citizen" may be a word that excludes some of our communities; visitors for example may not feel they are citizens. There was no clear preference overall, or other more suitable suggestions but a strong feeling that whatever word is chosen a definition is included in the strategy. A strap line to the Citizen Experience Strategy has been added to provide further clarity.

A definition has been duly included to say "citizens" are those who live, work in and visit the City Council.

A strap line to the strategy has been added to say, "For everyone that lives in, works in or visits the City of Oxford".

There was feedback over the vision which used the term "putting you at the heart of everything we do", which was said to be overused. In addition, the citizen feedback said that what was really important to them was knowing they had been listened to and understanding what the Council had done with any feedback given. The vision has therefore been amended to say, "Put communities and citizens at the heart of how we work, ensuring they actively shape our services and that the right support is available for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford".

Staff feedback also had clear themes. They were clear they need a better staff directory as well as development in customer service and equalities skills to

support citizens and fulfil the ambitions of the strategy. Staff also wanted to set clearer expectations for citizens of the service standards that the Council is working to. This feedback is reflected in the action plan to develop the citizen experience "culture" in the organisation.

Our vision is simple:

Put communities and citizens at the heart of how we work, ensuring they actively shape our services and that the right support is available for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.

In this strategy, "Citizens" are those who live, work in and visit the City Council. The outcomes and actions in this strategy also cover our relationships with businesses, communities and partners.

We will deliver modern, inclusive and accessible services that embrace the benefits of technology to make the experience quicker and easier for everyone.

Ensuring no-one gets left behind, we will provide a range of ways to contact us with access to specialists for more complex enquiries.

We will make the most of our data and insight, whether that is using citizen feedback to improve our processes, involving citizens in our service design, or utilising our data to spot trends and support business policy and decisions to ensure our services meet the needs of our citizens.

We will strengthen support within communities and work together with partners, agencies and community groups to give holistic, right first time solutions and advice to ensure the early prevention of issues.

We pledge to deliver these simple and ambitious outcomes:

Citizen Focused

- We will put you at the heart of how we work, and develop a learning culture to continually improve our offer to you
- We will listen, use insight and feedback to make sure our services are based on what is needed, and measure success in a way that is accountable to you
- We will use insight to spot trends where we are failing to meet the service standard and improve performance
- We will work collaboratively with our communities, and design services to meet your needs through a variety of contact channels
- We will develop a diverse and engaged workforce that is representative and in tune with

Positive Citizen Experience

- We will make sure the citizen experience as a whole is quicker, easier and better
- We will ensure our staff are supported to give a professional and helpful experience with access to the right tools and technologies
- We will take ownership for delivery and get the basics right
- We will set clear expectations, do what we say we will do and keep you informed of progress

Inclusive Access

- We will deliver modern, accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities and promote our equalities objectives. This includes:
  - An easy to use website for information and guidance, accessible through a range of devices including lap tops and smart phones
  - Self-service to access personal information and request services
  - Keeping updated with messages and alerts
  - Interactive social media
- We will deliver face to face and other assisted support, and help the most vulnerable people to ensure their complex needs are met and no one gets left behind
- We will make our services and information clear, concise and accessible to all using language that reinforces our values
- We will do all we can to reduce digital exclusion by improving our citizens skills and access to technology

Get it Right First Time

- We will resolve your needs at the first point of contact where possible
- We will act swiftly to remedy individual service failures and communicate these actions to you
- We will work collaboratively with partners, agencies and community groups to ensure early intervention
- We will ensure our systems and processes reduce unnecessary contact for you, so your needs are resolved at the first time you contact us

Action Plan

The data and insight received during the consultation have helped shaped this strategy and its emerging priorities, and are now embedded in a clear action plan which is laid out below. The delivery of this action plan will be overseen by the Council's senior management team and progress reported to the relevant Cabinet portfolio holders.

Outcome	Workstream	Start Date	Finish Date
Citizen Focused	Maintaining Customer Service Excellence accreditation		Next annual assessment date is November 2023
	Reviewing our corporate standards, key performance indicators and service offer	June 2023	November 2023
	Reviewing the improvement of services from data insight	April 2023	April 2024
	Review and refresh of the Community Involvement Policy	September 2023	December 2023
	Re-launch and ongoing engagement through the Residents Panel	July 2023	Continuous
Outcome	**Workstream**	**Start Date**	**Finish Date**
Positive Citizen Experience	Website redesign and content refresh	May 2023	TBC
	Development of new online forms	May 2023	Continuous
	Implementation of the revenues and benefits new online forms automation	April 2023	October 2023

Outcome	Workstream	Start Date	Finish Date
	Communications Plan to support and encourage digital access	June 2023	October 2023
	Service based process improvement programme	May 2022	May 2023
Inclusive Access	Development of face to face assisted support model for vulnerable and more complex queries	Continuous	
	Development of collaborative approaches with community groups, partner and agencies offering (Thriving Community Strategy)	Continuous	
	Supporting our communities to have access to digital technology and better digital skills	May 2023	Continuous
Outcome	**Workstream**	**Start Date**	**Finish Date**
Get it Right First Time	Service integration optimised across organisation	Continuous	
	Developing and aligning commissioned advice offer	May 2023	May 2024
	Behavioural insight	January 2023	March 2024
	Developing citizen experience culture for staff including digital and technology skills	April 2023	March 2024

Success Measures

The Council will be improving digital access to services for citizens and improving back-office automation that will mean less manual intervention by staff. The Council will be measuring the extent and success of how citizens use these new digital processes. It will also continue to measure customer satisfaction with its web, contact centre and face to face services. These will include stretching targets that sit alongside clear plans for improvement.

Citizen Experience Strategy and Operating Model

Conversations Feedback
April 2023

Citizen Experience Strategy and Operating Model

Contents:

- **General Feedback**
  - Language
  - Citizen / Customer/ Comments
  - Anything Missing?
- **Accessing our services**
  - Barriers
  - Solutions
- **Emerging Actions** – for the Organisation
  - Overview
  - Detail by theme
- **Emerging Actions** – by Service Area
- **Staff Feedback**
  - What more Teams can do
  - What help do staff need

General Feedback

Language

Suggestions to remove:
- Citizen first approach
- Doing *to* you
- 'Front Door'

Suggestions to add:
- 'Putting you first'
- Making your experience inclusive, seamless, accessible, easy and automated where appropriate for speed and simplicity
- Doing *with* you
- Something about listening to and hearing our citizen's voice rather than putting citizens at the heart of what we do
- Tenants satisfaction – could be a measure for success

Other comments :
- Too many words – Use visuals
- Needs to be plain English
- Use accessible colours
- Define the word 'you' in many places
- Digital; by design or choice? - needs consistency
- Needs to be within constraints of legislation
- 'Right first time' must be a positive comment and make clear it is referring to us getting right first time not the citizen
- The strapline is well used already – try something new
- Customer / citizens / residents – be consistent
- Grammar and punctuation needs looking at
- Tenants may not recognise themselves in "Citizens" and from Regulator perspective it's not a common term

General Feedback

Citizen?, Customer? Or something else?

- No clear preference
- Other suggestion- Residents, Community

Comments:

➢ Customer –   Suggests transactional, consumer
                More friendly

➢ Citizen –   Suggests the need to have citizenship; legal aspects
                The communities don't use this word, so wont identify
                Old and outdated
                Does not cover visitors to the City

- Some of our customers (Planning) are neither our citizens or residents
- Have our customers asked to be called something else ?
- Whichever is chosen, include a definition

General Feedback – Is anything missing ?

- An elevator pitch / summary
- Why this is necessary
- Where do the Members fit in?
- Where do Support Services (Enablers) fit in?
- Ensure this reflects our businesses too
- How ODS and OXPlace fit in?
- Make sure we acknowledge we won't be able to give everyone everything they want
- Needs to reflect different levels of contact for different teams
- How this is going to work
- How we will communicate and engage
- Emphasis on retaining a face-to-face offering
- What we are moving from, and to and why it is important
- Examples – how this will work
- Profiles
- Videos
- Data
- Our corporate values and standards
- Examples of the high-level work streams from the programme
- Our reporting mechanisms
- How we will know we have succeeded - What does good look like
- List of interaction points – who is their first point of contact
- In order to deliver, lack of ICT resource (even with prioritisation) is major issue

Accessing our Services

Citizens & Advice Agencies Feedback

Barriers

- Website not user friendly - too distracting, too many fonts, too clunky.
- Having to use Google to find the right webpage on the website as can't find it from the homepage!
- Hidden disabilities can be ignored/not recognised/not fully catered for (on website for example)
- Digital Poverty
- Literacy levels
- Blackbird Leys BLITZ IT hub is no more.
- Library staff no longer support with computer skills.
- Advice Centre has limited resources to help with online services.
- Unclear signage at library
- So many services and not knowing how to navigate it, find it difficult to do it over the phone or online

Accessing our Services

Citizens & Advice Agencies Feedback

Suggestions:

- How to videos on the website
- Offices in local areas saves transport
- Keyboard shortcuts
- In person 'how to' sessions
- Different languages on the website
- Clear options on the phone line, so citizens know they are going in the right direction
- Communicate back to citizens what we have done against our promises – however big or small – that's what they want to hear about

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Emerging Actions for the Organisation – Themes Overview (details in next slides)

	Webiste	Translation	IT	FOI	Links	Intranet	Data	Reporting	Face to Face	Training	Comms	Online offering	Cuture	EDI
Law Gov				FOI		Intranet					Comms			
Planning								Reporting						
Comm Services					Links		Data			Training	Comms			
Corp Strat		Translation					Data	Reporting			Comms			
Reg Serv		Translation				Intranet	Data	Reporting	Face to Face	Training		Online offering		
Corp Prop														
Regen. Ec					Links		Data				Comms		Cuture	EDI
Finance			IT			Intranet							Cuture	
Citizens		Translation							Face to Face	Training				
EDI		Translation							Face to Face	Training	Comms	Online offering	Cuture	EDI
Policy Officers					Links									
Housing														
OX Place							Data					Online offering		
B.I														

Emerging Actions for the Organisation (1/4)

Website

1. Improvements and better quality information on website; updated regularly, and resources to do this
2. How to use - videos on website to carry out tasks
3. Better links between OCC and OXPlace websites.

Translation

1. Better internal awareness and use of translation services available

ICT

1. CivicaPay
2. Improved phone signal for WFH
3. Wider roll out of Power BI

FOI

1. Strategic support for FOIs - communicating the importance and expectations for all staff to support, and learning from them

Emerging Actions for the Organisation

Links

1. Link to:
   - Digital Inclusion Strategy for County
   - Leisure Options
   - Census data
   - Transformation work in Housing Needs and Homeless Prevention strategy
   - Integrated Care strategy
2. Converse with other bodies and hold them to account to listen to our citizens
3. Explore widening role of Residents Panel to allow for testing of strategies etc.
4. Use our new developments to join up and integrate our work
5. Residents Panel

Intranet

1. Better Staff Directory

Data

1. Plan for better use of and sharing of data & insight internally and externally
2. Feed in and use data from Oxford Residents Survey
3. Better use of data and improved data sharing internally
4. Build a library of best practice, case studies etc
5. Volumetrics for managing demand

Emerging Actions for the Organisation (3/4)

Reporting

1. Review of corporate standards (CSE feedback)
2. Review of operational reporting metrics
3. Review of quality and number of Corporate and Service KPIs
4. Increased Power BI resource

Face to Face

1. Space in the community (Comm Centre) for sensitive conversations and 'drop in' conversations
2. Explore opportunities for working from Community Centres and promoting how people can book these spaces
3. In person 'How to' sessions
4. Ask citizens what they want and how they want to be engaged with

Training

1. Training around how to have conversations to understand needs of the citizen
2. A proper shadowing offer for staff
3. Ensure Advice Centres understand our service delivery
4. Make citizens feel like a person
5. EDI Training for staff
6. Comms training

Emerging Actions for the Organisation (4/4)

Comms

1. Open, honest, timely communication about decision making and any changes in these
2. Better promotion of 'AccessAble'
3. Training in comms
4. More awareness and better use of the new Residents Panel when in place
5. Support and encourage use of videos within comms
6. More opportunities to show we listen and we do
7. Comms Plan to support the channel shift towards digital

Online offering

1. Ask citizens what they want and how they want to be engaged with
2. More online forms
3. Online platform for reporting defects

Cuture

1. Structured engagement
2. Platform for best practice
3. An INTERNAL customer-focused culture
4. Continue to develop ways to provide recognition to staff for their hard work

EDI

1. Making it easier for everyone to apply for our jobs - show case our diverse workforce
2. More targeted support to our diverse communities
3. Youth Voice

Law and Governance - Emerging Actions

Service Area:

- Policy Review (changing he/she to they)
- Roll out of new database for Information & Governance
- Re-tendering of Case Management for Legal Services
- Lesson learning from Staff Survey (Law & Governance)
- Improving webpage content with rollout of refreshed website
- Publish FOIs on website via new system

Organisation:

- Improvements to website
- Services learn from their FOIs
- Strategic support for FOIs - communicating the importance and expectations for all staff to support with these
- Staff directory and intranet
- Open, honest, timely communication about decision making and any changes in these

Planning - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- GIS in place
- Local Land Charges digitisation project
- Improve webpages
- Review service standards
- Review of storage of applications – scanning an option?
- Replacement of Uniform

Organisation

- ❑ Re-fresh of website
- ❑ Review of corporate standards (CSE feedback)

Community Services - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Better use of data
- Demonstrating impact
- Digital inclusion
- Online booking systems

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Organisation

- ❏ Link to Digital Inclusion Strategy for County
- ❏ Plan for better use of and sharing of data & insight internally and externally
- ❏ Training around how to have conversations to understand needs of the citizen
- ❏ A proper shadowing offer for staff
- ❏ Better promotion of 'AccessAble'
- ❏ Comms. training

Corporate Strategy - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Website re-design/refresh project
- More digital newsletters - in particular Housing/Tenants
- Residents Panel refreshed
- Review of quality and number of Corporate and Service KPIs
- Roll out of Oxford Residents Survey
- Review of operational reporting metrics

Organisation

- ❑ Better quality information on website and updated regularly
- ❑ Raise awareness internally of translation services available
- ❑ Feed in and use data from Oxford Residents Survey
- ❑ Review of operational reporting metrics
- ❑ Review of quality and number of Corporate and Service KPIs
- ❑ More awareness and better use of the new Residents Panel when in place

Regulatory Services - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Helping citizen know structure of the team and therefore understand where to go for help (website and upskill Contact Centre)
- Online forms for HMO
- Better info on webpages
- Better use of Power BI for case management

Organisation

- ❑ Better info on website to reduce contact/queries from citizens
- ❑ Better use of and awareness of translation services
- ❑ Better intranet - in particular staff directory
- ❑ Better use of data and improved data sharing internally (particularly demographic data to ensure representative)
- ❑ Increased Power BI resource
- ❑ Space in the community (Comm Centre) for sensitive conversations and 'drop in' conversations
- ❑ Explore opportunities for working from Community Centres and promoting how people can book these spaces
- ❑ Ensure Advice Centres understand our service delivery
- ❑ More on-line forms

Corporate Property - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Right To Buy - improving process - making slicker - explore automation
- More prominent automated affordability calculator on line (RTB)

Organisation

- Support to provide good content for new website (capacity an issue in services)

Regeneration & Economy Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Structured engagement
- Use of videos in comms.
- Explore Govdelivery
- Sharing positive comms.
- SIP Phase2 and embed with Locality Managers
- Regular briefs with CSO
- Online form for general questions

Organisation

- Converse with other bodies and hold them to account to listen to our citizens (enabling role)
- Explore widening role of Residents Panel to allow for testing of strategies etc.
- Utilisation of our Community Solutions database to support B2B and tactical conversations
- Support and encourage use of videos within comms
- Structured engagement
- Wider offer around Youth Voice

Finance - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Increase presence in the community (to build trust with citizens and support channel shift)
- Civica Collect
- RPA
- Revs & Bens portal
- QL portal
- Text messaging

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Organisation

- ❑ Improved intranet
- ❑ Improved phone signal for WFH
- ❑ CivicaPay
- ❑ Staff directory
- ❑ Platform for best practice

Housing - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- CBL needs to go live - ongoing probs with QL etc
- Deliver Online form
- Deliver Enhanced Housing Options
- Secondment from Housing to IT to help with Power BI
- Training from housing to upskill to Contact Centre on key housing issues to improve "end to end Journey"
- Review housing needs triage process to improve citizen journey
- Mobile working solutions - devices to be rolled out along with versa forms
- Through LS transformation, understanding what the tenancy management offer will be in locality, face to face (sits alongside a significantly enhanced digital offer)
- End to end process map from assessment to allocations to drive out efficiency/new ways of working

Organisation

- Power BI needed across organisation
- Volumetrics to manage demand
- Refreshed focus on corporate homelessness prevention

OxPlace - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Review social media channels
- Automate handover
- Consultation events and feeding back to citizens
- Collect more feedback and use it to inform what we can deliver - design, installations, fittings, access to information
- Follow through the process of service user feedback into future design/build

Organisation

- ❑ Better link between OCC and OX Place websites - not duplicating information and making sure webpage on OCC looks like OX Place webpage
- ❑ Build a library of best practice, case studies etc.
- ❑ Online platform for reporting defects

Business Improvement - Emerging Actions

Service Area

- Update website with better and more informative information for citizens to help themselves
- Analyse what difference automation would; make to our front line (Face to face and Calls)
- Look at where we can do more user-led (engaging citizens/users - hearing their voice) design of our service improvements, process changes, new systems and comms.
- Provide ways for staff to go out into and work from the communities we serve. (This will also be part of our evolving F2F offer)

Organisation

q   Ensure there is a Comms Plan in place to support the launch of the new website and the rollout of other new online services
q   Continue to develop ways to provide recognition to staff for their hard work

Staff Feedback

Citizen focused

What more could teams do ?

- Ask citizens about barriers they encounter
- Act on user needs
- Sentiment analysis
- Escalation process (R&B)
- Remove internal barriers so we are seen as one entity

What help do staff need?

- More resources
- Time to read about what the Council is doing
- A strategic steer on addressing ICT needs
- Customer Services training

Staff Feedback

Positive Citizen experience

What more could teams do ?

- Co-design our services - work collaboratively
- More automation on accuracy of claims (R&B)
- Ensure processes are in place and clarify timescales (Property)
- Online bookings for schools/ museum (Comm Services)
- Corporate templates
- Adopt a conversational approach rather than transactional (C.Centre)
- Building blocks (capabilities) in place to provide good online transactions e.g. reusable integration with payments, booking system, etc (ICT)
- Better way to gather feedback online. Not getting useful feedback from GovMetric currently. Not getting any feedback from online form transactions (ICT)
- Reusable integrations with third party systems (e.g. Uniform, QL etc.) rather than just sending emails to service areas when someone submits an online form (ICT)
- Think long-term about online services. Currently contracts end, new systems procured, and all work on integration on old system is lost and has to be re-done (ICT)
- Let citizen/customer know how long each transaction they make online will take to process and what to do if it takes longer (ICT)
- Update citizens on progress of their online transaction to stop repeat contact about the same issue (ICT)
- Focus on delivering good online service for high volume services that currently can't do online e.g. Housing repairs, Bulky Waste Collection, Rent queries, P&R permits (ICT)

What help do staff need?

- Specific and updated training and information to all (eg questions around energy
- A Website giving more transparency on timeframes of service (R&B)
- Staff directory up to date with current staff, clear descriptions of roles and responsibilities so a search is effective and finds the right person (community services)
- Better internal comms (Community Services)
- Enhanced staff engagement (C.centre)
- Clearer guidelines and timeframes so that citizens are not kept wondering what is going on. (PROPERTY & RB Team)
- Clear strategic direction and technical capability/skills/resource to integrate various systems (ICT)
- Less third -party applications to deliver online services which all work slightly differently (ICT)
- A better understanding of what is available to citizens, so we know how to signpost (L&G team)

Staff Feedback

Inclusive access

What more could teams do ?

- Equality impact assessments and Surgeries (L&G team)
- Still offering PDF and Word-based forms on our website as the only digital channel for completing a transaction. Should be replaced with integrated online forms (ICT)
- More inclusive communications
- Need to ensure that all PDF/Word docs on our website comply with legal accessibility standards - WCAG 2.1. Currently quite far away from compliance on this (ICT)
- Have a F2F presence maybe teams call with public/in person rota R&B team

What help do staff need?

- Time - needed to absorb all the info that is already available – (L&G team
- Time, Testing of forms - efficiencies that are mapped need to be applied (R&B team)
- Corporate-led initiatives to train staff in accessibility best practice (Community Services)
- Staff engagement - are staff in a position to improve on their levels of engagement? What's creating barriers?
- Resource needed to comply with legal accessibility standards for online documents. Also requires whole organisation change in mindset/skills (ICT)

Staff Feedback

Get it right first time

What more could teams do ?

- It's not so much the TEAM getting it right. This needs to come from the top down, getting it right for their staff, the emphasis has been on the teams to improve far too much
- Corporate standard processes would help everyone internally and externally (L&G team)
- Automation - removes the opportunity for human error speed will stop 2nd chasing calls R&B team

What help do staff need?

- The staff directory up to date
- One single system that gives a single view of a resident/property, so anyone can see history/notes/contact etc (Community Services)
- Ensuring that we get things right, needs major spend on either staffing or technology, to ensure that we have the resources to get it right.(PROPERTY)
- Corporate understanding of objectives - pressure points, government drivers (R&B)
- Time (L&G)

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Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	Gross P	Gross I	Current P	Current I	Score	Target P	Target I	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
CEX001	Project Scope	Detailed scope of roles/activities cannot be agreed with services	Threat	Competing priorities. Limited capacity. Service pressures.	Unable to progress with project.	Reduce	09/06/22	Ian Wright	4	3	3	2	6	2	2		Robust RACI in place within Project Scoping ToR. This will need to be agreed with each Project Lead and their HoS at scoping stage along with the scope of the project.	31/05/24	Ongoing	50%	Vicki Galvin
CEX004	Delay of efficiencies	The level and rate of efficiencies realised /savings is reduced by descoping or delay	Threat	Change in priorities. Delay in implementation of ICT - internally or via extranal provider. Capacity within services to implement. Data to demonstrate efficiencies lacking.	Increased pressure on services as agreed savings are taken. Inability to meet MTFP.	Reduce	09/06/22	Ian Wright	4	4	4	3	12	3	3		Ensure digital technology roadmap is prioritised to enable savings for customer. Where benefits have an ICT element this is now going to be highlighted on the Benefits Tracker to activate conversations at OCB around resource for this ICT work. Put in place robust front door of change process to ensure CMT can prioritise project and make decisions relating to prioritisation and potential impact on savings. Engaging HoS via commissioning conversations whereby we set out a clear RACI and project scope at the very start. Inter-dependencies understood and picked up in the conversations to shape the Corporate Business Plan. Robust governance in place via weekly Delivery Boards	31/05/24	Ongoing	10%	Vicki Galvin
CEX005	Delay of web/digital	Delays in deployment of web/digital offer due to deployment of ICT on other projects	Threat	Competing and changing priorities within ICT. Staff changes. Team capacity.	Delayed rollout of online forms/applications and RPA. Delay to process improvements and efficiencies/savings being made.Delay to channel shift of customers. Customer experience remains unimproved.	Reduce	09/06/22	Ian Wright	4	4	4	4	16	4	3		Online forms and website refresh reported on under CEX Programme tracker to help prioritise and align objectives. ICT a standing item at the CEX Delivery Board weekly meeting to discuss inter-dependencies and timelines. (Attended by Rocco and/or Harry). Where benefits have an ICT element this is now going to be highlighted on the Benefits Tracker to activate conversations at OCB around resource for this ICT work which is engaged on other project activities.	31/05/24	Ongoing	10%	Vicki Galvin
CEX006	Channel Shift	Channel shift outcomes delayed	Threat	See CEX005	Delay to process improvements and efficiencies/savings being made. Customer experience remains unimproved.	Reduce	09/06/22	Ian Wright	4	4	4	4	16	4	3		Develop and identify key customer team members to be upskilled to develop simple forms without interfaces to other systems with minimal reliance or ICT digital team support. There will be a specific project once the Operating Model is agreed to support, encourage and upskill customers to channel shift which will include use of Behavioural Insight.	31/05/24	Ongoing	10%	Vicki Galvin
CEX007	Digitally Excluded	Digitally excluded are not impacted by these changes	Threat	Impact not understood through an EIA. Insight and feedback from customers/citizens not actively sought or considered ongoing.	Digital gap is increased in the city. Increase in inequalities. Some customers/citizens not able to access services. Increase in calls and face to face visits places greater pressure on services. Savings not delivered.	Reduce	09/06/22	Ian Wright	4	4	3	4	12	3	3		Equality Impact Assessments in place and regularly reviewed. Ensure a fit for purpose offer is still in place within the community. Ongoing consultation with the EDI Steering Group.	31/05/24	Ongoing	20%	Helen Bishop

ID	Risk	Description	Threat/Opp	Cause	Consequence	Response	Date	Owner								Action	Date	Status	%	Owner
CEX009	Campaign Management	Campaign management with customers is fragmented and causes avoidable demand during implementation	Threat	Lack of Comms Plan and support. Reactive comms.	Some customers/citizens not able to access services. Increase in calls and face to face visits places greater pressure on services. Savings not delivered.	Reduce	09/06/22	Ian Wright	4	4	3	3	9	2	2	Put in place a governance (including a RACI and scope) to manage campaigns with our customers.☐ Monthly Demand Management with Tom Jennings.	31/05/24	Ongoing	10%	Vicki Galvin
CEX010	Website	Benefit impact and stakeholder management impact due to delay in procurement or deployment process for web/digital offer	Threat	Capacity in business to write new content.	Some customers/citizens not able to access services. Increase in calls and face to face visits places greater pressure on services. Savings not delivered.	Reduce	09/06/22	Helen Bishop	4	4	3	3	9	2	2	Clear governance to monitor and review progress, training for content authors and engagement with business. Stakeholder mapping and plan in place	30/09/23	Ongoing		
CEX011	Service Capacity	Capacity and commitment in services to lead and deliver on projects.	Threat	Competing and changing priorities within Services. Team capacity stretched. Poor Comms with services re: Fit for the Future portfolio. Lack of clear direction from Senior Management.	Delays to delivery of projects and therefore efficiencies, savings and process improvements for the customer/citizen.	Avoid	01/0922	Vicki Galvin	4	4	4	4	16	2	2	Robust Terms of Reference to be agreed in scoping meeting complete with RACI to ensure roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear from the start of each project. Service Leads to attend Customer Experience Delivery Board to provide update and raise any issues/blockers each week.	Ongoing	Ongoing	10%	Vicki Galvin
CEX012	Strategy & Operating Model sign off	Delay in agreement of Strategy & Operating Model due to challenges back from internal and/or external stakeholders	Threat	Poor comms/engagament with stakeholders. Competing priorities.	Delay to implementation and therefore realisation of benefits.	Reduce	15/12/22	Ian Wright	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	Engagement Plan in place to ensure user-led design.	31/05/23	Completed	100%	Helen Bishop

THE RISK REGISTER IS FORMATTED AS A TABLE. PRESS TAB ON THE LAST TABLE CELL TO INSERT A NEW ROW.

Notes

Gross Risk Score

Risk level if existing key controls and mitigations were not in place or not effective.

Current Risk Score

This is the risk score at the time that the risk is reviewed. When the risk is first identified it will be the same as the gross risk score. The current risk score is tracked to ensure that progress is being made to manage the risk and reduce the Council's exposure.

Target Risk Score

This is the risk score after mitigating actions have taken place. The target risk score shows how effective your action plans are at managing the risk.

Risk Management Approach

See separate tabs for further information:
- **Risk Identification**
- **Types of Risk to Consider**
- **Risk Evaluation & Prioritisation**
- **Risk Treatment**

Risks should be identified that may affect the Council's ability to achieve its business objectives, execute its strategies successfully or limit its ability to exploit opportunities.

Risks can be identified through a number of methods, including:
• A 'brainstorming' session or workshop with the whole management team and relevant stakeholders
• Interviews or questionnaires with key stakeholders
• Meetings with smaller groups of people

There are a wide range of methods available that can be used to identify and understand risks. The method that you select will depend upon the type of risk(s) that you are dealing with but typically a management team workshop is the method most commonly used.

Additionally, existing sources of information could help inform this stage. Some examples are listed
• Service / corporate plans, strategies and objectives
• Existing risk registers
• Risks or issues raised by internal audit or other scrutiny body
• Risks identified through budget setting processes
• Health & safety risk assessments
• Business continuity risk assessments
• Partnership, programme or project documentation (e.g. business case or project risk register)
• Experience of those participating in the risk identification process

It is the responsibility of those identifying risks to decide which sources of information they should consult. This may be one or more of the sources listed above or it could be something else you think is appropriate.

As well as direct risks to the achievement of our objectives it is important to think broadly about uncertainties that may have an impact on the organisation. The diagram shown below illustrates a variety of different risk themes, expanding on PESTLE prompts, which the organisation could face. Think also in terms of these themes when identifying risks.

Once identified, the risks need to be described in sufficient detail and recorded in a consistent format to support effective decision making on the way that the risk is managed. It is crucial for risks to be defined properly at this stage. Failure to do so can result in confusion about the exact nature of the risk, ineffective risk controls being implemented, or the risk analysis being over or underestimated.

The description of the risk should include the following elements:
• Risk Title – a short and concise header for the risk
• Description – expanding on the risk title outlining the situation or event that exposes us to a risk.
• Risk Cause – also known as the trigger event. Situations or factors which result in the risk becoming a
• Risk Effect – the likely consequences if the risk materialises (The negative impact - consider worst likely

When describing a risk try not to describe the impact of the risk as the risk itself or define risks with statements which are the converse of objectives. Focus upon the uncertain event that would result in these impacts

Finance

Types of Risk to consider
Strategic / Commercial
1	Under performance to specification
2	Management will under perform against expectations
3	Collapse of contractors
4	Insolvency of promoter
5	Failure of suppliers to meet contractual commitments (quality, cost, time)
6	Insufficient capital
7	Market fluctuations
8	Trade/Banking crises
9	Fraud/theft
10	Partnership failing to deliver desired outcomes
11	Situation is not insurable (cost of insurance outweighs the benefit)
Economic / Financial / Market
1	Exchange rate fluctuation
2	Interest rate instability
3	Inflation
4	Shortage of working capital
5	Failure to meet projected revenue targets
6	Market developments will adversely affect plans
Legal and Regulatory
1	New or changed legislation may invalidate assumptions upon which the activity is based
2	Failure to obtain appropriate approval e.g. planning consent
3	Unforseen inclusion of contingent liabilities
4	Loss of intellectual property rights
5	Failure to achieve satisfactory contractual arrangements
6	Unexpected regulatory controls or licencing requirements
7	Changes in tax or tariff structure
Organisational / Management / Human factors
1	Management incompetence
2	Inadequate corporate policies
3	Inadequate adoption of management practices
4	Poor leadership
5	Key personnel have inadequate authority to fulfil their roles
6	Poor staff selection procedures
7	Lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities
8	Vested interests creating conflict and compromising overall aims
9	Individual or group interests given unwarrented priority
10	Personality clashes
11	Indecision or inappropriate decision making
12	Lack of operational support
13	Inadequate or inaccurate information
14	Health and Safety constraints
Political
1	Change of government policy
2	Change of government
3	War and disorder
4	Adverse public opinion/media intervention
Environmental
1	Natural disasters

2	Storms, flooding, tempests
3	Pollution incidents
4	Transport problems (including aircraft/vehicle collisions)
Technical / Operational / Infrastructure	
1	Inadequate design
2	Professional negligence
3	Human error/incompetence
4	Infrastructure failure
5	Operation lifetime lower than expected
6	Increased dismantling/decommisioning costs
7	Safety being compromised
8	Performance failure
9	Residual maintenance problems
10	Scope creep
11	Unclear expectations
12	Breaches in security/information security
13	Lack or inadequacy of business continuity

Once risks have been identified the risk matrix is the main tool for prioritising risks so we can establish which risks are most significant and therefore are in need of greater attention and resources. It also allows us to compare different types of risk with each other across the council.

Each risk should be analysed using a five by five matrix for (1) the likelihood it will happen and (2) the impact if it did occur. This assessment should be made on three different basis:
• Gross risk – risk level if existing key controls and mitigations were not in place or not effective.
• Current risk – risk level after existing controls and mitigations are taken into consideration.
• Target risk – anticipated risk level following the introduction of planned controls and mitigations.

Assessing the gross risk allows consideration of the dependency the organisation has upon the existing key controls and informs decisions around risk treatment, and selection of an appropriate target risk level, considered in the next section of this toolkit. It is often helpful to consider the Current Risk first, and then ask yourself what the impact and likelihood of the risk might be if the key controls were not in place.

It is the risk owner's responsibility to ensure the controls they believe are reducing the risk are effective and are working in practice. Controls that are not yet in place should not be considered within the current risk.

Each identified risk should then be plotted onto the risk matrix.
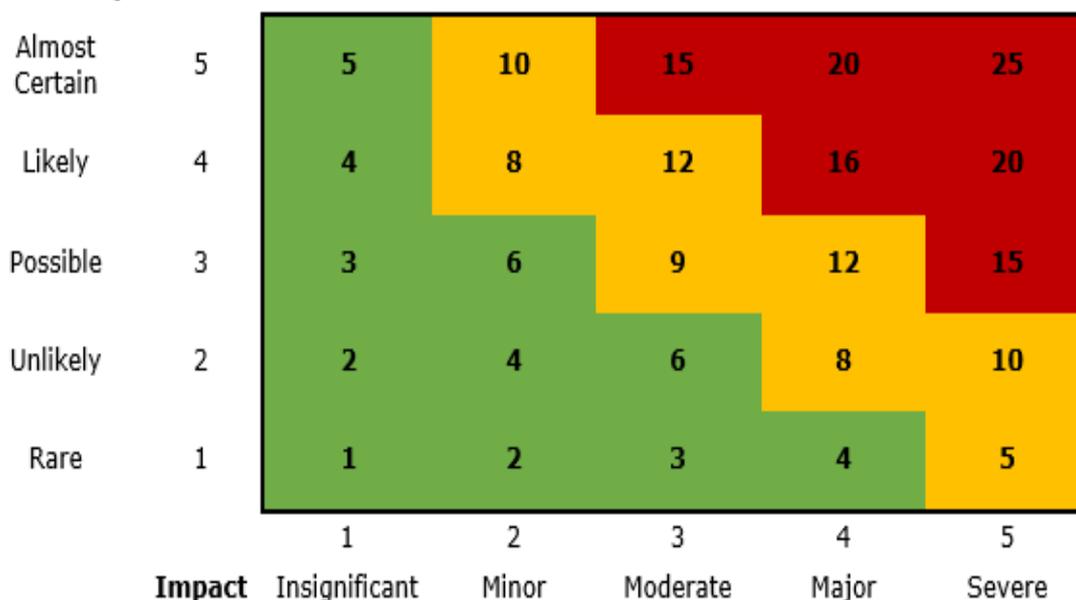
When considering the likelihood of a risk happening you should select the number from 1 to 5 from the risk matrix that you think it will be over the next 12 months (it can be longer or shorter; some risks in the Strategic Risk Register are better considered over 3 to 5 years, some operational risks will be considered over 3 to 6 months). This score will require an element of judgement when considering how likely an event is to occur and you should consider the following:
• Has this event happened before in the Council? (How frequently?) Has this event happened elsewhere?
• How likely is it that one or more of the causes/ triggers of the event will occur?
• Has anything happened recently that makes the event more or less likely to occur?

The following tables provide some support in quantifying the risk in terms of likelihood and impact.

Risk Probability Assessment Criteria

Scale	Description	Likelihood of	Probability of Occurrence

Scale	Description	Occurrence	Probability of Occurrence
1	Rare	1 in 10 years	The event may occur in certain circumstances
2	Unlikely	1 in 3 years	The event could occur
3	Possible	1 in 2 years	The event should occur
4	Likely	Annually	The event will probably occur
5	Almost certain	Monthly	The event is expected to occur or occurs regularly

When you select the impact you should give consideration to the factors outlined in the risk matrix. For example, if the risk you are scoring has a low financial impact but a high impact on our reputation then you would select the most appropriate number between 1 and 5 that relates to the level of reputational impact. Once again, this score will have an element of judgement.

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Financial	<£50k per annum	£50k - £250k per annum	£250k - £500k per annum	£500k - £750k per annum	>£750K per annum
Service Delivery	No impact to service quality, limited disruption to operations	Minor impact to service quality, minor service standards are not met, short term disruption to operations, minor impact on a partnerships	Significant fall in service quality, major partnership relationships strained, serious disruption in service standards	Major impact to service quality, multiple service standards are not met, long term disruption to operations, multiple partnerships affected	Catastrophic fall in service quality and key service standards are not met, long term catastrophic interruption to operations, several major partnerships are affected
Reputation	Public concern restricted to local complaints which do not attract local media attention.	Minor adverse local / public / media attention and complaints	Adverse national media public attention	Serious negative national or regional criticism	Prolonged, regional & national condemnation
Compliance & Regulation	Minor breach of internal regulations, not reportable	Minor breach of external regulations, not reportable	Breach of internal regulations leading to disciplinary action Breach of external regulations, reportable	Significant breach of external regulations leading to intervention or sanctions	Major breach leading to suspension or discontinuation of business and services
Strategic	Little impact on the organisational strategy	May have an impact on achieving organisational strategy	Would impact on the organisational objectives	Would require a significant shift from current strategy and objectives	Would require a fundamental change in strategy and objectives

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Once risks have been identified and scored based on current controls the next step is to decide what action needs to be taken to manage them. Generally speaking, there are four approaches to treating risk: Treat, Tolerate, Terminate or Transfer:

Action	Description	Options
Treat / Reduce	Controlling the likelihood of the risk occurring, or controlling the impact of the consequences if the risk does occur	Reducing the likelihood of the risk occurring AND / OR Mitigating the impact if the risk does occur
Tolerate / Accept	Acknowledging that the ability to take effective action against some risks may be limited or that the cost of taking action may be disproportionate to the potential benefits gained.	The ability to take effective action against some risks may be limited or the cost of taking action may be disproportionate to the potential benefits gained in which case the risk is accepted on an "informed" basis.
Terminate / Avoid	Not undertaking the activity that is likely to trigger the risk	Changing the direction or strategy and revisiting objectives or improving channels of communication Obtaining further information from external sources or acquiring expertise Reducing the scope of the activity or adopting a familiar, proven approach Deciding not to undertake the activity likely to trigger the risk
Transfer	Handing the risk on elsewhere, either totally or in part – e.g. through insurance.	Financial instruments such as insurance, performance bonds, warranties or guarantee. Renegotiation of contract conditions for the risk to be retained by the other party. Seeking agreement on sharing the risk with the other party. Sub-contracting risk to a consultant or external suppliers. NB. It may not be possible to transfer all aspects of a risk. For example, where there is or reputational damage to the organisation.

When considering further action required to manage the risk, and indeed the appropriateness of existing controls, an assessment of treatment options should be made alongside a consideration of the Council's risk appetite and tolerance for the current level of risk.

A further consideration is the efficiency of risk treatment in relation to the cost effectiveness of the proposed actions to be taken. Firstly the cost of implementation has to be considered (time, manpower, budget, etc.). The impact expected if no action is taken, should be weighed against the cost of action and the reduction of the impact. There should be a direct benefit from the cost implementation in terms of the reduction of the level of the risk.

Plans should then be put into place to manage the risk with key milestones identified and clear owners – ensuring that they are 'SMART' – Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound.

Oxford City Council has focused on the Red, Amber, Green status of risks in determining the risk appetite of the organization. Red risks are considered unacceptable and every effort must be made to reduce the risk to the organization.

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The risk appetite is reviewed periodically or when there are significant changes to the organisation. Changes to the risk appetite level would require a change to strategy and would therefore require approval of the Cabinet.

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Form to be used for the initial assessment (Equality Impact Assessment)

Service Area: Business Improvement 177	**Section:** Fit for the Future	**Key person responsible for the assessment:** Helen Bishop (Head of Business Improvement and Citizen Experience Delivery Lead) Vicki Galvin (Senior Programme Manager for Citizen Experience)	**Date of Assessment:** May 2023	
Is this assessment in the Corporate Equality Impact assessment Timetable?			~~Yes~~	**No**
Name of the Policy to be assessed: Citizen Experience Strategy			**Is this a new or existing policy**	New

1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy	The Citizen Experience Strategy and Operating Model have been developed from user-led conversations with citizens, staff, Unions and Members between August 2022 and February 2023.
	The external facing strategy sets out our vision for the future, our principles and our objectives. It is a promise to our customers about the consistent high quality experience they can expect from the Council across all of our communication and access channels.
	The vision states we want to be: 'Working with our communities to ensure our citizens are at the heart of service delivery, getting everything they need to enjoy living and working in the city of Oxford.'
	The four main principles of the strategy are: • Citizen focused • Positive Citizen experience • Inclusive Access • Get it right first time
	The strategy also lays out that in delivering on our strategy the organisation will apply principles to how we operate, will live up to our promises and standards, will empower our staff, will work as one, will introduce new, innovative technology and will provide a choice of contact channels to our citizens.
	The internal facing operating model provides the framework for implementation of our Citizen Experience strategy over the next 3 years. It outlines the building blocks we have and will put in place to deliver on our promise. These include early intervention, our contact channels, enablers such as insight, marketing and culture and a mixed service delivery method.
	The model outlines how we will achieve the outcomes defined in the strategy, the different measures of success, how we will use these to improve the citizen experience and where we will source evidence of performance against these.
	In developing the outline of a strategy and operating model a representative team of key staff from across the organisation were involved in six workshops that looked at demand management, data and insight, process improvement, digital by design, culture and the key building blocks for a successful strategy and operating model. From this data emerging priorities were developed under the headings of data, design, delivery, measurement, culture, leadership, process and technology as well as the requirements of our core functions. Conversations then took place with

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	the wider organisation, citizens, Members and partners so that the strategy is developed based on the needs and experiences of users and the operating model incorporate all services.
	Both the strategy and operating model align with our corporate objectives and design principles as well as other key Council strategies including the Thriving Communities Strategy, Equalities Strategy and Economic Strategy.
	It is important that the Citizen Experience strategy is reviewed on an annual basis and refreshed every 3 years.
3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and in what way	• All citizens of Oxford which includes residents and businesses* • Our staff • Our Members • Partners • Visitors** Strengthening support within communities and enhancing the role of prevention, this strategy will improve resident outcomes overall and reduce the call on council services, which can then focus on the most complex needs. The locality model is intrinsic to stimulating this approach. Streamlined channels of contact and consistent ways of working. Technology, systems and processes will be integrated between the customer operations and operational services, to ensure the needs of our customers are met in a seamless way, whilst staff can focus their efforts where they are most needed. *According to the ONS Census 2021 data the population of Oxford is 162,040 which is made up of 15.4% (24,991) Asian, 4.7% (7,535) Black, 5.6% (9,005) Multiple Ethnic groups, 70.7% (114,561) White and 3.7% (5,948) Other Ethnic group. Those aged 65+ years make up for 12% of the population in the city. The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 results show Oxford has one LSOA (Lower Layer Super Output Area) within the 10% most deprived areas nationally (Northfield Brook) and there are 9 areas in total among the 20% most deprived nationally which are located in The Leys, Barton, Littlemore, Rose Hill and Carfax. There are 4,580 registered businesses within the Oxford boundaries that provide approximately 113,900 jobs.

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	The Oxford Internet Institute (OII) recently conducted a survey of local residents to explore the impact of the digital divide in the city. The results revealed that almost a quarter of Oxford residents lack access to the internet, and this lack of access disproportionately affects those from lower-income households and minority ethnic backgrounds.
	**Oxford attracts approximately 7 million day time and staying visitors per year

4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy?

Outcomes have been defined under each of the four main principles of the strategy. The current known workstreams to deliver these outcomes and the potential EDI implications for each of these have been set out below.

Citizen focused
- Putting our Citizens at the heart of everything we do
- Using insight and feedback, developing a learning culture to continually improve our offer to citizens

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:
- Customer Service Excellence accreditation
- Corporate standards, KPIs, service offer and standards
- User centred design methodology and approach
- Continuous improvement of services from data insight (3Cs, FOI, Member enquiries, etc)
- Data protection considerations and awareness
- Business Intelligence Unit - making sure the organisation understands the insight available
- Review and fresh of the Community Involvement Policy
- Relaunch of the Residents Panel

The EDI implications here are
- Ensuring we continue to actively seek citizen feedback from a representative range of people so our insight is up to date, inclusive and in line with our citizen's changing needs.
- Ensuring opportunities to engage in user-centred design and a user-led approach are fully inclusive
- Ensuring our Residents Panel is representative and inclusive.

Positive Citizen experience
- Making sure the experience is quicker, easier and better

- Working collaboratively with our communities, designing services to meet our citizen's needs through a variety of contact channels

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:
- New digital and technology platforms e.g. Digital Platform and Customer Contact Platform
- Redevelopment and exploitation of new online forms
- Website redesign and content refresh
- Roll out of Revs & Bens Portal

The EDI implications here are
- Ensuring 'no one gets left behind' as new digital and technology platforms are introduced, particularly people with no/limited access to internet/devices, people with no/low digital skills and confidence, people with learning disabilities, people with visual impairments, people with English as a second language.

Inclusive Access
- Delivering modern, accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities & promote our equalities objectives
- Delivering face-to-face and other assisted support, helping the most vulnerable and complex cases and ensuring no one gets left behind

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:
- Assisted support model for vulnerable and more complex queries
- Maximisation of community group, partner and agency offering (Thriving Community Strategy)
- Digital skills and technology for communities
- Explore introducing a form of Youth Parliament/reviewing our Youth Voice offer

The EDI implications here are
- Ensuring our most vulnerable citizens are aware and can access our assisted support model when needed via the contact channel that suits them
- Ensuring the digital skills for communities offer reaches those who need it most and is accessible
- Ensuring our Youth Parliament/Youth Voice offer is representative and inclusive

Get it right first time
- Resolving our citizen's needs holistically at the first point of contact where possible
- Ensuring our systems and processes reduce unnecessary contact for our citizens

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:
- Service integration optimised across organisation
- Optimisation of advice sector
- Behavioural insight

- Citizen Experience mindset and culture established
- Digital and technology skills for staff

The EDI implications here are

- Ensuring our Citizen Experience culture develops in line with our Equalities Strategy values and behaviours
- Ensuring the digital skills for staff offer reaches those who need it most and is accessible

Where appropriate these individual high level workstreams will develop their own Equality Impact Assessments so the specific impacts can be thought through, assessed and mitigated as far as possible.

5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	- Staff engagement, buy-in and commitment to implementing the strategy and operating model - Perceived capacity for implementing and embedding the operating model - Level of cultural change achieved in some areas - Leaders consistently leading by example - Timely implementation of the Digital Strategy		
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy	- All Oxford citizens - Our staff – including ODS and OX Place - Our Members - Unions	**7. Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy?**	Oxford City Council – all services
8. Are there concerns that the policy _could_ have a differential impact on racial groups.	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010). The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.	
9. Are there concerns that the policy _could_ have a differential impact due to gender	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010). The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.	
10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to disability	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010) and is committed to delivering accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities & promote our equalities objectives and ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Delivering face-to-face and other assisted support, helping the most vulnerable and complex cases. We will use insight and customer feedback as a way to continually develop our services while incorporating digital by design to our services. We will always offer alternative contact channels to suit our citizens requirements at the time they need to contact us. Our insight already tells us that many citizens would do and/or would like to use online services.		
11. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to sexual orientation	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010). and is committed to delivering accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities & promote our equalities objectives and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Delivering face-to-face and other assisted support, helping the most vulnerable and complex cases. We will use insight and customer feedback as a way to continually develop our services while incorporating digital by design to our services. We will always offer alternative contact channels to suit our citizens requirements at the time they need to contact us. Our insight already tells us that many citizens would do and/or would like to use online services.		
12. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	

their age			
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010). and is committed to delivering accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities & promote our equalities objectives and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Delivering face-to-face and other assisted support, helping the most vulnerable and complex cases. We will use insight and customer feedback as a way to continually develop our services while incorporating digital by design to our services. We will always offer alternative contact channels to suit our citizens requirements at the time they need to contact us. Our insight already tells us that many citizens would do and/or would like to use online services.		
13. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their religious belief	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010). The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.		
14. Could the differential impact identified in 8-13 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy	Y	N	Unclear at this time. This will be determined as we implement. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate.

15. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason	Y	N	TBC – see above.			
16. Should the policy proceed to a partial impact assessment	Y	N	**If Yes, is there enough evidence to proceed to a full EIA**		Y	N
			Date on which Partial or Full impact assessment to be completed by			
17. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	YES	~~NO~~	18. Date the Service Plan will be updated	All Service Areas will be expected to include references to this strategy in their emerging Service Plans from 2023 onwards	19. Date copy sent to Equalities Officer in Policy, Performance and Communication	
20. Date reported to Equalities Board:			Date to Scrutiny and EB		21. Date published	

Signed (completing officer): _ __   Signed (Lead Officer) __ __