

# Agenda

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## Scrutiny Committee

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Tuesday 3 September 2024**

Time: **6.00 pm**

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

**For further information** please contact:

Celeste Reyeslao, Committee and Member Services Officer

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## Committee Membership

Councillor Katherine Miles (Chair)

Councillor Tiago Corais (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan

Councillor Chris Jarvis

Councillor Dr Amar Latif

Councillor Sajjad Malik

Councillor Edward Mundy

Councillor Simon Ottino

Councillor Asima Qayyum

Councillor Dianne Regisford

Councillor Mike Rowley

Councillor Anne Stares

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

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1 Apologies for absence</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of interest</b>	
<b>3 Chair's Announcements</b>	
<b>4 Minutes</b>	9 - 18
<p>Minutes from 02 July 2024</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> That the minutes of the informal remote meeting held on 02 July 2024 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<b>5 Work Plan and Forward Plan</b>	19 - 24
<p>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.</p> <p>The Committee is recommended to confirm its agreement to the Work Plan, or agree any amendments as required.</p>	
<b>6 Report back on recommendations and from Scrutiny Panel meetings</b>	25 - 48
<p>At its meeting on 10 July 2024, Cabinet considered the following reports from Scrutiny and made responses to the recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024-28</li><li>• Leisure Investment Programme</li><li>• Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces</li></ul> <p>Since the Scrutiny Committee's previous informal remote meeting on 02 July 2024, the following Panels have met:</p>	

- Housing and Homelessness Panel (03 July 2024)
- Finance and Performance Panel (18 July 2024; 27 August 2024)

At its informal remote meeting on 02 July 2024, the Committee requested that the Scrutiny Officer develop a recommendation tracker incorporating all Scrutiny Committee recommendations from 2023/24 onwards. The recommendation tracker is attached.

The Committee is asked to:

1. **Note** Cabinet's responses to its recommendations.
2. **Note** any updates from Panel meetings.
3. **Note and comment on** the recommendation tracker.

## 7 **Budget Review Group Scope**

49 - 54

At its first meeting of the municipal year the Scrutiny Committee established a Budget Review Group to examine the Council's budget proposals for 2025/26.

The Committee is recommended to consider and agree the attached scope, or agree any amendments as required.

## 8 **Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter/Pledges - Annual Update**

55 - 70

In the 2023/24 municipal year, the Committee requested that annual reporting on progress against all of the Council's Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy pledges be submitted for consideration, alongside the full list of possible pledges so that the Committee might identify any further potential pledges that the Council could sign-up to.

The Executive Director (Development) has submitted a report providing a year one update against the Council's pledge commitments as part of the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter. Cllr Susan Brown, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working, Cllr Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and an Inclusive Economy, 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 Annual Safeguarding Report 2023/24

71 - 82

The Executive Director (Communities and People) has submitted a report presenting the Safeguarding Annual Report 2023-24. Cllr Lubna Arshad, Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford, Richard Adams, Community Safety Service 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.

## 10 Anti-Social Behaviour [presentation]

At its informal remote meeting on 02 July 2024, the Committee commissioned an item on Anti-Social Behaviour. This presentation item will provide the Committee with a general overview of Anti-Social Behaviour ahead of undertaking a review of the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy later in 2024/25. The presentation will cover topics including: roles, responsibilities, legislation, partnership working and performance/management information. Cllr Lubna Arshad, Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford and Richard Adams, Community Safety Service Manager have been invited to present and answer questions.

The Committee is asked to receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.

*Note: The presentation will not be available to review before the meeting; any slides will be published with the minutes of the meeting.*

## 11 Dates of future meetings

### Scrutiny Committee

- 08 October 2024
- 04 November 2024
- 02 December 2024
- 14 January 2025
- 29 January 2025
- 03 March 2025
- 01 April 2025

### Standing Panels

Housing & Homelessness: 10 October 2024; 07 November 2024; 06

March 2025

Finance & Performance: 04 September 2024; 04 December 2022; 15 January 2025; 07 April 2025

Climate & Environment: 10 September 2024; 20 November 2024; 26 February 2025; 27 March 2025

**All meetings start at 6.00 pm.**

## **Information for those attending**

### **Recording and reporting on meetings held in public**

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- 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.

#### **Members Code – Other Registrable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing\*\* of one of your Other Registrable Interests\*\*\* then you must declare an

interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members Code – Non Registrable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests, then you must declare the interest.

You must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room, if you answer in the affirmative to this test:

“Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.”

Otherwise, you may stay in the room, take part in the discussion and vote.

\*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.

\*\* Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person’s quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

\*\*\* Other Registrable Interests: a) any unpaid directorships b) any Body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority c) any Body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.



## Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 2 July 2024



### Committee members present:

Councillor Miles (Chair)	Councillor Corais (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Altaf-Khan	Councillor Henwood ( <i>substitute for Councillor Stares</i> )
Councillor Jarvis	Councillor Latif
Councillor Mundy	Councillor Ottino
Councillor Qayyum	Councillor Regisford

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

Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement  
Vicki Galvin, Senior Programme Manager for Customer Experience  
Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy  
Clare Keen, Policy and Partnerships Officer  
Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development)  
Chris Bell, Green and Blue Spaces Development Manager  
Hagan Lewisman, Active Communities Manager  
Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer  
Celeste Reyeslao, Committee and Member Services Officer

### Other Members present:

Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies  
Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working  
Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford

### Apologies:

Councillor(s) Malik and Stares sent apologies.  
Substitutes are shown above.

## 9. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

## 10. Chair's Announcements

The Chair had no announcements. The intended process to be followed during consideration of items at the meeting was explained.

## **11. Minutes**

The Committee resolved to **approve** the minutes of the informal remote meeting held on 05 June 2024 as a true and accurate record, subject to an amendment to Minute 5, "Adult Exploitation" to be corrected to "Adult Exploitation and Modern Slavery" and "Tourism Review Group Update" to be corrected to "Tourism".

*The Committee agreed to consider items 7, 8, 9 and 10 next on the agenda, followed by items 5, 6 and 11.*

## **12. Citizen Experience Strategy Progress Report**

Cllr Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies introduced the report from the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) which provided a comprehensive update on the delivery of the Citizen Experience (CEX) Strategy. An overview of the strategy was provided and the overall positive progress since its implementation was highlighted. Cllr Chapman reported some key achievements over the previous year, including the launch of the Comments, Complaints and Compliments system, the relaunch of the Resident's Panel, improvements to the Council website, and the introduction of Customer Service Officers into community larders.

Cllr Chapman drew attention to the performance of telephony and digital services which had consistently ranked within the top 10 out of 30 local authorities. Key areas of focus for 2024/25 included improving online payment services, maintaining a balance between self-service and face-to-face services, and ensuring alternative provisions for those who were digitally disadvantaged.

Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement added that the strategy implemented was broad in scope. Feedback would be used to improve digital access and automation with ongoing efforts made to enhance coordination within services, ensuring early intervention and proper citizen support. Overall, the strategy aimed to foster a culture that prioritised citizens and communities at the core of Council operations.

Vicki Galvin, Senior Programme Manager for Customer Experience also attended the meeting to speak to the item and answer the Committee's questions.

During discussions, the Committee noted the following:

- Council websites historically struggled with online usability due to the constant need to improve navigation for better user experience and the ongoing development necessary to enhance features and functionality. There remained a significant challenge in the lack of online payment options for services such as bulky waste collection, which had caused frustration for users. Addressing this issue was crucial for improving the online performance ratings.
- The Council's face-to-face services had relocated to the Westgate Library in January 2022, operating three days a week alongside Citizens Advice Oxford, and received over 400 visits per month. This service had since moved to a more defined space within Westgate Library in July 2023, with partitioned areas to

ensure confidentiality and a designated waiting space. Feedback collected from service users indicated high satisfaction levels of around 90%.

- Co-locating with Citizens Advice Oxford allowed the benefit of a more coordinated service provision: with both organisations signposting citizens to each other for real-time, specialist advice or queries.
- A Digital Café had recently been launched at Westgate Library in partnership with the local Integrated Care Board. This aimed to alleviate digital barriers including the lack of internet connectivity and varying levels of digital skills.
- Customer Services Officer presence had been introduced into community food larders as part of community outreach work, in recognition of the fact that not everyone wanted/was able to come into the city centre for face-to-face services.
- A survey was conducted, in conjunction with Activate Learning in Blackbird Leys, to assess community needs in relation to digital access, leading to plans for a training course tailored to cover issues relating to access and usage, including mobile device skills and utilising digital terminals available across the city; officers were working to secure a date and location for the course.

The Committee requested an update report on the online payment system rollout, including how the system was working and any teething problems. The Committee requested that the Scrutiny Officer liaise with officers to schedule this update into the Work Plan.

The Committee noted the report; there were no recommendations.

*Cllr Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement and Vicki Galvin, Senior Programme Manager for Customer Experience left the meeting and did not return.*

### **13. Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024/2028**

Cllr Susan Brown, Leader of the Council introduced the report from the Head of Corporate Strategy which sought Cabinet approval for the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028. She indicated that the document represented important updates guiding the Council's proposed strategy for the next four years, building upon the previous Council Strategy 2020-24. The key priorities had largely remained unchanged but reflected ongoing relevance. The strategy incorporated feedback from the Local Government Association Peer Review and the previous recommendations from the Committee on the pre-consultation draft of the strategy, along with community input on issues such as affordable housing.

Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy mentioned that Corporate KPIs were not included in the submitted report but would be developed and presented for Cabinet approval in August. The Corporate KPIs would incorporate robust tracking over the strategy's four-year span. He highlighted that the comparative work requested by the Committee in a recommendation on the pre-consultation draft of the strategy had been undertaken, which would be circulated to the Committee outside of the meeting via the Scrutiny Officer. He also outlined engagement with external stakeholders during the consultation process, which began in June 2023, including individual sessions with political groups and extensive discussions with internal staff.

Clare Keen, Policy and Partnerships Officer also attended the meeting to speak to the item and answer the Committee's questions.

During discussions, the Committee noted the following:

- The Corporate Strategy 2024-28 focused on the Council's strategic direction rather than detailed coverage of all statutory services and other areas. These would be included in departmental business plans aligned with the strategic priorities outlined in the document.
- The reference to decarbonise 'other council buildings' included all non-residential properties owned by Council, ranging from community centres and leisure facilities to significant structures like the Town Hall.
- The Strategy aimed to outline an overarching direction rather than committing to specific initiatives. Whilst there had not been specific efforts that focused on Oxford becoming a child-friendly city, work to develop an age-friendly city was recently initiated and found that improving accessibility for older people also benefitted younger children.
- Engagement with the Children and Young People Partnership was integral to the development of the proposed strategy.
- The decline in the number of children in the city was attributed primarily to housing affordability issues. In response, the Strategy proposed to focus on increasing the supply of affordable homes and raising standards in the private sector. The Council currently offered extensive provisions such as play parks, leisure centres, and affordable leisure activities for children and families, including free swimming and summer play schemes, which indicated there were no significant gaps in relation to these services.
- In terms of deliverability, the Strategy aimed to prepare plans to enable the quick implementation of ambitious goals once funding became available. Despite financial limitations, these ambitions were tempered with responsible financial management practices and the Council's active pursuit for funding through initiatives such as the OxWED development, its wholly-owned companies, and grant funding opportunities from the Government and other sources.
- Resources were allocated to drive forward the Council's zero carbon priorities. The draft Strategy proposed to expand the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP), which had so far attracted nearly £1m of funding, into a county-wide partnership.

The Committee resolved to make the following recommendation on the report to Cabinet:

1. That the Council includes a priority within the strategy to have an age and child friendly city, noting that the detail would sit in other supporting strategies such as Oxford's Economic Strategy, the City Centre Action Plan and the Thriving Communities Strategy, to ensure that inclusivity of all ages is at the forefront of the Council's approach.
2. That the Council includes specific reference within the strategy to the work of the Child Poverty Review Group and adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty to demonstrate the Council's commitment to working to reduce inequality at every level.
3. That the Council makes more explicit reference within the strategy to activity which is funded versus activity that is dependent on securing funding; and references prioritisation processes to ensure that activity is undertaken on the basis of having maximum impact when considering cost/benefit and value for money.

*Cllr Susan Brown, Leader of the Council, Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy and Clare Keen, Policy and Partnerships Officer left the meeting and did not return.*

## **14. Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces**

Cllr Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford introduced the report from the Executive Director (Development) which sought Cabinet approval for progressing the submission of the proposed byelaws for parks and open spaces to the Secretary of State for approval following public consultation. He noted that the Council's existing byelaws had not been reviewed in over 25 years. The proposed update would aim to establish a more focused set of byelaws to ensure the safety and wellbeing of users, remove outdated restrictions such as the prohibition of ball games and tree climbing, and introduce new provisions addressing issues relevant to the present age.

Cllr Munkonge outlined some of the key findings of the consultation, which ran from February to April 2024, including the public's reception to the lifting of the blanket ban on cycling in parks.

Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development) clarified that the proposed draft byelaws were scheduled for Council consideration at the July meeting, before submission to the Secretary of State for approval. Upon return, they would undergo a further public consultation and again be presented to the Council for final approval, completing the necessary steps to repeal the outdated byelaws.

Chris Bell, Green and Blue Spaces Development Manager also attended the meeting to speak to the item and answer the Committee's questions.

During discussions, the Committee noted the following:

- The proposed draft byelaws received clear public support for enhancing safety and user consideration. Although lifting the blanket ban on cycling in parks was identified as one of the more controversial issues with particular challenges related to its enforcement, the consultation indicated that the public felt the positives outweighed the negatives.
- Clarification on bicycle regulations was needed to avoid discriminating against cyclists and e-bike users. The goal was to encourage considerate cycling without imposing strict rules, recognising that e-bikes had made cycling accessible to more people, especially older adults. Balancing enforcement and flexibility was acknowledged to be challenging.
- The revocation of old byelaws pertaining to tree climbing focused on public safety and consideration. It neither encouraged nor banned the activity, but ensured that updated byelaws were in place to manage related safety concerns.
- Accurate definitions were crucial for finalising the byelaws. It was highlighted that legal advice was required for any changes to the document due to potential implications.

The Committee resolved to make the following recommendation on the report to Cabinet:

1. That the Council includes a speed restriction within the byelaws related to cycling.

2. That the Council displays information in parks (e.g. on notice boards) for the public on how to report anti-social behaviour.

*Cllr Latif left the meeting.*

## **15. Leisure Investment Programme**

Cllr Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford introduced the report from the Executive Director (Communities and People) which sought Cabinet approval for a programme of improvements at the City Council's leisure facilities. He highlighted the successful transition to More Leisure as the new provider and reported that the mobilisation had now progressed to contract management and initial teething problems continued to reduce day-by-day.

Cllr Munkonge outlined the need to improve facilities within leisure centres, the ice rinks, and swimming pools to ensure they met operational standards. The Leisure Investment Programme was initially allocated £2 million from the capital budget. Following tender invitations for the improvement projects, an additional £1.04 million was necessary to fully meet the requirements for enhancing these facilities.

Hagan Lewisman, Active Communities Manager advised that collaborative efforts with More Leisure had resulted in an exciting programme prepared for Oxford City Council's leisure centres. The recommendations in the cabinet report were informed by expert opinions of More Leisure, were subject to a thorough procurement processes and involved the City Council's leisure officers undertaking the necessary due diligence. The improvements promised significant positive impact across Oxford facilities, enhancing access to physical activities, reducing inequalities, and ensuring long-term sustainability, while providing a Council return on investment.

During discussions, the Committee noted the following:

- Daytime usage of the sports hall at the Leys Leisure Centre was considered low, prompting opportunities to reorganise schedules and optimise space.
- Recognising that some of the standard sports offered did not appeal to younger people, efforts were aimed at broadening the appeal of leisure centres to non-traditional activities to enable new users, whilst also addressing impacts on existing groups.
- Active user groups were encouraged to engage in constructive dialogue and potential partnerships to drive necessary changes to the current leisure programme. Whilst outcomes could not be guaranteed because of the long-term nature of this process, the focus would remain on continued conversations and identifying alternatives for these groups where possible.
- Providing leisure services was not a statutory obligation for local authorities and many other local authorities had closed swimming pools and leisure centres. The Council's procurement process prevented any closures of leisure centres, however there was recognition that some changes would affect certain groups. In response, ongoing suggestions for programme improvement were welcomed by leisure centres, with More Leisure expressing willingness to address impacts resulting from these changes.
- Gaining popularity of court activities such as padel tennis and pickleball prompted discussions with the tennis provider in relation to the incorporation of these activities on both indoor and outdoor courts.



- Athletics activities were closely coordinated with the Oxford athletics club with efforts made to integrate these into the services offered by More Leisure to ensure a variety of usage opportunities were available.

The Committee requested that the Scrutiny Officer liaise with officers to schedule the following items into the Work Plan:

- The follow-up report requested as part of the Committee's previous recommendation on the Leisure Services Contract Award: *'That the Council reports back to the Scrutiny Committee as soon as possible with an update on the arrangements established for the effective commissioning, delivery and management of the leisure services contract – including the arrangements established to ensure a smooth transition to the new provider.'*
- A progress review of implementation of the Leisure Investment Programme at the appropriate point, including an update on progress on the programme/project delivery, whether it is on target, and key performance indicators linked to programme/projects.

The Committee resolved to make the following recommendation on the report to Cabinet:

1. That the Council undertakes a thorough analysis of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall usage during all opening times, paying particular attention to evening usage, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on user groups; actively engages with users regarding appropriate alternative provision; and ensures that appropriate mitigations are put in place to protect against disproportionate impacts of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall proposals on active user groups.
2. That the Council publishes high-level information on the Leisure Investment Programme and progress on its delivery in a prominent place on the Council's website in order to provide public reassurance and transparency.

*Cllr Jarvis left the meeting.*

*Cllr Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford and Hagan Lewisman, Active Communities Manager left the meeting and did not return.*

## **16. Matters exempt or part exempt from publication and exclusion of the public**

The Committee resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix 4 to the 'Leisure Investment Programme' report on the grounds that their presence would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

### **a) Leisure Investment Programme - exempt appendix**

The Committee asked questions in relation to the information contained in Appendix 4 to the report.

## **17. Public Session**

The Committee resolved to return to public session for the remaining items of business.

## 18. Work Plan and Forward Plan

The Committee was advised that the Adult Exploitation and Modern Slavery item had been scheduled for March 2025; a date was yet to be confirmed for the item on Tourism but this would be scheduled in due course.

The Committee noted the Forward Plan.

The Committee reviewed the Work Plan set out in the agenda and noted that no reports were currently expected for the August meeting.

The Committee agreed the following Scrutiny-commissioned items for consideration during 2024/25, noting that exact scope and timescales may be dependent on resource capacity:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Business Rates Non-Payment and Systems Management
- Report back on arrangements from Leisure Contract Award
- Adult Exploitation and Modern Slavery
- Tourism

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that suggested items which were not selected for 2024/25 would remain on the list of Scrutiny-commissioned items for consideration in 2025/26.

During discussion, clarification was sought regarding the grass mowing schedule in terms of which body was responsible for it (including what each involved body paid for), the schedule and individual verge ownership across the City. The Scrutiny Officer advised that she would follow-up with the relevant officers after the meeting and request that information was re-circulated to all Members.

The Committee noted that it would be helpful if a map showing responsibility for grass verges and other land across the city was published on the Council's website, so that the public could contact the correct body first time about issues related to grass mowing and litter, for example.

The Committee:

1. **Agreed** the Work Plan as set out in the agenda pack.
2. **Agreed** Scrutiny-commissioned items for consideration in 2024/25, as set out above.
3. **Requested** that the Scrutiny Officer liaise with relevant Cabinet Members and officers to schedule Scrutiny-commissioned items into the Work Plan.

*Cllr Corais left the meeting.*

## 19. Report back on recommendations and from Scrutiny Panel meetings

In response to a question raised at the previous meeting in June, the Committee was advised that 'scrutiny' would continue to be a standing item on Shareholder and Joint Venture Group (SJVG) agendas, the same way as scrutiny was at Cabinet meetings. Recommendations relating to companies scrutiny would be submitted to SJVG (rather than Cabinet) and the Finance and Performance Panel Chair or relevant Scrutiny



representative would have the opportunity to present recommendations under that specific item. Exact arrangements were still being determined, but it was likely that Scrutiny would have a standing invite to SJVG meetings to observe (i.e. without speaking rights), however this invitation could be revoked if needed (e.g. for confidentiality reasons).

The Committee noted that on 12 June 2024, Cabinet considered recommendations related to ten reports, responses to which were set out in the agenda pack:

- Tree Management Policy 2024-2032
- Framework for the Installation of Renewable Technologies in Council-owned Properties
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Citywide Retrofit Strategy
- Tree Planting
- Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings
- Integrated Performance Report Q3 2023/24
- Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment
- Implementation of Selective Licensing
- Adult Exploitation

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the Climate and Environment Panel had met on 11 June 2024 and considered three substantive items: Tree Management Policy 2024-2032; Framework for the Installation of Renewable Technologies in Council-owned Properties; and HRA Energy Efficiency Projects 2024/25. The Panel made a number of recommendations to Cabinet in respect of the Tree Management Policy 2024-2032 and Framework for the Installation of Renewable Technologies in Council-owned Properties items, responses to which were set out in the agenda pack.

The Committee requested that the Scrutiny Officer develop a recommendation tracker incorporating all Scrutiny Committee recommendations from 2023/24 onwards.

**20. Dates of future meetings**

The dates of future meetings were noted.

The Committee agreed to cancel the next Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled for 06 August 2024 due to no business, unless the Corporate Strategy Key Performance Indicator item/other relevant items were added to the Forward Plan.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.52 pm**

**Chair ..... Date: Tuesday 6 August 2024**

*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

## August 2024 to November 2024

Published on 01/08/24



### Cabinet - 11 September 2024

<b>ITEM 57: ID: I037319</b>	<b>Asbestos Surveying and Air Monitoring Contract</b>
To seek approval for the award of an asbestos surveying and air monitoring contract to meet the obligations of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012) and Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974.	
<b>ITEM 58: ID: I037424</b>	<b>Council Strategy 2024-28 Key Performance Indicators</b>
A summary of the key performance indicators which will be reported annually to monitor progress on the Council Strategy 2024-28.	
<b>ITEM 59: ID: I036930</b>	<b>Treasury Management Annual Report 2023-24</b>
A report to set out the Council's Treasury Management activity and performance for the financial year 2023-24.	
<b>ITEM 60: ID: I036931</b>	<b>Integrated Performance Report for Q1 2024-25</b>
A report to update Cabinet on finance, risk and corporate performance matters as at 30 June 2024.	
<b>ITEM 63: ID: I037243</b>	<b>Disposal of Land at Redbridge and Hinksey</b>
To consider the disposal of land near Redbridge and Hinksey to support the Oxford Flood Alleviation Project.	

<b>ITEM 67: ID: I037550</b>	<b>Replacement of Front Doors to Flats with Compliant Certificated Fire Doors</b>
To seek Cabinet approval and delegation to award contracts to enable Front Entrance Fire Door replacement for relevant properties in the portfolio as identified in Fire Risk Assessments.	

## Cabinet - 16 October 2024

<b>ITEM 71: ID: I035286</b>	<b>Thriving Communities Strategy Update</b>
Cabinet, at its meeting on <a href="#">14 December 2022</a> , resolved that an annual progress update be provided to Cabinet on the Oxford Thriving Communities Strategy 2023-2027.	

<b>ITEM 73: ID: I037213</b>	<b>Housing Complaint Handling Annual Report 2023-24</b>
To receive a report on the handling of landlord complaints for the year 2023-24.	

<b>ITEM 74: ID: I037456</b>	<b>The Local Government Association: Corporate Peer Review Action Plan update and Progress Review Feedback</b>
To provide an update to Cabinet on the Council's Action Plan in response to the Corporate Peer Review feedback and recommendations from July 2023 and the Progress Review feedback from April 2024.	

<b>ITEM 75: ID: I034756</b>	<b>Bertie Place Affordable Housing Scheme</b>
Cabinet, <a href="#">on 9 August 2023</a> , resolved to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Subject to the completion of the statutory procedure to appropriate the land at Site A and the subsequent decision of the Cabinet to appropriate the land, to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <b>Grant project approval</b> for the build and acquisition of affordable homes developed by OCHL for which budgetary provision has been made in the Council's Housing Revenue Account in respect of Bertie Place; and</li> <li>(b) <b>Delegate authority</b> to the Head of Housing in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance and the Head of Financial Services / S151 Officer to enter into a Development Agreement with OCHL to facilitate the</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

development, secure the purchase of the completed affordable homes, to be held in the HRA, and to enter into any related agreements and contracts to facilitate the development within this project approval and budget for Bertie Place. Acquisition costs are specified within the confidential appendix.

**ITEM 62:  
ID: I037182**

**Blackbird Leys Development Project - Compulsory Purchase Order**

To seek delegated authority for the Executive Director (Development) to make a Compulsory Purchase Order to support the obtaining of vacant possession of properties required to complete Phase 2 of the Blackbird Leys Development Project.

**ITEM 64:  
ID: I037258**

**Option Agreement for Disposal of Land**

To seek approval to enter into an Option Agreement for the disposal of land.

**ITEM 66:  
ID: I037548**

**Procurement of new Planning IT and Document Management System**

To approve the procurement of a new IT system to replace the current Uniform system used by planning and other departments, as well as the linked Document Management System.

**ITEM 65:  
ID: I037546**

**Acquisition of Social Rent properties at Barton Park into the Council's Housing Revenue Account**

To approve the acquisition of properties at Barton Park to the Council, including property current held by Oxford City Housing (Investment) Limited, to be held in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA); and recommending to Council an in-year budget change to the HRA Capital Budget and associated changes to the HRA Business Plan to fund and operationalise this.

**ITEM 72:  
ID: I037580**

**Corporate Debt Policy**

To seek approval for a revised Corporate Debt policy. The Corporate Debt policy provides clear guidance for all Council Officers on the recording, reporting, recovery and monitoring of income.

## Cabinet - 13 November 2024

<b>ITEM 72: ID: I036230</b>	<b>Council of Sanctuary Framework</b>
Cabinet report to seek approval of the Council of Sanctuary framework and authorisation to apply for Council of Sanctuary Award status.	
<b>ITEM 76: ID: I037349</b>	<b>Lease of Old Boys' School George Street</b>
To consider the re-grant of a lease for 125 years.	
<b>ITEM 77: ID: I037350</b>	<b>Lease of Chester House, 21 - 27 George Street</b>
To consider the re-grant of a 125 year lease.	
<b>ITEM 78: ID: I037498</b>	<b>Grant Allocations to Community &amp; Voluntary Organisations 2025/26</b>
A report to make decisions on the allocation of grants to community and voluntary organisations for 2025/26.	

# Proposed Scrutiny Work Schedule

September 2024 to November 2024

## September 2024 – confirmed reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	03 September	Budget Review Group Scope Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledges – Annual Update Annual Safeguarding Report 2023/24 Anti-Social Behaviour [presentation]
Finance and Performance	04 September	Council Strategy 2024-28 Key Performance Indicators Treasury Management Annual Report 2023/24 Integrated Performance Report Q1 2024/25 Exempt Treasury Management Matters [discussion item]
Climate and Environment	10 September <i>Moved from 05 September</i>	Net Zero Masterplan Annual Air Quality Status Report Local Area Energy Planning and mitigation measures regarding local grid constraints Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) Expansion Plans

## October 2024 – provisional reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	08 October	Thriving Communities Strategy Update

		<p>The Local Government Association: Corporate Peer Review Action Plan Update and Progress Review Feedback</p> <p>Corporate Debt Policy</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Review</p>
Housing and Homelessness	10 October	<p>Landlord Services Transformation (Social Housing (Regulation) Act Compliance) [presentation]</p> <p>Housing Complaint Handling Annual Report 2023/24</p> <p>Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness Update</p>

### November 2024 – provisional reports

Committee/Panel	Meeting date	Reports
Scrutiny Committee	04 November	<p>Leisure Update</p> <p>Grant Allocations to Community &amp; Voluntary Organisations 2025/26</p>
Housing and Homelessness	07 November	<p>Council of Sanctuary Framework</p> <p>Housing Performance Monitoring (2024/25 mid-year)</p> <p>Implementation of Refugee Resettlement in Oxford</p> <p>Housing Complaint Handling Performance (Q1 &amp; Q2 2024/25)</p> <p>Housing First Update</p>
Climate and Environment	20 November	<p>Net Zero Masterplan</p> <p>Eco-moorings Project Update (and update on other fuel-related issues in relation to boating communities) [presentation]</p> <p>High-level challenges and constraints impacting on the deliverability of solar opportunities at Council car parks</p> <p>Local Nature Recovery Strategy</p>



**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 10 July 2024  
**Report of:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Title of Report:** Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024-2028

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Katherine Miles, Scrutiny Committee Chair
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	All
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	This is a policy framework document
<b>Recommendation(s): That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report</b>	

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	Draft Cabinet response to Scrutiny recommendations

## Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 02 July 2024 to consider a report on the Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024-2028. The report, which is due for Cabinet consideration on 10 July 2024, recommends that Cabinet notes the public and stakeholder consultation on the draft Council Strategy 2024-28; agrees the revisions to the draft strategy in response to the consultation; delegates authority to the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make further minor amendments to the draft strategy before adoption; and recommends to Council the adoption of the Council Strategy 2024-2028.
2. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Susan Brown (Leader of the Council), Mish Tullar (Head of Corporate Strategy) and Clare Keen (Policy and Partnerships Officer) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

## Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council introduced the report. The report provided feedback from the public and stakeholder consultation on the Council Strategy 2024-2028 and sought approval for the draft strategy. The draft strategy built on the existing Council Strategy 2020-24; it incorporated feedback from the Council's recent LGA Peer Review and, where possible and appropriate, feedback from the consultation and previous comments from the Scrutiny Committee in 2023/24 when it reviewed the pre-consultation draft of the strategy. The draft strategy had undergone a great deal of consultation, which had revealed overarching support of the priorities identified in the document. The Committee was advised that the key performance indicators linked to the strategy would be submitted to Cabinet for approval in August 2024.
4. The Committee asked a range of questions, including questions relating to the fact that a number of key and statutory Council services did not appear to be mentioned in the draft strategy – and whether this was an unintentional omission; which buildings fell into the category of 'other buildings' in relation to the Council's Zero Carbon Oxford priority: 'decarbonising homes and other buildings'; whether consideration had been given to 'Child Friendly City' status in Oxford as part of the strategy development process; the degree to which the Council's zero carbon ambitions were tempered by financial realities; and whether consideration had been given to explicitly referencing 'Vision Zero' (the countywide strategy aimed at eliminating deaths and serious injuries on Oxfordshire's roads by 2050) within the strategy.
5. In particular, the Committee noted that a number of cities billed themselves as 'Child Friendly Cities' and queried whether or not this had been considered for Oxford during the development of the strategy. The Committee was informed that no work had been undertaken in relation to making Oxford a 'Child Friendly City', but work had recently commenced with external partners in relation to making Oxford an 'Age Friendly City'. In discussion, officers advised that many of the elements related to ensuring an 'Age Friendly City' also applied to children and families, therefore the city would become more child friendly as a result of work to make the city age friendly.
6. It was also noted that the unaffordability of housing in Oxford was one of the reasons why the city did not have a large child population, as families were driven out of the city to find more affordable housing. The Committee recognised that 'good, affordable homes' was identified as a priority within the draft strategy and this priority would seek to help children, including children in poverty, across the city by working to ensure the availability of affordable housing in Oxford. The Leader of the Council stated that there was good provision in the city of play parks, leisure centres and affordable leisure options for children and families – albeit in some areas of the city there was not as much play space as the Council would like. In particular, the Leader of the Council acknowledged that there was a lack of children's play space in the city centre. The Committee asked whether this could be addressed via a commitment in the strategy to ensure adequate play space for children across the city – and in particular the city centre, including a specific commitment to including dedicated children's play space in the Broad Street redevelopment. The Committee was

informed that the strategy was not the appropriate place for that level of detail; however, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the comments had been noted.

7. While recognising the other work going on to achieve 'Age Friendly City' status and how this would also lay the foundation for making Oxford more child friendly, the Committee agreed that having an age and child friendly city should be an explicit priority for the Council – which should be articulated within the strategy. This would demonstrate that inclusivity for all ages was at the forefront of the Council's approach. The Committee noted that the detail related to creating an age and child friendly city would not sit in the high-level strategy document, but rather it would likely sit in other supporting strategies, such as Oxford's Economic Strategy, the City Centre Action Plan and the Thriving Communities Strategy.

***Recommendation 1: That the Council includes a priority within the strategy to have an age and child friendly city, noting that the detail would sit in other supporting strategies such as Oxford's Economic Strategy, the City Centre Action Plan and the Thriving Communities Strategy, to ensure that inclusivity of all ages is at the forefront of the Council's approach.***

8. The Committee noted that the draft strategy referenced child poverty and thriving communities as priority areas. However, it noted that there was not explicit reference to the work of the previous Child Poverty Review Group or the Council's recent adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty. The Committee agreed that explicit reference to these should be included within the strategy to demonstrate the Council's commitment to reducing inequality at every level.

***Recommendation 2: That the Council includes specific reference within the strategy to the work of the Child Poverty Review Group and adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty to demonstrate the Council's commitment to working to reduce inequality at every level.***

9. During its questioning, the Committee identified that not all activity set out within the strategy was funded; much of it relied on the Council securing additional funding. Given current financial constraints on the Council, the Committee was of the view that the Council's ability to deliver on the entirety of the strategy was therefore somewhat diminished. To assist with expectation management and ensure clarity, the Committee agreed that activity which was funded versus activity which was dependent on securing funding should be more clearly drawn out within the strategy. It was also agreed that there should be specific reference to prioritisation processes for strategy activity that ensured maximum impact given limited resources – to ensure the Council got the greatest value for money.

***Recommendation 3: That the Council makes more explicit reference within the strategy to activity which is funded versus activity that is dependent on securing funding; and references prioritisation processes to ensure that activity is undertaken on the basis of having maximum impact when considering cost/benefit and value for money.***

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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 02 July 2024 concerning the Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024-2028. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Agree?</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
<p>1) That the Council includes a priority within the strategy to have an age and child friendly city, noting that the detail would sit in other supporting strategies such as Oxford’s Economic Strategy, the City Centre Action Plan and the Thriving Communities Strategy, to ensure that inclusivity of all ages is at the forefront of the Council’s approach.</p>		<p>Officers are currently working with partners in the city to examine the opportunity of becoming an Age Friendly City. If a decision is taken to seek accreditation this will be added to the strategy.</p> <p>While the Council has limited capacity to support additional work when it is also managing significant budget pressures, Councillor Louise Upton and 2 council officers have been awarded places on a residential course at LSE for intensive training on how to make a city work for young children (95 cm tall, hence the name Urban95) and their care-givers. This can inform future work in this area.</p> <p>The Council has a strong record on supporting children and young people and creating child-friendly spaces and activities. Examples include the provision of 87 play areas and recreation grounds across the city, the work of our Youth Ambition team to provide regular and summer holidays for some of our most disadvantaged young people, and leisure discounts including free swimming for under-17s and an expanded free swimming lessons provision.</p>

<p>2) That the Council includes specific reference within the strategy to the work of the Child Poverty Review Group and adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty to demonstrate the Council's commitment to working to reduce inequality at every level.</p>		<p>A reference to adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty has been added to the draft Council Strategy 2024-28. A reference to the work of the Child Poverty Review Group would not be appropriate, as this is a forward-looking document that doesn't seek to replicate information published elsewhere on how proposals were developed.</p>
<p>3) That the Council makes more explicit reference within the strategy to activity which is funded versus activity that is dependent on securing funding; and references prioritisation processes to ensure that activity is undertaken on the basis of having maximum impact when considering cost/benefit and value for money.</p>		<p>A reference to the Council's ability to meet its 2030 and 2040 Net Zero targets being subject to additional external funding has been added to the draft Council Strategy 2024-28. The Strategy's sister document, the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan is the Council's main tool for prioritising spend. It uses the Council Strategy as the basis for that prioritisation process together with associated consideration of cost/benefit and value for money.</p>

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 10 July 2024  
**Report of:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Title of Report:** Leisure Investment Programme

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Katherine Miles, Scrutiny Committee Chair
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford and Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Finance and Asset Management
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Support Thriving Communities
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Thriving Communities Strategy
<b>Recommendation(s): That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report</b>	

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	Draft Cabinet response to Scrutiny recommendations

### **Introduction and overview**

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 02 July 2024 to consider a report on the Leisure Investment Programme. The report, which is due for Cabinet consideration on 10 July 2024, recommends that Cabinet grants project approval for the Leisure Management Programme; recommends to Council the approval of an additional capital budget of £1.04m, above the £2m already agreed in the capital programme, necessary to deliver the Leisure Investment Programme; and agrees various delegations of authority related to the Leisure Investment Programme.
2. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Chewe Munkonge (Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford) and Hagan Lewisman (Active Communities Manager) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

## Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford introduced the report. The report sought approval for a programme of improvements at the Council's leisure facilities. The Committee was advised that the Council had successfully completed its transition to the new leisure provider, More Leisure, and was now moving from contract mobilisation to contract management.
4. The Committee asked a range of questions, including questions relating to current usage of the sports hall at the Leys Leisure Centre in the evenings; maintaining adequate access to a variety of leisure facilities; communications with and feedback from residents/user groups on the proposals; provision for emerging sports (e.g. padel and pickleball); accessibility and inclusivity in relation to the athletics club; the proposed new state of the art inflatables included in the plans; and interdependencies between the Leisure Investment Programme and Leys Youth Hub.
5. In particular, the Committee was concerned that the proposal to develop half of the sports hall at the Leys Leisure Centre into soft play including Tag Active would negatively impact user groups which currently used the space in the evenings. While the report outlined that the sports hall was generally underutilised in the day, there was no consideration within the report regarding the impact on evening users, when the sports hall was better utilised. While noting responses to questions that the sports hall was not fully booked in the evenings, the Committee agreed that the Council should undertake a thorough analysis of sports hall usage during all opening times, including the evenings, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on all user groups. It also agreed that the Council should actively engage with users regarding appropriate alternative provision in the event that they could no longer use the sports hall; and put in place mitigations to protect against disproportionate impacts of the proposals on active user groups.

***Recommendation 1: That the Council undertakes a thorough analysis of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall usage during all opening times, paying particular attention to evening usage, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on user groups; actively engages with users regarding appropriate alternative provision; and ensures that appropriate mitigations are put in place to protect against disproportionate impacts of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall proposals on active user groups.***

6. The Committee recognised that, as a result of previous failings, it would be useful for the Council to publish information on the Leisure Investment Programme, and progress on its delivery, in a prominent place on the Council's website. The Committee agreed that this may help provide public reassurance and transparency in relation to leisure provision.

***Recommendation 2: That the Council publishes high-level information on the Leisure Investment Programme and progress on its delivery in a prominent place on the Council's website in order to provide public reassurance and transparency.***



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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 02 July 2024 concerning the Leisure Investment Programme. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agree?</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1) That the Council undertakes a thorough analysis of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall usage during all opening times, paying particular attention to evening usage, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on user groups; actively engages with users regarding appropriate alternative provision; and ensures that appropriate mitigations are put in place to protect against disproportionate impacts of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall proposals on active user groups.	Yes	Agreed, but with slightly amended wording:  <i>'That the Council undertakes a thorough analysis of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall usage during all opening times, paying particular attention to evening usage, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on user groups; actively engages with users regarding appropriate alternative provision; and ensures that appropriate mitigations are put in place <b>where possible</b> to <b>try to</b> protect against disproportionate impacts of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall proposals on active user groups.'</i>
2) That the Council publishes high-level information on the Leisure Investment Programme and progress on its delivery in a prominent place on the Council's website in order to provide public reassurance and transparency.	Yes	Agreed

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**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 10 July 2024  
**Report of:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Title of Report:** Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Katherine Miles, Scrutiny Committee Chair
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Support Thriving Communities; Pursue a Zero Carbon Oxford; Deliver More, Affordable Housing
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Thriving Communities Strategy
<b>Recommendation(s): That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report</b>	

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	Draft Cabinet response to Scrutiny recommendations

### **Introduction and overview**

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 02 July 2024 to consider a report on the draft proposed byelaws for Oxford City Council parks and open spaces. The report, which is due for Council consideration on 15 July 2024, recommends that Council approves the proposed byelaws for parks and open spaces following public consultation; recommends the submission of the application to the Secretary of State for approval of the proposed byelaws; notes that upon the Secretary of State granting leave for the Council to make the proposed byelaws there will be a further period of consultation of not less than 28 days; and notes that a further report will be presented to Council to allow for a final decision to make the proposed byelaws.
2. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Chewe Munkonge (Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford), Tom Bridgman (Executive Director (Development)) and Chris Bell (Green and Blue Spaces Development Manager) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

## Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy Oxford introduced the report. The Council's byelaws had not been updated for 25 years; an update was required as some of the byelaws were outdated and/or related to parks that no longer existed or had a different name. The report would seek Council approval for the proposed byelaws for submission to the Secretary of State for approval, after which there would be a further period of public consultation and then a final decision by Council to make the proposed byelaws. There had been a good response to public consultation to date, which had demonstrated very clear support for the byelaws overall.
4. The Committee asked a range of questions, including questions relating to the definition of a bicycle used in the byelaws; whether any conversations had taken place with the universities to influence them to change their policies in parks; concerns over the Council encouraging tree climbing, particularly during nesting season and in relation to public liability; whether there was a trial period for the byelaws once implemented, where revisions could be made if there were any negative repercussions; cycling; and whether the byelaws could include a requirement that boats at Council-owned river moorings must have the equivalent of a vehicle MOT.
5. In particular, the Committee queried the definition of a 'bicycle' within the byelaws, in recognition of the increasing use of e-bikes which could reach much higher speeds but were still technically a bicycle, for example. The Committee noted that e-bikes were much heavier and faster than traditional push-bikes, which could present a danger to the public if not ridden considerately. There was also mention of motorised bikes such as mopeds – and whether these were included in the definition of a bicycle, citing similar public safety concerns. There was recognition from the Committee that bicycles now came in various forms, therefore it would be difficult to include an all-encompassing and futureproof definition of a bicycle within the byelaws.
6. It was clarified that the Council needed to look carefully at this, as it did not want to discriminate against people who used e-bikes, for example, in a considerate way; e-bikes had reintroduced cycling to some groups, such as those with reduced strength or mobility, and the Council wanted to support them to continue cycling considerately. It was confirmed that consideration could be given to including a speed restriction related to cycling within the byelaws, which would help futureproof the byelaws while ensuring that cyclists could continue using bicycles considerately, in accordance with the byelaws. The Committee was of the view that a speed restriction would be the most pragmatic option to help ensure public safety within parks and open spaces.

***Recommendation 1: That the Council includes a speed restriction within the byelaws related to cycling.***

7. In discussion, the Committee noted the proposed byelaw prohibiting endangerment and annoyance – and the general role of the byelaws in preventing and suppressing

nuisance. The Committee agreed that this largely amounted to reducing and preventing anti-social behaviour and agreed that it would be helpful for the public if information was displayed in parks (e.g. on notice boards) about how to report anti-social behaviour. The Committee was of the view that promoting how to report anti-social behaviour could assist with enforcement, which the Committee recognised was challenging for the Council.

***Recommendation 2: That the Council displays information in parks (e.g. on notice boards) for the public on how to report anti-social behaviour.***

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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 02 July 2024 concerning the Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agree?</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1) That the Council includes a speed restriction within the byelaws related to cycling.	In Part	Although it is not viable to set a specific speed limit for bicycles in parks as such (there would be no way to police/enforce this) the need has been identified to provide a clearer definition in the proposed byelaws of what constitutes a bicycle to ensure only legally defined e-bikes are permitted in parks, and that there is a clear distinction between these and motorbikes of any description. There is a clear legal definition of an e-bike under UK law which will be added to the byelaws to cover this (it must have a motor output not exceeding 250w continuously and a maximum speed assistance of up to 15 mph). There is a general byelaw included which covers dangerous or inconsiderate cycling in parks regardless of the type of bicycle being ridden.
2) That the Council displays information in parks (e.g. on notice boards) for the public on how to report anti-social behaviour.	Yes	New updated signage is currently being installed in all the play areas which contains the direct Parks number which people can use to report issues. These and other signs also contain the web address, and on the whole people prefer to contact the council in this way. For more serious ASB we need to continue to encourage the public to report this to the police at the time.

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Ref	Date	Report	Recommendation	Agreed?	Response	Continue to monitor?	Update Scheduled
0001	07-Jun-23	Housing Management System Implementation	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.	Yes - Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of the Committee, to request update on development of roll back plans for system changes.	
0002	04-Jul-23	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26	That the Council adds context to the section on adult exploitation to give a flavour of the situations and responses; and uses available local, regional and national data to frame the figures so that they tell a story.	Yes	Reporting Period Jan 2022 – Mar 2023 Source of Data Local and county data – recorded by Anti-Slavery Coordinator Oxfordshire Regional data – quarterly infographics reported by Modern Slavery coordinator, Thames Valley Police National data – annual report published by Single Competent Authority (Home Office) of NRM and Duty to Notify referrals. Please note: TVP regional data and NRM national data is only up until end of 2022 – have not received TVP Q4 infographics and NRM data only published annually. Total number of adult cases: [data provided in table] Out of the 78 cases reported 60 were individual, 7 were businesses and 11 premises.; 56 are no longer being exploited - 29 who were already receiving support through NRM and 31 following multi-agency partnership working to safeguard victims and disrupt exploiter activity; Disruption outcomes have included closure orders on premises (brothels), financial penalties incurred through other partners such as immigration, HMRC and council teams, police investigations and action and Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority taking action where labour exploitation is occurring.	Yes - consider whether recommendation taken into account in 2023/24 Safeguarding Annual Report when it is submitted to Committee in September 2024.	03-Sep-24
0003	04-Jul-23	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26	That the Council undertakes a longitudinal study of victims and survivors of adult exploitation to gain an understanding of the impact that support has in positively changing the course of lives, which is grounded in data.	Yes	The Council will monitor case outcomes over time to assess the impact of support to victims of modern slavery reported to the Council. This will form part of the Anti-Slavery Coordinator's work plan.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.	
0004	04-Jul-23	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26	That the Council actively works with the voluntary sector and community groups to ensure they have adequate safeguarding policies in place and have access to suitable safeguarding training and support.	No	Organisations receiving funding from the Council will be required to have a safeguarding policy that aligns to the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. Responsibility for the production, implementation and adherence to the policy is the responsibility of the organisation itself. Safeguarding Policy has been updated to state: 12.2 The Council will review the safeguarding policies of commissioned and grant funded services on application to the Council to check they comply with the standards set by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board. The Safeguarding Coordinator obtains annual Commissioned Services Safeguarding Self Assessments from each service.	No - recommendation not accepted; but policy also updated to be clear on the Council's role in respect of other organisations' policies.	
0005	04-Jul-23	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Report 2022/23 and Safeguarding Policy 2023-26	That the Council clarifies its procedure for reporting back to staff on changes to safeguarding procedures to ensure organisational awareness.	Yes	The safeguarding awareness briefing is updated quarterly in line with local and national procedures. Upon amending internal policy and procedures, changes are communicated to staff using the following methods: Quarterly safeguarding newsletter (next due at the end of July); Weekly Connected Council newsletter Intranet news story release; Safeguarding awareness briefing update; Communication with HR colleagues to update induction packs with updated policy and procedures; Replacement of existing policy and procedures on external and internal web pages; Dissemination to teams via Safeguarding Champion network. Training section of the Safeguarding Policy has been updated to state: 8.7 Procedural changes will be communicated to staff through updates to the internal safeguarding awareness briefing and internal communications platforms.	No - recommendation addressed fully in response.	
0006	04-Jul-23	Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge	That the Council requests that the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership ensures the full list of possible pledges is easily and prominently available online.	Yes	As referenced at the meeting, the OIEP is in the process of setting up its own website – so the link to the pledges will change by September this year; the OIEP currently sits on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership website and has a specific page on the Charter including a link to the pledges: Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter - Future Oxfordshire Partnership	No - full list of pledges is available on OIEP website.	
0007	04-Jul-23	Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge	That the Council reviews the full list of possible pledges to see if it could sign-up to additional pledges; including whether the Council could sign-up to any pledges within the 'recruit inclusively' theme.	Yes	The Council has signed up to an inclusive recruitment pledge under 'Opportunities to work' group: Opportunities to work - Supporting those furthest from the labour market on their journey towards secure employment. As an employer we pledge to improve the diversity of our workforce through more inclusive recruitment practices (Gail Makin, Head of People; People Strategy)	Yes - consider when annual OIEP report comes to Scrutiny in September 2024	03-Sep-24
0008	04-Jul-23	Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge	That the Council undertakes a RAG rating audit for the full list of potential pledges outlining what it could do against each one, whether there are any additional budget or resource implications, whether the Council is currently meeting a pledge or if more work needs to be done and then prioritises pledges on the basis of that audit, to provide assurance that the Council is doing as much as possible to ensure an inclusive economy.	Yes	Participation in the Charter requires commitment to select pledges only, organisations are not expected to sign up to all pledges or to be audited on them. Therefore, it is in addition to participation in the Charter/pledges and to respond to Scrutiny Committee's further recommendations that officers will report back to Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis (July 2024 onwards) with an audit of progress against both agreed pledge commitments and the full list of all pledges to identify any further potential areas to sign up to and/or endorse the pledges. A baseline will be compiled in this year (July 2023) against which to measure progress in subsequent years. This audit will provide assurance that the Council is doing as much as possible to ensure an inclusive economy.	Yes - consider when annual OIEP report comes to Scrutiny in September 2024	03-Sep-24
0009	04-Jul-23	Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge	That the Council engages with the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership to understand whether it has a preferred approach for organisations' pledge selection approach, or whether there is flexibility for organisations to determine their own approach; and requests that this be clearly articulated in an appropriate location.	Yes	The approach for the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter is designed to be flexible in terms of signing up to pledges, the main aim of the Charter is increased engagement from employers and progress towards a more inclusive economy through meaningful actions as well as the ability to showcase good practice. Organisations are asked to choose a selection of pledges that are most relevant; it could be things they are already doing and will continue to do over the next 12 months or it could be something they are looking to start work on this year. This will be communicated via the new OIEP website (in development) in addition to current information which sits on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership website and has a specific page on the Charter including a link to the pledges: Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter - Future Oxfordshire Partnership	No - recommendation addressed in response.	
0010	04-Jul-23	Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge	That the Council improves its communications on how its pledge commitments are framed to ensure clarity around whether they are a checklist of work already completed or underway, or whether they represent a more aspirational 'to do' list; and clearly articulates this locally.	Yes	Officers will work with colleagues in internal communications to feedback detailed and point-by-point responses to staff and union engagement in the Charter and pledges and feedback for each point raised any identified actions resulting from the engagement. A 'You said, we did' approach will frame this checklist and be presented back to staff and unions via the intranet from September 2023.	Yes - consider when annual OIEP report comes to Scrutiny in September 2024	03-Sep-24
0011	04-Jul-23	Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledge	That the Council suggests to the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership the addition of pledges relating to the inclusion of organisations with Trade Union Recognition Agreements as a preference during procurement exercises.	Yes (subject to OIEP decision)	Emma Coles (Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Manager) will take this back to the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Steering Group for consideration.	Yes - consider when annual OIEP report comes to Scrutiny in September 2024	03-Sep-24
0012	04-Jul-23	Citizen Experience Strategy	That the Council seeks ongoing feedback on how individuals and groups engage with the strategy and whether they feel excluded by the use of the term 'citizen'; and listens to and reflects on this feedback with a view to adjusting the language accordingly in future iterations of the strategy.	Yes	We will monitor engagement with the strategy, including the use of language within it, and use this insight to inform future work. An annual review of the strategy will be provided to the Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, which can also be made available for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee.	Yes - monitor via annual update report to Scrutiny.	
0013	04-Jul-23	Citizen Experience Strategy	That the Council contextualises the strategy by drawing out the general feelings of exclusion felt by many groups and individuals in the current climate.	Yes	As per the equalities impact assessment included in the report, the intention is to undertake a more detailed equalities impact assessment for each major workstream. This process should identify any "general feelings of exclusion" and ensure the appropriate mitigations are implemented.	No - recommendation addressed in response, will be fulfilled by individual Equalities Impact Assessments.	
0014	05-Sep-23	Delivery of a New Burial Space	That the Council continues to facilitate open dialogue and communication with stakeholders in order to help ensure the success of the proposed project, with all Members being kept informed of progress as the project develops.	Yes	Clr Munkonge will circulate an e-mail to all Members at the appropriate time giving an update on project progress. We will be continuing conversations with stakeholders, including faith leaders through the Interfaith Forum, as this project develops.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.	
0015	05-Sep-23	The Leys Pools & Leisure Centre - Youth Hub	That the Council includes a risk relating to continuity of the youth hub provision within the risk register, which will be monitored on an ongoing basis and any relevant risk mitigations implemented.	Yes	We recognise the importance of the sustainability of this project and are happy to accept the Scrutiny Committee's recommendation of adding a risk to the risk register that looks to try to mitigate this.	Yes - Scrutiny Officer to check this happened.	

0016	10-Oct-23	Delivery of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure for Oxford	That the Council works closely with Oxfordshire County Council to consider options for reserved parking spaces outside homes specifically for at-home onstreet EV charging in areas of Oxford where a need for this provision is identified (e.g. because of parking constraints in those areas).	Yes	Officers will recommend to Oxfordshire County Council EV Team that they explore these options (allocated EV gulley bays, shared community gulley bays) with County Highways as part of the GUL-e project.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0017	10-Oct-23	Delivery of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure for Oxford	That the Council works closely with Oxfordshire County Council to consider options for at-home EV charging in conservation areas to ensure that residents living in these areas do not experience disproportionate access to onstreet EV charging opportunities	Yes	The LEVI grant fund includes GUL-e channels which could be used in conservation areas. Oxford City Council EV Team will continue to work with Oxfordshire County Council to develop guidance for home charger applications in all localities, including conservation/heritage areas (guidance for applications is an output of the GUL-e LEVI grant). We will also continue to lobby central government to equalise Planning Policy for all homeowners, whether they have access to off-street parking or not.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0018	10-Oct-23	Delivery of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure for Oxford	That the Council works closely with Oxfordshire County Council to explore options to incentivise concessionaires to promptly repair EV Infrastructure when a unit is out of service.	Yes	This is already in scope for both the planned LEVI contracting and the existing DPS Concession Contract. The draft (documentation is not yet finalised by Oxfordshire County Council officers) LEVI tender specifications for both off-street and onstreet sites contain: Key Performance Indicators setting minimum targets for when the charger must be operational; Financial compensation penalties to be paid to the 13 Council – for uptime targets not met. Based on averaged revenue share payments for chargers that are not working (down-time penalty); Strengthened and clearly quantified escalation up to contract termination for continued SLA breaches and material defaults.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0019	10-Oct-23	Delivery of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure for Oxford	That the Council works closely with Oxfordshire County Council to investigate the viability of EV co-charging between employment and the public on employment sites	Yes	Support for co-charging is already in scope for Oxford's proposed EV Infrastructure Implementation Plan. This work will be undertaken as part of a work package, which includes: Develop relationships with all local stakeholders and partners to deliver a citywide approach; Create a city EV working group to identify shared assets and opportunities and utilise ZCOP and other private landowners to maximise EV infrastructure opportunities across the city. The draft LEVI contracts contain the option of inclusion of third party owned land, which could include employment sites, simplifying the delivery of the above work packages. Public EV charging solution impacts and opportunities have been raised with the County Council as a consideration under the workplace parking LEVI work strand.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0020	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council seeks to facilitate increased engagement with the Integrated Care Board in relation to the provision of healthcare infrastructure to meet both new and existing unmet demand as a result of development within and outside the City boundary, to ensure that adequate plans are drawn up to meet existing and future demand, in collaboration with the neighbouring Districts to encourage good joined-up, cross-boundary working	Yes	We will continue to encourage BOB ICB to engage in the process. We will also seek to use the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's Planning Advisory Sub-Group as an additional means to co-ordinate this engagement across Oxfordshire as a Senior Manager of the ICB has recently been co-opted as a non-voting member of that group.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0021	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council adds a requirement into Policy E3: Affordable Workspace Strategy and Affordable Workspace Provision on Commercial Sites that, in the event that a developer of any of the 8 sites listed does not propose the provision of affordable workspace within their affordable workspace strategy, that developer must include a justification within their strategy as to why not.	Yes	We propose a change to Policy E3 to emphasise this point as follows: "Development proposals delivering commercial development4 on the following sites are expected to deliver affordable workspace produce an affordable workspace strategy which will set out the details of the affordable workspace to be delivered as part of their masterplans: ARC Oxford, Oxford Science Park, Oxpens, Osney Mead, Nuffield Sites, Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex, Unipart, Northern Gateway. Details of the size, marketing, servicing and the management of the spaces should be set out in an affordable workspace strategy. The City Council will work proactively and collaboratively with any developers on any sites where they would like to promote the delivery of affordable workspace in their development. The details of the affordable workspace strategy including the size, management and servicing of the space will be secured through a Section 106 agreement to the satisfaction of the local planning authority."	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0022	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council reassesses the list of Local Centres and locations not included in the list against the definition to see whether more locations can be included in this and future Local Plans.	No	Local Centres have been identified in several previous Local Plans. In drafting the Local Plan 2040, we considered whether any additional ones should be added. We were alert to the NPPF definition of a local centre being clear that it can't just include a parade of shops that serve only the immediate area. Also important to this consideration was the policy approach that applies to local centres (and district centres and the city centre), which is that there should be an area of active frontage notable in the street and that should be protected as an area of activity. We also looked at maps of access to facilities and services and considered where this was lacking. These considerations led us to add Underhill Circus to the list of local centres, as this is a clear focal point with an active frontage which serves a fairly wide area. Other areas of shops were considered, including for example around Hollow Way and Magdalen Road. However, these were considered to be stretching the definition quite far, because they have small collections of units which are spread out and which do not create a focal point, which do not obviously serve a wider area and which do not create a strong active frontage.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0023	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council clarifies the definition of a Local Centre within the draft Local Plan to aid understanding as to why some areas are not defined as such, in the event that recommendation 3 is not accepted for the current draft Local Plan.	No	The glossary of the Local Plan currently includes this definition: "Local centres - Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and launderette. Small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance are not classified as local centres." It is considered that this is a full definition as requested.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0024	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council clarifies the way in which housing numbers on sites are presented within the draft Local Plan, to make clear that the minimum number of dwellings to be delivered which are stated within policies are in addition to the number of existing dwellings on those sites.	Yes	We have tried to make this clear on applicable sites, however we will check and ensure that this is clear on every site with existing housing. We also propose an additional sentence for clarity to the third paragraph in the introduction of the chapter as follows: "Housing numbers are expressed as a minimum netgain. This means that sites with existing housing will be expected to re-provide the equivalent numbers and also the minimum stated in the policy as a net-gain. The minimum number shall be exceeded where it is possible to do so consistent with the other policies in the Plan. The homes should be delivered as general market and affordable housing in accordance with Policy H2 unless it is expressly stated in the site allocation policy that student accommodation or employer-linked affordable housing are suitable on the site. Other specialist forms of housing will be considered on their merits."	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0025	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council amends the narrative around Templars Square and related Policy SPS12 to highlight the current significance and significant future potential of the site, more broadly than just the provision of housing, to a large number of people and communities across a large area of the City beyond Cowley alone – stressing the importance of redevelopment and reinvigoration of the site.	Yes	We propose adding to the opening paragraph of the supporting text of Policy SPS12 to read: "Templars Square is within the Cowley Centre district centre and provides a varied retail and commercial offer which serves a local and wider catchment area. Residential apartments are also provided across the site, including at Hockmore Tower. Templars Square plays an important role in serving the local and wider community. Redevelopment provides a significant opportunity for this part of the city".	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0026	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council reviews the ward names used within the draft Local Plan to ensure that they correctly reflect the current wards of the City.	Yes	We'll make sure they are all up to date before the document is published.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0027	16-Oct-23	Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document	That the Council produces a list of changes between the Local Plan 2036 and Local Plan 2040 to publish alongside the Local Plan 2040 for public consumption.	Yes	We have updated the Local Plan website to make it easy to work through the main sections of the document (e.g. housing) and read what the Local Plan 2036 did, and where the Local Plan 2040 intends to build on this. We hope this will provide the function and readability intended.	Yes - Scrutiny Officer requested link 08 August 2024 to where this read across is available; once provided no further recommendation tracking required.
0028	06-Nov-23	Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2024/25	That the Council, within the report, includes a breakdown between 'Fully Funded', 'Partially Funded (50%)' and 'lower funding'.	Yes	All Oxford Community Impact Fund grants where match funding was required to be reported (for Big Ideas) were funded in the 'lower funding' bracket (see appendix 4) with the exception of Cowley Road Works as they were unsuccessful in their Arts Council Funding bid. Whilst some didn't include specific figures on their returns, their accounts to 31 March 2022 clearly show the Oxford Community Impact fund contribution to be significantly less than 50%.	Yes - consider whether this has been done in annual report to be submitted to Committee in 2024/25.
0029	06-Nov-23	Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2024/25	That the Council, within the report, notes the minimum requirement for organisations that don't work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.	Yes	Organisations that don't work with children, young people or vulnerable adults will be asked to confirm this in the application process. In doing so, they will be exempt from relevant aspects of the Safeguarding policy requirement as determined by the Safeguarding Coordinator in consultation with the Head of Community Services.	Yes - consider whether this has been done in annual report to be submitted to Committee in 2024/25.

0030	06-Nov-23	Central (City & University) Conservation Area Appraisal	That the Council would encourage the use of modern windows and other retrofitting measures on historic buildings where appropriate, and the relevant documents are signposted within the report.	Yes	Add to the third bullet point under Step 9: Sustainability and Climate Change in the Design Advice (page 95 of the appraisal; page 101 of the Cabinet Agenda Pack) as follows [new text in bold]: "As a broad principle, historic features should be retained wherever possible, this does not mean that buildings cannot be made more energy efficient however, for example historic window frames and glass should be retained because they contribute strongly to the character and appearance of the conservation and historic building, but options such as careful maintenance, draft proofing or secondary glazing can offer real but sensitive benefits. Where buildings have poor performing modern, or unsympathetic replacement windows, consideration should be given to their replacement with new high-performance windows of a suitable appearance, such as doubleglazed or vacuum-glazed timber sash windows. This can benefit both the building's character and its energy performance." Also add a further web link to Historic England guidance: Historic England guidance on retrofitting to page 95 of the Appraisal (page 101 of the Cabinet Agenda Pack) in the section on 'Sustainability and Climate Change'; and: Also under suggestions for 'Further Reading' at section 8.3 of the Appraisal (page 108 of the Cabinet Agenda Pack) to ensure this advice note and expert guidance is easy to find.	No - amendments to the Appraisal as per the recommendation were included in the final, published Appraisal document on the Council website.
0031	06-Nov-23	Central (City & University) Conservation Area Appraisal	That the Council amend the appraisal to welcome applications that would make private green spaces more accessible to the public.	Yes	Add an additional recommendation (a third bullet point) for Section 7.3 in the Management Plan) page 69 of the Appraisal and page 75 of the Cabinet Agenda Pack), which concerns 'Streets, public spaces and green and blue space' as follows: 'Support applications that would provide greater public accessibility to private green spaces'.	No - amendment to the Appraisal as per the recommendation were included in the final, published Appraisal document on the Council website.
0032	04-Dec-23	Authority Monitoring Report and Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23	That the Council sets out the change in definition of students captured by the student threshold at the boundary where it changed in future iterations of the Authority Monitoring Report.	Yes	Additional clarity will be provided in future versions of the Authority Monitoring Report adding to the note of both Figure 1 (University of Oxford Students) and Figure 2 (Oxford Brookes students) on pages 60 and 61 of the AMR as follows: Note: Student numbers contributing to the threshold for 2020/21 onwards have been redefined according to the Local Plan 2036 definition and only include full-time, taught-course students. Please refer to Appendix 3.5 in the Local Plan to see the full list of student exclusions.	Yes - consider when AMR/IFS report submitted for 2023/24 (during 2024/25 Council year)
0033	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council surveys unsuccessful job applicants relating to equalities issues and surveys appointing managers as to why unsuccessful applicants were not recruited in order to improve the Council's data and insight into workforce equalities issues at the recruitment stage.	No	Given our existing resources and the many new initiatives outlined in the Workplace Equalities Plan for 2024/25, we cannot commit to this in the next 12 months. There would be an additional cost of producing and delivering an online survey: it would be impractical and time consuming to do a manual survey. The survey could not be totally anonymous as we would need to track feedback by vacancy. This may put people off from being honest if they were interested in other roles. It is a great suggestion as it would be valuable to gather feedback. This may be something we can look at in the future when our online recruitment process is operating effectively. At present, we are trying to fix basic processes.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0034	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council sets a higher, more ambitious target for the representation of minority ethnic groups within the workforce to increase the pace of improving representation.	Yes	This is planned. Background work is complete and a suitable target needs now to be agreed by the senior leadership team and our Portfolio Lead.	Yes - consider when Equalities Update submitted in 2024/25
0035	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council explores the reasons for underrepresentation of Muslim staff within the workforce and works to identify and address barriers to the recruitment and retention of Muslim staff.	Yes	We can do some work around this by consulting with existing staff and our new staff network to identify barriers and possible solutions.	Yes - consider when Equalities Update submitted in 2024/25
0036	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council expands the gender identity options within its application forms and workforce monitoring to include options for Trans Man and Trans Woman.	Yes	Yes is depending on key staff feedback. When groups are small, careful thought is needed around how far to go with the level of information gathered. There is a benefit to collecting this data and some individuals are likely to welcome the greater 11 recognition of the two different groups of trans man and trans woman but some individuals may be uncomfortable sharing the extra layer of detail. I suggest we consult our LGBTQ+ staff network on this issue and take advice from Inclusive Employers as we are a member. If we believe it is the right thing to do after taking advice and staff soundings, then we will go ahead.	Yes - consider when Equalities Update submitted in 2024/25
0037	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council routinely collects Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data from all job applicants, regardless of the application route they take (e.g. CV or online application form).	Yes	Yes is in the longer term. The data is certainly important and will help us identify issues or bias in selection processes. However, we should look for an online solution where applicants register with us and then submit a CV. We can look at whether we can deliver this with our current system in the future. There may be an extra cost associated with system changes as our system supplier may need to support any change. Our aim is to have a straightforward process for all applicants and that all applicants will apply online through our website. We wish to automate the process as much as possible. This will include collecting applicant personal data upfront and having managers shortlist online. Progress has been hindered because we have had a systems administrator vacancy for over 12 months but now have filled the post. There is an additional cost to deliver improvements to our system as we will need input from our software provider and we have made provision/a proposal in the capital budget.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0038	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council anonymises job application forms during the shortlisting process for all applications going forward.	Yes	This is something we have already explored and can't deliver right now. We will pick this up with the planned system review of how we manage recruitment. I am not sure when we will be able to deliver this but it is the right thing to do to reduce bias in the selection process.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0039	04-Dec-23	Equalities Update	That the Council maps the career trajectory over time for individuals within the workforce with a protected characteristic; to include information such as length of service, pay grade, age and protected characteristic.	No	We can look at whether we can report from our current HR system but this is a complex task as some people leave, the typical service/time with the authority will vary according to professional group and career pathways are clear in some areas and less clear in others. We can start by looking at more detailed workforce profiling but I would suggest this is not a priority for the team right now as we still have lots of basic functional processes to improve. Our focus is on addressing barriers to entry to the Council workforce currently and our plan is to monitor diversity by grade to see if our actions have any impact.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0040	04-Dec-23	Review of Glyphosate Use by Oxford Direct Services to Manage Weeds on Behalf of Oxford City Council	That the Council works with Oxford Direct Services to compile a list of areas within the City where local community groups have purposefully planted plants, which should be approached with caution by Oxford Direct Services when applying Glyphosate so as not to cause unwanted damage.	No	Glyphosate is only applied topically onto weeds growing within pavements and other paved areas. Care is already taken to ensure it does not impact on other plants growing within the vicinity of those areas where the herbicide treatment is being applied.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0041	04-Dec-23	Review of Glyphosate Use by Oxford Direct Services to Manage Weeds on Behalf of Oxford City Council	That the Council provides a means for community groups and interested individuals to register for updates related to when Glyphosate application will take place in particular areas across the City, to enable the synchronisation of works undertaken by those groups and Oxford Direct Services.	No	The application of Glyphosate is undertaken three times a year, and only when conditions are appropriate – for example not when it is raining or windy. It would not be practicable to provide real time updates on operational works of this nature undertaken across the city.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0042	04-Dec-23	Review of Glyphosate Use by Oxford Direct Services to Manage Weeds on Behalf of Oxford City Council	That the Council publishes a list of those areas of the City which have currently opted-out of Glyphosate application, to ensure councillors are aware of areas in their respective wards and can access the information freely.	Yes	Historically, Osney and St Thomas Ward has been opted out of Glyphosate treatment for weeds on paved surfaces with the agreement of ODS. Going forwards it is proposed that the usage of Glyphosate to manage weed intrusion in paved surfaces is delivered uniformly across the city to meet need.	No - response addressed recommendation in full.
0043	04-Dec-23	Review of Glyphosate Use by Oxford Direct Services to Manage Weeds on Behalf of Oxford City Council	That the Council develops a communications plan for those areas of the City which have currently opted-out of Glyphosate application and the public more broadly to ensure awareness and understanding of the proposals regarding Glyphosate usage going forward.	Yes	A communications plan is already being applied. A press release has already been issued and media coverage generated on the proposed approach to Glyphosate usage. Infographics have been created and will be distributed through the Council's digital channels.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0044	04-Dec-23	Local Government Association Corporate Peer Review: Council Action Plan	That the Council places engagement with local anchor institutions at the heart of the Corporate Strategy 2024-28, in particular the need to hold open and honest conversations about the overall vision and aspirations for Oxford to enable organisations to work together to drive forward that collective vision of the type of city Oxford should be.	Yes	Oxford's anchor institutions have been involved from the outset in the development of the Council's new Corporate Strategy 2024-28, via the Oxford Strategic Partnership. We will continue to engage with them to drive forward and deliver against a collective vision for the city and the wording of the new strategy will reflect this.	No - Corporate Strategy 2024-28 now developed and adopted.
0045	16-Jan-24	Private Rented Sector Regulation Policies - Results of Consultation	That the Council clarifies how the principles of its private rented sector regulation policies apply to social housing providers and housing for asylum seekers.	Yes	This will be clarified when the policies are published, where the legislation and policies apply to such accommodation and providers.	Yes - Scrutiny Officer asked officers 08 August 2024 where policies published and will then check that this recommendation has been fulfilled.
0046	16-Jan-24	Private Rented Sector Regulation Policies - Results of Consultation	That the Council explores the ways in which domestic abuse and the Council's work towards achieving Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation can feed into its private rented sector regulation policies to ensure alignment across the organisation.	Yes	We will explore how these policies can align with the DAHA accreditation work area and update procedures where appropriate.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0047	16-Jan-24	DAHA Accreditation and Domestic Abuse Review Group Update	That the Council investigates and assesses the adequacy and clarity of the support and signposting provided to victims and survivors of domestic abuse housed in safe and/or temporary accommodation.	In Part	Concerns were raised about the safety of people fleeing domestic abuse in temporary accommodation and hotel settings. This area will be investigated but not sanctuary or refuge accommodation.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.



0048	16-Jan-24	DAHA Accreditation and Domestic Abuse Review Group Update	That the Council proactively lobbies Central Government based on the horrific lived experiences of Oxford residents, stressing the urgent need for additional resources to support the Council in meeting its new statutory obligations relating to domestic abuse.	Yes	This is a Member-led activity.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0049	16-Jan-24	DAHA Accreditation and Domestic Abuse Review Group Update	That the Council ensures that the lived experiences of children are captured and addressed by the Council through its domestic abuse work.	Yes	Data on children is captured through HClick, which includes those temporarily housed in bed/breakfast and our temporary housing stock.	No - response addressed recommendation.
0050	16-Jan-24	DAHA Accreditation and Domestic Abuse Review Group Update	That the Council delivers domestic abuse training annually to Members going forward and appoints a Member as Domestic Abuse Champion.	In Part	A wide range of domestic abuse training courses are available through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) website. Officers will review if a Member course is also needed and the addition of a Member Domestic Abuse Champion.	No - domestic abuse training for Members will be delivered on 02 October 2024. The Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford (currently Cllr Arshad) fulfils the Member Domestic Abuse Champion role, just without the official title of champion, and is actively engaged in learning about domestic abuse and the local context. No further monitoring required as the recommendation has been addressed.
0051	16-Jan-24	Draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 for Consultation	That the Council undertakes a comparative analysis to clearly set out what has changed between the current Corporate Strategy 2020-24 and the draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 as a result of prioritisation.		This work will be done as part of our response to the LGA peer review.	No - comparative analysis circulated to Committee 15 July 2024 and included as a minutes supplement for the July 2024 meeting.
0052	16-Jan-24	Draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 for Consultation	That the Council incorporates references to community wealth building, or appropriate alternative language which reflects the principles of community wealth building, within the draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 – to include explicit use of the phrase 'shortened supply chains' within the 'Strong, Inclusive Economy' section.		The Corporate Strategy has been drafted to avoid the use of jargon or terms that are not widely understood by a general audience. We believe our commitments reflect some of the key principles of community wealth building in appropriate alternative language, in particular on the Oxford Living Wage, local economic development in disadvantaged areas, and using our procurement power to support local businesses, apprenticeships and better public spaces. We have consulted with the procurement team on including a reference to 'shortened supply chains'. We believe that this is already implicit in our commitment to strengthening local supply chains, but we are unable to mandate or enforce shortened supply chains in our procurement. As part of strengthening our work with local businesses, we hold 'meet the buyer' events and 'how to tender' workshops primarily targeted at local businesses. On high-value contracts we ask bidders to detail their reliance on sub-contractors and name them.	No - Corporate Strategy 2024-28 now developed and adopted.
0053	16-Jan-24	Draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 for Consultation	That the Council includes wording under the priorities within the 'Zero Carbon Oxford' section along the lines of 'working in partnership with other institutions in Oxford to ensure a joined-up approach to tackling emissions'.		We believe the commitments to work with partners to reduce building emissions across the city, and the commitment to work with partners on a Local Area Energy Plan to reduce emissions, amount to a commitment to a joined-up approach to tackling emissions while also giving more concrete and measurable actions.	No - Corporate Strategy 2024-28 now developed and adopted.
0054	16-Jan-24	Draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 for Consultation	That the Council includes a glossary of key terms used throughout the Corporate Strategy 2024-28 in the final document.		This will be included in the final published documents in June 2024.	No - Corporate Strategy 2024-28 now developed and adopted. Glossary included.
0055	16-Jan-24	Draft Corporate Strategy 2024-28 for Consultation	That the Council draws out and emphasises the interaction and interconnectivity between the priorities of the Corporate Strategy 2024-28 within the foreword of the final document		That was always the intention and will be included in the final published documents in June 2024.	No - Corporate Strategy 2024-28 now developed and adopted.
0056	06-Feb-24	Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28	That the Council clarifies whether the capital schemes which pre-dated the Council's net zero targets and therefore are not subject to the same zero carbon criteria jeopardises the Council's ambition to reach net zero by 2030.	Yes	We are able to clarify this by answering the question: the answer required input from officers who were not present at the Committee. The 2030 net zero target for the Council was first adopted in February 2021. Any capital programmes in place in the period 2012-2021 would have been subject, instead, to a commitment to reduce the Council's carbon footprint by 5% per annum. In setting the 2030 net zero target in 2021, previous capital programmes and existing assets were taken into account as part of setting the net zero target to be reached over the following decade. The Council is currently on track to meet the 2030 target.	No - response addressed recommendation in full.
0057	06-Feb-24	Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25	That the Council reviews its investments in light of the conflict in Israel and Palestine and any associated human rights abuses with a view to assessing alignment with the Council's current Ethical Investment Policy.	Yes	The Council reviews its investments in line with its Environmental, Social and Governance Policy at the time of making the investment as well as our Ethical Investment Policy. This is updated and subject to review and in the light of the current situation we are happy to confirm that it will be included in our review arrangements.	No - response addressed recommendation in full.
0058	04-Mar-24	Request for Exceptional Circumstances Relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy	That the Cabinet, in the making of its decision, has regard to the relative insignificance of the value of the proposed CIL exemption compared to the overall project viability gap and thus the limited impact that the CIL exemption, if agreed, would have on influencing and/or changing the behaviour or intentions of BMW.	No	Consideration of the value of the subsidy is mandated as part of the Subsidy Control Act and so it already forms part of the decision-making process.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0059	04-Mar-24	Request for Exceptional Circumstances Relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy	That the Cabinet, in the making of its decision, has regard to the existence of other entities that are able to provide subsidies of a similar scale, in particular Central Government.	No	The application for exceptional relief relates specifically here to the CIL liability, and no other body would be able to grant such an exemption.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0060	04-Mar-24	Request for Exceptional Circumstances Relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy	That the Council, should the CIL exemption be approved by Cabinet, asks BMW to provide a statement setting out how it will mitigate the impact of the development without the use of CIL monies.	Yes	CIL money is not used to mitigate impacts of a specific development (CIL should not be confused with Section 106 agreements that specify measures in relation to specific planning applications). Nevertheless, and noting that the statement is not a requirement of the Relief process, this will be requested of the applicant.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0061	05-Mar-24	Oxfordshire Food Strategy - City Action Plan	That the Council engages with local food larders with a view to improving the variety of fruit and veg available, having regard to the outcome of the recent study undertaken at Oxford City Farm in relation to mothers and the impact of the cost of living crisis.	Yes	The Council has been supporting the local food larders by initiatives such as funding fridges and fridge-freezers, with campaigns to donate food produce, by providing a low cost community van to help with logistics, through supplying Household Support Fund when available and through our partnership work with SOFEA on the food pipeline. We will continue to explore opportunities to support food larders and help increase the range of fruit and vegetable offered.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0062	06-Mar-24	Oxfordshire Food Strategy - City Action Plan	That the Council reviews its policy in relation to the management of leftover food from Town Hall events so that it does not go to waste.	Yes	The Town Hall management team are working with the current caterer on reducing food waste and further opportunities around this. Currently the caterer works with the customer in advance on their food requirements, trying to ensure that minimal cooked food is left over and that all uncooked food will be re-used within their business.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0063	07-Mar-24	Oxfordshire Food Strategy - City Action Plan	That the Council promotes reducing food waste and encouraging diet change as the most impactful factors from a climate perspective, as well as reducing food miles.	In Part	We believe that this is mostly covered in the City Food Action Plan within the third item under the heading of 'Build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together'. The lead organisation is GFO and the Council can provide a supporting role.	No - response cites that recommendation already covered in City Action Plan.
0064	08-Mar-24	Oxfordshire Food Strategy - City Action Plan	That the Council, working with the community, explores options for the collection of food waste from larger generators of food waste within the city and distribution among food larders; and adds this to the City Action Plan.	No	Whilst this is a positive aspiration, there is a real risk that this is something that becomes particularly resource intensive given the scale of the ask both to the Council and to the wider system. As such it is likely to put delivery of the action plan at risk.	No - recommendation not accepted.
0065	09-Mar-24	Oxfordshire Food Strategy - City Action Plan	That the Council re-evaluates the priority areas of the city where activity will take place set out in the City Action Plan, which are currently set at the ward level, with a view to setting priority areas at a sub-ward level to more accurately reflect levels and pockets of deprivation across the City.	In Part	For some actions a citywide focus is appropriate, however for others a much more targeted approach is already advocated. For example, under 'Tackle food poverty and diet-related ill-health' the outcome on item 1 is 'Better understanding of the drivers of food insecurity at a hyper-local level enables targeted interventions and reduction in food insecurity'. We will continue to target resources to where they are most needed where we have capacity to enable it.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0066	11-Apr-24	Adult Exploitation	That the Council develops and delivers training for all Members related to spotting the signs of adult exploitation and modern slavery and how to report it.	Yes	Training is available for Members which can be delivered to councillors.	No - Member briefing on adult exploitation and modern slavery scheduled for 12 November 2024. No further monitoring required as recommendation fulfilled.
0067	11-Apr-24	Adult Exploitation	That the Council rolls out a social media campaign related to spotting the signs of adult exploitation and modern slavery and how to report it.	In Part	Social media campaigns are used for different types of exploitation at different times of the year. The campaigns include spotting the signs, how to report and support for 57 victims.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0068	11-Apr-24	Oxford City Council Annual Business Plan 2024-2025	That the Council includes specific year one actions within the 'Good, Affordable Homes' priority related to driving forward the Council's aim to increase the number of new homes for social rent.	Yes	Wording in the Business Plan 2024/25 will be amended to highlight that the delivery of new housing for social rent is central to the actions under the Good, Affordable Homes priority.	Yes - Scrutiny Officer asked officers 08 August 2024 whether this was implemented and for link to published document.
0069	02-Jul-24	Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024/2028	That the Council includes a priority within the strategy to have an age and child friendly city, noting that the detail would sit in other supporting strategies such as Oxford's Economic Strategy, the City Centre Action Plan and the Thriving Communities Strategy, to ensure that inclusivity of all ages is at the forefront of the Council's approach.		Officers are currently working with partners in the city to examine the opportunity of becoming an Age Friendly City. If a decision is taken to seek accreditation this will be added to the strategy. While the Council has limited capacity to support additional work when it is also managing significant budget pressures, Councillor Louise Upton and 2 council officers have been awarded places on a residential course at LSE for intensive training on how to make a city work for young children (95 cm tall, hence the name Urban95) and their caregivers. This can inform future work in this area. The Council has a strong record on supporting children and young people and creating child-friendly spaces and activities. Examples include the provision of 87 play areas and recreation grounds across the city, the work of our Youth Ambition team to provide regular and summer holidays for some of our most disadvantaged young people, and leisure discounts including free swimming for under-17s and an expanded free swimming lessons provision.	Yes - request update on Age Friendly City work and Urban95 course in due course.

0070	02-Jul-24	Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024/2028	That the Council includes specific reference within the strategy to the work of the Child Poverty Review Group and adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty to demonstrate the Council's commitment to working to reduce inequality at every level.		A reference to adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty has been added to the draft Council Strategy 2024-28. A reference to the work of the Child Poverty Review Group would not be appropriate, as this is a forward-looking document that doesn't seek to replicate information published elsewhere on how proposals were developed.	No - reference to socio-economic duty included in the strategy, which has now been adopted..	
0071	02-Jul-24	Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024/2028	That the Council makes more explicit reference within the strategy to activity which is funded versus activity that is dependent on securing funding; and references prioritisation processes to ensure that activity is undertaken on the basis of having maximum impact when considering cost/benefit and value for money.		A reference to the Council's ability to meet its 2030 and 2040 Net Zero targets being subject to additional external funding has been added to the draft Council Strategy 2024- 28. The Strategy's sister document, the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan is the Council's main tool for prioritising spend. It uses the Council Strategy as the basis for that prioritisation process together with associated consideration of cost/benefit and value for money.	No - strategy now adopted.	
0072	02-Jul-24	Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces	That the Council includes a speed restriction within the byelaws related to cycling.	In Part	Although it is not viable to set a specific speed limit for bicycles in parks as such (there would be no way to police/enforce this) the need has been identified to provide a clearer definition in the proposed byelaws of what constitutes a bicycle to ensure only legally defined e-bikes are permitted in parks, and that there is a clear distinction between these and motorbikes of any description. There is a clear legal definition of an e-bike under UK law which will be added to the byelaws to cover this (it must have a motor output not exceeding 250w continuously and a maximum speed assistance of up to 15 mph). There is a general byelaw included which covers dangerous or inconsiderate cycling in parks regardless of the type of bicycle being ridden.	No - recommendation incorporated into draft byelaws as far as possible; Council agreed in July 2024 to submit the byelaws to Secretary of State for approval.	
0073	02-Jul-24	Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces	That the Council displays information in parks (e.g. on notice boards) for the public on how to report anti-social behaviour.	Yes	New updated signage is currently being installed in all the play areas which contains the direct Parks number which people can use to report issues. These and other signs also contain the web address, and on the whole people prefer to contact the council in this way. For more serious ASB we need to continue to encourage the public to report this to the police at the time.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.	
0074	02-Jul-24	Leisure Investment Programme	That the Council undertakes a thorough analysis of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall usage during all opening times, paying particular attention to evening usage, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on user groups; actively engages with users regarding appropriate alternative provision; and ensures that appropriate mitigations are put in place to protect against disproportionate impacts of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall proposals on active user groups.	Yes	Agreed, but with slightly amended wording: 'That the Council undertakes a thorough analysis of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall usage during all opening times, paying particular attention to evening usage, to understand the impact that the proposal would have on user groups; actively engages with users regarding appropriate alternative provision; and ensures that appropriate mitigations are put in place where possible to try to protect against disproportionate impacts of the Leys Leisure Centre sports hall proposals on active user groups.'	Yes - update to be requested in due course.	
0075	02-Jul-24	Leisure Investment Programme	That the Council publishes high-level information on the Leisure Investment Programme and progress on its delivery in a prominent place on the Council's website in order to provide public reassurance and transparency.	Yes	Agreed.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.	

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## Scrutiny Budget Review 2025/26 – Scoping Document

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<b>Review Topic</b>	Budget Review 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2028/29
<b>Lead Member Review Group</b>	Councillor James Fry
<b>Other Review Group Members</b>	<p>Councillor Chris Jarvis; Councillor Dr Christopher Snowton; Councillor Ian Yeatman</p> <p><i>Members of the Housing and Homelessness Panel will be invited to scrutinise Housing-related budgetary items:</i></p> <p><i>Councillor Lizzy Diggins (Chair); Councillor Theodore Jupp; Councillor Edward Mundy; Councillor Asima Qayyum; Councillor Rosie Rawle; Councillor Anne Stares</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Climate and Environment Panel will be invited to scrutinise the Environmental Sustainability-related budgetary items:</i></p> <p><i>Councillor Emily Kerr (Chair); Councillor Judith Harley; Councillor Jemima Hunt; Councillor Katherine Miles</i></p>
<b>Substitutes</b>	<p>The Scrutiny Operating Principles state that ‘<i>no substitutions will be allowed on Standing Panels or Review Groups. This is to provide continuity of membership given the focused nature of their work.</i>’</p> <p>Members of the Budget Review Group should make every effort to attend meetings to help ensure continuity of membership. However, given the tight timescales within which the Budget Review Group is required to meet (with very limited scope for alternative meeting dates) and the need to ensure cross-party representation at those meetings, substitutes will be permitted for Budget Review Group meetings in exceptional circumstances, provided agreement is sought in advance.</p> <p>Exceptional circumstances would mean unavoidable commitments (e.g. work and/or pre-booked travel). Should Budget Review Group members be unable to attend one or more of the Budget Review Group meetings, they should contact the Scrutiny Officer at their earliest convenience to advise the meeting date(s) they cannot attend; the reason(s) why they cannot attend; and the name of their substitute. Members must seek their own substitute from their political group as normal. The Scrutiny Officer will then respond to advise whether or not the request has been approved – provided the reason(s) given constitute exceptional circumstances, requests will be approved.</p> <p>Where a substitute is required, Members must submit the required information as far in advance as possible, but at least two clear working days before the meeting for which a substitute is required.</p>
<b>Officer Support and allocated hours</b>	Scrutiny Officer support – approx. 2-3 days per week from mid-December 2023 to mid-February 2024. Additional support from the Head of Financial Services and other Senior Officers.

<b>Background</b>	<p>The Finance and Performance Panel is responsible for scrutinising finance and budgetary issues and decisions, including the Budget 2025/26 decision.</p> <p>The Budget 2025/26 paperwork will be published for consultation on <b>03 December 2024</b> ahead of a final decision by Full Council on <b>13 February 2025</b> (<i>reserve date 24 February 2025</i>). Scrutiny has formed a Budget Review Group to scrutinise the budget proposals in detail before reporting to Cabinet in February 2025.</p>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>To scrutinise the Council's draft budget for 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Plan for the following three years and provide public assurance of the Council's budget setting processes and decisions.</p>
<b>Key lines of inquiry</b>	<p>Areas of focus for the Budget Review Group this year to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The progress of financial mitigation strategies arising from the various pressures on Council finances and the Council's overall expectation of what the 'new normal' looks like financially</li> <li>• The interaction, robustness and financial impact of the financial returns to the Council from Oxford Direct Services and OX Place business plans – including scrutiny of the ODS and OX Place Business Plans and their importance in relation to the financial sustainability of the Council</li> <li>• Specific consideration of the Council's planning regarding macroeconomic factors such as inflation and the cost of living crisis</li> <li>• The robustness of plans and risks to the Council's anticipated income streams, particularly relating to parking, commercial property and the Council's companies</li> <li>• The robustness of the HRA Business Plan</li> <li>• Assessment of overall strategy and individual proposals to mitigate lost income and to reduce costs, including the deliverability of proposals for income generation and savings</li> <li>• Planned borrowing levels and the impact of the changes arising from Minimum Revenue Provision</li> <li>• Levels of contingencies and earmarked reserves</li> <li>• Deliverability of the Capital Programme and its relation to previous iterations of the Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• The realism of optimism bias assumptions applied to the Capital Programme</li> <li>• Progress with, and opportunities to further exploit, emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to increase productivity/efficiency</li> <li>• The impact of staff recruitment and retention on the ability to realise the MTFP (e.g. achievement of performance targets, unplanned expenditure on temporary staff, delivery of plans and priorities and increasing pressure on existing staff)</li> <li>• Outcomes of the strategic reviews of Community Services and ODS; and anticipated impact of those outcomes</li> <li>• The impact of the new Government on local government finances</li> <li>• The impact of budget proposals on service users and the wider community</li> </ul>
<b>Indicators of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust independent scrutiny of budget proposals;</li> <li>• Detailed consideration of key lines of inquiry;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The production of an evidenced based report with recommendations;</li> <li>• Broad agreement on conclusions and recommendations amongst Review Group members;</li> <li>• The majority of recommendations are agreed by the Cabinet.</li> </ul>		
<b>Methodology/ Approach</b>	<p>Evidence gathering to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A budget briefing by the Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services;</li> <li>• Reviewing Budget 2025/26 paperwork, including options or bids presented to Members;</li> <li>• Submitting written questions to Senior Officers and reviewing their responses;</li> <li>• Meetings with Executive Directors and Heads of Service.</li> </ul>		
<b>Specify Witnesses/ Experts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management</li> <li>• Chief Executive</li> <li>• Executive Director (Development)</li> <li>• Executive Director (Communities and People)</li> <li>• Executive Director (Corporate Resources)</li> <li>• Head of Financial Services</li> <li>• Head of Housing Services</li> <li>• Head of Planning and Regulatory Services</li> <li>• Active Communities Manager</li> <li>• Head of Business Improvement</li> <li>• Head of Law and Governance</li> <li>• Community Safety Service Manager</li> <li>• Head of Corporate Strategy</li> <li>• Environmental Sustainability Lead</li> <li>• Head of Regeneration and Economy</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead</li> <li>• Head of Corporate Property</li> <li>• Corporate Assets Lead</li> <li>• Property Services Manager</li> <li>• Managing Director (Oxford Direct Services)</li> <li>• Managing Director (OX Place)</li> <li>• Head of Facilities Management (Oxford Direct Services)</li> <li>• Finance Business Partners</li> </ul>		
<b>Out of scope</b>	N/A		
<b>Projected start date</b>	03 December 2024	<b>Draft Report Deadline</b>	13 January 2025 for Finance and Performance Panel on 15 January 2025
<b>Meeting Frequency</b>	5 meetings in December 2024 / January 2025	<b>Projected completion date</b>	By 05 February 2025 Cabinet

## Draft outline of meetings (*all held remotely*)

### Meeting one – Thursday 19 December 2024, 6:00 – 8:00pm

Introduction to the budget and its context (Cllr Ed Turner, Caroline Green, Nigel Kennedy, Andrew Friar and Emma Jackman; Helen Horne and Simon Howick to attend to answer questions in relation to OX Place and ODS):

- Current local context
- Budget-setting process to date
- Overview of the whole budget – including areas of particular risk and/or tension, options presented to Members and potential trade-off options in terms of savings/income, key areas of growth or income generation, impact of particular elements of the budget on local people/groups
- How previous discussions with Finance and Performance Panel and any recommendations associated with those discussions (including Budget Review Group recommendations for the 2024/25 budget) have fed into the budget-setting process for 2025/26
- Interaction, robustness and financial impact of the financial returns to the Council from Oxford Direct Services and OX Place business plans
  - ODS and OX Place Client
  - ODS and OX Place Business Plans
  - Outcome of the Strategic Review of Services Provided by ODS

### Meeting two – Monday 06 January 2025, 6.00 – 8.00pm

Introductions to service area budget proposals and questions from Review Group:

- Corporate Resources (**Tom Hook**)
  - Law and Governance (**Emma Jackman**)
  - Financial Services (**Nigel Kennedy**)
  - Business Improvement (**Helen Bishop**)
- Corporate Strategy (**Mish Tullar and Emma Burson**)
  - Environmental Sustainability (**Tina Mould**)

Other attendees: **Andrew Friar**

Members of the Climate and Environment Panel will be invited to participate in the Scrutiny of the Environmental Sustainability element of this meeting.

### Meeting three – Tuesday 07 January 2025, 6:00pm - 8.00pm

Introduction to budget proposals and answering Review Group questions from:

- Development (**Tom Bridgman, Emma Burson, Jason Jones and Paul Swaffield**)
  - Corporate Property (**Jane Winfield and Emma Gubbins**)
  - Planning and Regulatory Services (**David Butler**)
  - Regeneration and Economy (**Carolyn Ploszynski**)
    - Housing Delivery (**Tom Bridgman, Carolyn Ploszynski and Dave Scholes**)
  - Capital Programme (**Tom Bridgman, Carolyn Ploszynski and Malcolm Peek**)

Other attendees: **Nigel Kennedy, Andrew Friar**

**Meeting four – Wednesday 08 January 2025, 6:00pm - 8.00pm**

To consider draft recommendations from previous meetings; introduction to budget proposals and answering Review Group questions from:

- Housing and Communities (**Peter Matthew, Nerys Parry, Hagan Lewisman and Jason Jones**)
  - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (**Peter Matthew and Nerys Parry**)
  - Community Safety (**Richard Adams**)

Other attendees: **Nigel Kennedy, Andrew Friar**

Members of the Housing and Homelessness Panel will be invited to participate in the Scrutiny of the Housing element of this meeting.

**Meeting five – Thursday 09 January 2025, 6.00pm - 8.00pm [prior to Finance and Performance Panel on 15 January 2025]**

To consider the draft Review Group report.

In addition, the following reports will be submitted:

- Report on income from Council assets and Council-owned property lettings (*the latter is in response to a previous Panel recommendation where the response referenced a further briefing: That the Council undertakes an analysis in relation to the letting of Council-owned property between estimated time taken to let properties versus actual time taken to let properties, with a view to being able to incorporate more accurate assumptions in the budget going forward.*) (**Jane Winfield, Emma Gubbins and Jason Jones**)
- Report on car parking (**Jane Winfield, Emma Gubbins, Jason Jones and Oliver Hearn (ODS)**)

Other attendees: **Nigel Kennedy, Andrew Friar**

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**To:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 03 September 2024  
**Report of:** Executive Director (Development)  
**Title of Report:** Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter/Pledges – Annual Update

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	This report is the year 1 report on an annual organisational audit against all Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter pledges requested by Scrutiny Committee in 2023.
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and an Inclusive Economy
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Strong, Fair Economy
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Council Strategy 2024-28
<b>Recommendation(s): That the Committee resolves to:</b>	
1. <b>Note and comment on</b> the report and agree any recommendations.	

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	OIEP Charter
Appendix 2	Oxford City Council OIEP Charter Annual Audit

## Introduction and background

1. On 12 July 2023, [Cabinet approved](#) participation in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) Charter (**Appendix 1**) and endorsed a series of Oxford City Council, Oxford Direct Services (ODS) and OX Place pledges.
2. Oxford City Council is committed to creating a more inclusive economy through its Corporate Plan priorities and Economic Strategy commitments and delivery plan.
3. The Council committed as an organisation to 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.

<b>Pledge</b>	<b>Oxford City Council Lead</b>	<b>Related policy or strategy</b>
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.		
<i>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</i>		
<i>As a supplier we pledge to use local SMEs in our supply chain wherever possible and to record the percentage of the total spend.</i>		
<i>We pledge to support our employees to volunteer on local community projects</i>	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.

<b>Pledge</b>	<b>Oxford City Council Lead</b>	<b>Related policy or strategy</b>
<i>As an employer we pledge to continue to be a Disability Confident Employer and support people with health conditions and disabilities</i>	Head of People, service area lead	People Strategy
<i>As an employer we pledge to improve the diversity of our workforce through more inclusive recruitment practices</i>		
<i>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</i>		
<i>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</i>		



<i>opportunities to speak up about concerns and issues.</i>	
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- c. **Improve training and educational attainment** - *Creating workplaces where employees can thrive and grow and supporting educational programmes for children.*

<b>Pledge</b>	<b>Oxford City Council Lead</b>	<b>Related policy or strategy</b>
<i>As a levy paying business we pledge up to 25% of our unused Levy to help grow apprenticeships in Oxfordshire</i>	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.*

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

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

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

4. At its meeting on 04 July 2023 the Scrutiny Committee requested an annual audit of the organisation against all pledges in the OIEP Charter. This report is the year 1 report on that audit, as 2023 audit established the baseline. Despite the broader remit of the audit, the Council remains committed to 13 pledges; not the full list of 39 pledges.
5. The OIEP Charter has 39 pledges, and the following summary is an audit of the organisation against all possible pledges, not just the 13 initially adopted and which were arrived at after engagement with all Council Heads of Service and engagement with all staff and the Unions. The Council agreed it could commit to deliver against 13 pledges within existing resources. Doing so meant that the Council was and continues to set a clear example to others in the county about how much every organisation can do to foster a more inclusive economy. It was agreed that if a local authority facing significant resource constraints could commit to 13 OIEP pledges, then it raised expectations of what could be done by other organisations, especially those with greater financial capacity.
6. **Note:** Please read **Appendix 2** with Annual Audit Information alongside the following section of the report as it lists a full summary of the audit.

## Year 1 Oxford City Council OIEP Charter Pledges Audit Results (2024)

7. The following summarises the year 1 (2024) audit of the organisation against all Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Pledges (39), compared to the baseline (2023) and examples of evidence.
8. The principal learning from the first-year audit is that despite agreeing to adopt 13 of the 39 possible OIEP pledges, Oxford City Council, when audited against the full list of 39 pledges can demonstrate progress against the majority (35 of 39 total pledges) in 2024. Progress is RAG-rated: Red - no progress, does not meet target; Amber - some progress, partly meets target; Green - significant progress, meets target.
9. The following is a breakdown which shows that, of the 35 of 39 pledges that Oxford City Council is performing against, the majority are rated green, a small number amber and none are red:
  - Green for 31 of the 35 Pledges
  - Amber for 4 of the 35 Pledges
  - Red for 0 of the 35 Pledges
10. As well as demonstrating performance against the majority of the pledges, significant improvements in the progress against pledges in 2024 (compared to the 2023 baseline) can be seen for 32 of the total 39 pledges, as broken down below:
  - Within Green, improvements for 10 of the total 39 pledges
  - Amber to Green, improvements for 21 of the total 39 pledges
  - Red to Amber, improvements for 0 of total pledges
  - Blue (or not applicable) to Amber, improvements for 1 of total 39 pledges
11. Oxford City Council's People Team has led on the majority of these improvements.
12. As well as improving in some areas, the Council has also maintained continuity of progress (neither declining nor improving, but remaining the same) in 2024 (compared to the 2023 baseline). This is the case for 17 of the total 39 pledges.
  - Remained Green, for 10 of the total 39 pledges (of which improvements within green were identified in addition)
  - Remained Amber, for 3 of the total 39 pledges.
  - Remained Red, for 3 of the total 39 pledges.
  - Remained Blue (Not applicable), for 1 of the total 39 pledges.
13. There is no decline in progress against pledges in 2024 compared to the 2023 baseline. Given the increasingly constrained financial environment both this continuity and lack of decline is noteworthy and should also be considered an indication of success.
14. The only pledges not currently being progressed are 10, 11, 18 and 32. The reason they are not being progressed is because they are not within the 13 original pledge commitments and are therefore not deliverable within existing service resources and planned, budgeted, delivery:

- *Pledge 10. ‘As an employer I pledge to sponsor a volunteer in a school for the Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh) programme (£450 per volunteer)’*
  - Pledge 10 is not applicable to Oxford City Council, OX Place, or ODS.
- *Pledge 11. ‘As an employer we pledge to offer an alternative interview process i.e. 1 day in the workplace seeing how an individual works and interacts with others’.*
- *Pledge 18. ‘As an employer we pledge to ‘Ban the Box’ – removing the need to ask for details of previous convictions by applicants unless there are clear and compelling (safeguarding) reasons for this.’*
  - Pledges 11 and 18 are being considered as part of wider People Team initiatives but not currently being implemented.
- *Pledge 32. ‘I pledge to become a mentor via the OxGROW virtual mentoring platform to help individuals looking for support to find a job or change career, to help them with areas such as developing resilience, CV writing and preparing for interviews’*
  - Pledge 32 could potentially be integrated into initiatives around reinvigorating the employee volunteering programme.

## Recommendations

15. The officer recommendations are that:

- Oxford City Council should continue to participate in the OIEP Charter (**Appendix 1**). The audit demonstrates that Oxford City Council is delivering effectively against the committed 13 pledges and also performing successfully when monitored against the majority of all available pledges.
- Scrutiny should continue to consider the organisational audit against all pledges annually to raise the profile of the Council’s good practice, seeking to inspire others in the county; and
- Scrutiny considers making recommendations on ways that the Council can identify opportunities to improve progress against all 35 pledges ahead of the year 2 (2025) audit as well as exploring potential to deliver against pledges not currently being progressed.

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**Background Papers:** None

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# 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:

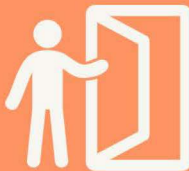


### Improve training and educational attainment

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

OIEP Charter Pledge	2023 Status (RAG)	Evidence Examples	2024 Status (RAG)	Evidence Examples	Progress
<b>Support local and social economy - Using our buying power to support the local economy and maximise social value</b>					
1. As a buyer we pledge to buy goods and services from purposeful local organisations, including SMEs, social enterprises and cooperatives, wherever possible		<p>OCC-Match my Project Meet the buyer event held in February 23</p> <p>Oxford TOMs, Oxford Social Value Strategy, and commitments</p> <p>ODS Track and report monthly spend with SME's</p> <p>Constitution states that at least one quote should be from a local supplier</p> <p>-SME spend % monitored</p> <p>-Local spend% monitored</p>		<p>OCC: Match my Project launched in Nov 2023, building momentum as a platform for suppliers &amp; community groups. The platform has potential to become a 'single entry point' into skills/training opportunities across UK Shared Prosperity Fund programmes, Community Employment and Procurement Plans and other initiatives delivered or supported by OCC. Second meet the buyer event held in February 24 with another planned in 2025.</p> <p>OX - Social value agreements with contractors now set targets for local spend on materials and labour.</p> <p>ODS: We aim to work with suppliers who share our commitment to social value, ensuring at least 15% social value is embedded in all our tenders. ODS supports the local economy and shares best practice through participation in events such as Oxford City council 'Meet the Buyer' at Oxford Town Hall. ODS prioritises purposeful local businesses (SMEs, social enterprises, and cooperatives) for almost 45% of our purchases and encourages contractors to do the same. This commitment extends to the voluntary and community sector. We prioritise work with local businesses where possible and reported monthly to exec - SME 23/24: 73.07% Local 23/24: 59.63%</p>	
2. As a supplier of goods and services we pledge to support local community projects by sharing our skills and expertise with local groups		<p>OCC-Community Wealth Building project 'Owned by Oxford', Ox TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) social value evaluation and Match My Project platform.</p> <p>OX Place have taken 2 suppliers to the Match my project site so far as part of their SV agreements with us. We are also hoping that volunteering opportunities are relevant to the skill set of our OX Place staff in the new year.</p> <p>ODS launched Staff volunteering bank</p>		<p>OCC-Owned by Oxford Steering group has secured further phase 2 funding through Esmée Fairbairn and Friends Provident and is establishing its 'theory of change' and key areas of focus in 2024. OSEP funded through Year 2 of UK SPF to support the growth of the social economy,</p> <p>OxTOMS development, OIEP Social Value and Procurement anchor sub-group work</p> <p>OX - Staff are aware of the charter and how they can volunteer - we are hoping to have a team day doing so by the end of the year to encourage participation in this.</p> <p>ODS: As per Pledge 1 update.</p>	
3. As a buyer we pledge to assess		OCC-Match my Project, Oxford TOMs, Oxford Social		OCC: Procurement Team Procurement Team social value	







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<p>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.</p>		<p>Value Strategy and commitments.</p> <p>OX Place review and negotiate the SV offer alongside the contract negotiations, SV Plan shared and can be referenced.</p> <p>ODS- 15% in all tenders</p>	<p>at 20% in July 24.</p> <p>OXP - We have recently changed our SV within procurement, setting out more defined targets using OXTOMS. This will make it easier to account and assess the SV offer from a supplier. This was done with advice from procurement at OCC.</p> <p>ODS: Social Value is a minimum of 15% in tenders. Work is underway between the Social Value Lead and Procurement team to revise SV question bank to allow for further alignment with OIEP goals and local needs. This is in trial with two large tenders in 2024 so far. Uniform and tarmac supply. Tarmac: we have added targeted carbon reduction and apprenticeship social value questions to align with business needs, sector specific concerns and local priorities.</p>	
<p>4. 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</p>		<p>OCC-Oxford Living Wage Campaign- employers, Social Value Strategy, Match my Project platform</p>	<p>OCC: Total OLW employers supported in July 24 were 132 and total employees were 26,931. The measurement of employees is a new Corporate Indicator established to further this audit work and better understand supply chains since April 24</p> <p>OXP - This is now included as a question as part of our SV section in our procurement process.</p> <p>ODS: Oxford living wage included in standard terms and conditions and tender packs.</p>	
<p>5. As a supplier we pledge to support our employees to volunteer on local community projects</p>		<p>OCC supporting employees to volunteer on local community projects.</p> <p>OX Place planning to offer staff Opps in early 2024.</p> <p>ODS- Volunteering bank for all staff to use.</p>	<p>OCC continues to support employees to volunteer on local community projects. An employee pilot is being developed to start in spring.</p> <p>OXP - Staff are aware of the charter and how they can volunteer - we are hoping to have a team day doing so by the end of the year to encourage participation in this.</p> <p>ODS: We've established a volunteering bank for staff which gives staff a shared pool of 200 volunteering hours to contribute their time to local causes, creating positive social change.</p>	
<p>6. As a supplier we pledge to use local SMEs in our supply chain wherever possible and to record the percentage of the total spend.</p>		<p>OCC Corporate target set for SME spend % and a separate KPI for % of local spend reported on monthly.</p> <p>OX Place will aim to set up a system to record this in 2024.</p>	<p>OCC: Constitution states that at least one quote should be from a local supplier.</p> <p>SME spend % monitored. 2022-2023 (OCC excluding ODSL, ODSTL, OCHL) 62.66% excludes indirect SME spend. Local spend% monitored. 2022-2023 (OCC excluding</p>	









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				<p>ODSL.ODSTL, OCHL)38.50% Excludes indirect local spend.</p> <p>OXF - In the SV section of our supplier procurement, this is now a mandatory target and therefore we will be able to report on it in future. ODS: We track and report monthly - SME 23/24: 73.07% Local 23/24: 59.63%</p>	
<b>Opportunities to work - Supporting those furthest from the labour market on their journey towards secure employment</b>					
7. As an employer we pledge to being 'Positive about Older Workers' to create opportunities for candidates with more experience / looking for work in later life.		OCC-We encourage all workers, have carried out research into this.		<p>OCC: We are an equal opportunities employer and ensure that we use inclusive language in our talent attraction. We have invested in time and resource to improve our Inclusive Recruitment guidance in 24/25 as well as offering Inclusive Recruitment and Unconscious Bias training for Hiring Managers.</p> <p>ODS: We foster an inclusive and diverse workplace with 90% of our 600-strong workforce living locally in Oxfordshire.</p>	
8. As an employer we pledge to commit to flexible job design (including job share, part time working, school-friendly hours and flexibility around other care commitments).		OCC: result of the staff survey 2023 93% of respondents agreed OCC is a flexible employer		OCC: Results of 2024 staff survey are that 94% percentage of respondents agreed OCC is a flexible employer. An increase of 1% on last year, reflecting improvements	
9. As an employer we pledge to be a Disability Confident Employer (levels 1 and 2) create opportunities for people with health conditions and disabilities (and maybe improving awareness of "Access to Work" to help them manage any associated costs.		OCC currently have Disability Confident Employer level 2		OCC continue to have Disability Confident Employer level 2	
10. As a Disability Confident employer we pledge to be a Disability Confident Leader – this means they can support fellow employers to be DC confident and be involved in the process to achieve		OCC: At this stage we are not ready to move to level 3		<p>ODS: We're proudly accredited by Inclusive Employers, holding the status of a Disability Confident Leader. This places us among the top eight employers in Oxfordshire for fostering an inclusive workplace.</p> <p>OCC-Disability Confident employer Level 2</p>	





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accreditation. (Level 3)					
11. As an employer we pledge to offer an alternative interview process i.e. 1 day in the workplace seeing how an individual works and interacts with others.		OCC: We can look at this in the future but not ready at this stage		OCC: This is something that we may consider in the future but is not in place at this time.	
12. As an employer we pledge to embed a long term culture across the business at all levels, to ensure all employees feel respected and valued and to have a commitment to eliminating unlawful discrimination		OCC: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion EDI strategy  Anti-Racism Charter, this is an ongoing process and we are committed to this		OCC are members of Stonewall and Inclusive Employers. We are delivering EDI training "Inclusion is for Everyone" for all staff, and later in 24/25, we are to run an EDI for Managers course, to include Equality Impact Assessments, and Strategic EDI for senior managers, to include Inclusive Decision making. We have an EDI lead within the People Team. We hold staff networks to include LGBTQ+, REACH and Disability and Neurodiversity.  ODS: Inclusive employer membership, EDBI Strategy, staff app (Blink).	
13. As an employer we pledge to be a learning organisation, sharing our successes on EDI strategy and practical action, analysing setbacks to develop new ways of engagement and practical action		OCC: Pulse Staff Surveys responses we look at this and take this on board. We look at services areas and active plans.		OCC have an Equalities Action plan, held accountable to the EDI lead and People Team, devised from the annual Equalities.  This is reported to the EDI steering group as well as our portfolio holder, Cllr Nigel Chapman. We also have EDI objectives with our People Plan, that is communicated in the wider OCC	
14. As an employer we pledge that every member of our workforce has the opportunity to voice how they can and do add value to the organisation through their unique talents, experience and resources.		OCC: Overall staff engagement in feb 2023 survey 82%. My work contributes to what the council is trying to achieve 96% agree. Let's talk, Lunch and Learns		OCC: hold an annual staff survey as well as pulse surveys throughout the year. We hold monthly "Let's Talk" sessions where all staff have the option to attend. We run staff networks for those from underrepresented groups. We instil a Candid and Caring culture around sharing honest feedback and have supported this by rolling out training, including feedback models.  ODS: Inclusive employer membership, EDBI Strategy, staff app (Blink), Women's Network.	
15. Supporting adults with few or no qualifications		OCC-Community Employment and Procurement Plans (CEPPs)  Kickstart Scheme  OIEP Educational attainment WG apprenticeships		OCC have devised a new talent strategy which will allow us to work in a more structured manner supporting interns from lower socio-economic backgrounds, work placements from our priority schools, and we are working in partnership with	





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				Activate learning to trail a Sector Work Academy programme, where we offer a short work trial and guaranteed interview to unemployed adults wishing to work in Customer Services.	
16. Supporting young people who have faced disadvantaged circumstances		OCC-Kickstart Scheme, apprenticeships, internships		OCC - As a part of our talent strategy, we are supporting 2 local schools, chosen based on most disadvantaged backgrounds, lowest GCSE results, and highest minority ethnic groups to offer work placements, and also to support them with careers advice. This year so far, we have attended a mock interview day and a careers advice session.	
<b>Recruit inclusively - Making jobs accessible for all residents and hiring from diverse communities</b>					
17. As an employer we pledge to explore 'Name-blind' (and 'age-blind', etc.) applications to remove unconscious bias from the selection process.		OCC: We are looking at this and has been addressed in training		OCC are adopting an anonymous screening process in our iTrent System. Name and DOB will be included in this.	
18. As an employer we pledge to 'Ban the Box' – removing the need to ask for details of previous convictions by applicants unless there are clear and compelling (safeguarding) reasons for this.		OCC: Not able to deliver currently		OCC: Not able to deliver currently	
19. As an employer we pledge to engage with local support organisations and partners to share their insight into recruitment, retention, and job design barriers.		OCC: We are engaging with local organisations and advertising in local areas		OCC - we work in partnership with Activate Learning where we explore their SWAP scheme to support unemployed adults seeking employment. We are improving the way that we work with local schools, prioritising in 24/25 with 2 schools. We are partnering with Oxford Brookes and Oxford university to support OCC with Interns and Grads.  ODS: We advertise vacancies via Job Centre, Aspire, and explore opportunities for prison leavers via Bullingdon and Spring Hill.	
20. As an employer we pledge to be open to receive in work place support to enable the employee to learn with confidence.		OCC: This is in progress		OCC: continued, Reasonable adjustments would be made/arranged for any individual that needed them in order to learn or progress within the council.	
21. As an employer we pledge to brief human resources staff about issues		OCC: This is being looked at on how we can support this. At the moment will be bringing in refugees and asylum seekers to visit the		OCC: Feasibility of this continues to be explored.	





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<p>that might arise in recruiting refugees and asylum seekers, eg the possible need for more follow-up questions in interviews, as 'selling oneself' is an uncomfortable experience for people from many cultures.</p>		<p>Town Hall and meet are EDI Lead</p>			
<p>22. As an employer we pledge to a user friendly application process, using simple language and no jargon. – bearing in mind, many where English is second language will not know work place terminology until they receive a job.</p>		<p>OCC: We are doing this and we have rewritten our Job Descriptions to reflect this</p>		<p>OCC -ongoing, we are continually improving on our language in our recruitment and attraction process to include inclusive language.</p> <p>We have launched training for Hiring Managers and also a Hiring Managers Network, where items such as this are educated.</p>	
<p>23. As an employer we pledge we will continue to educate and train our hiring managers / employees on how to successfully recruit and retain candidates that have experienced some form of disadvantage circumstances</p>		<p>OCC-We are in the process of doing this. More work needs to be done. We have had Inclusive Recruitment training but will be doing more</p>		<p>OCC - successful launch of Inclusive Recruitment training - Part 1 = Positive Action and Process and Part 2 = Unconscious Bias.</p> <p>We have also successfully launched a Hiring Managers' network where we can educate, challenge and standardise</p>	
<p>24. As an employer we pledge we will invest time in developing and embedding long term inclusive recruitment strategies within our business and hiring processes</p>		<p>OCC-ongoing</p>		<p>OCC - a lot of work has been completed here, with new inclusive recruitment guidance to be launched imminently on our new intrant pages. As well as the training mentioned and Hiring manager's network.</p> <p>There is also work being done on anonymising sifting and manager self-service on iTrent.</p>	
<p>25. As an employer we pledge we will identify new recruitment strategies that our business can introduce to develop an exceptional, allowing alternative pools of candidates</p>		<p>OCC: workforce action plan and data profiles</p>		<p>OCC - a lot of work has been completed here including the new talent strategy supporting work with interns, graduates and schools.</p> <p>As a part of the new inclusive recruitment process and guidance, specialist diverse sites have been included.</p> <p>We also will be going out to procurement this year where diversity will be a key factor.</p>	







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to access our job opportunities.					
26. As an employer we pledge we will strive to do our best and continue to seek guidance on inclusive recruitment best practices, ensuring we have current long-term strategies to attract and offer employment opportunities to all.		OCC-exploring opportunities in this area		OCC - a lot of work has been completed here including the new talent strategy supporting work with interns, grads and schools. As a part of the new inclusive recruitment process and guidance, specialist diverse sites have been included. We also will be going out to procurement this year where diversity will be a key factor.	
27. As an employer we will pledge to ensure that all levels of our business are involved in driving our inclusive recruitment strategies forward, ensuring they remain a priority at all times.		OCC-refining processes to improve cross service prioritisation		OCC - via our inclusive recruitment training, guidance and Hiring Manager networks.	
28. As an employer we pledge to develop and embed practical processes [Exceptional Recruitment Pathways] so that potential candidates from disadvantaged groups can gain employment with our business, sustain their employment and thrive within both the workforce and wider society.  For example: •Prison leavers, and those with an offending history •Refugees •Military Forces personnel, to include those currently serving and their families, and Veterans of the service •Adults who have taken a career gap for caring duties		OCC: to establish a Refugee Employment Support Programme (RESP)		OCC Refugee Employment Support Programme (RESP) continues in partnership with Aspire Oxfordshire. OIEP Inclusive Employers Working group supports Prison leavers, Refugees, carers and Military forces personnel as target groups.  ODS: We advertise current vacancies via Job Centre Plus, Aspire, and explore opportunities for prison leavers via Bullingdon and Spring Hill. Armed Forces Covenant.	
<b>Improve training and educational attainment - Creating workplaces where employees can thrive and grow and supporting educational programmes for children</b>					
29. As an Employer I pledge to provide		OCC has a company volunteer for Arch and will be		OCC has had at least 1 company volunteers for Arch for	

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staff time to volunteer at a local school for Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh) programme		promoting the opportunity by new volunteer opps. Policy  OX Place happy to look at this as a volunteering opp for our staff		a full academic year	
30. As an employer I pledge to sponsor a volunteer in a school for the Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh) programme (£450 per volunteer)		N/A to OCC		N/A to OCC	
31. As a levy paying business we pledge up to 25% of our unused Levy to help grow apprenticeships in Oxfordshire		OCC pledged 10K to support two local companies within the Care Sector to achieve a Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care Apprenticeship over 18 months and a level 2 Adult Care Worker Apprenticeship over 12 months.		Oxford City Council have pledged our apprenticeship transfer allowance to a value of £72,126.  50% of this is available directly via our pledge page and has been assigned to Oxford/Oxfordshire small businesses within the Care, Education, Child Care and Charity Sectors.  50% has been ring fenced for pledges arranged by our partner organisation OxLEP, whose mission is to build funds from Oxford businesses for Oxford businesses.  ODS: The levy underspend donated to OxLEP Skills.	
32. I pledge to become a mentor via the OxGROW virtual mentoring platform to help individuals looking for support to find a job or change career, to help them with areas such as developing resilience, CV writing and preparing for interviews		No action currently		No action currently	
<b>Sharing resources, skills and assets - Practical ways to ensure goods and services are accessible to all</b>					
33. As an employer we pledge to donate laptops, tablets and phones no longer needed to Getting Oxfordshire Online and pass them on to people who need them. Helping people to access the data, training and support they		OCC-support to 'Getting Oxfordshire Online'		OCC-continued support to 'Getting Oxfordshire Online'	

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need to get online					
34. As an employer or individual we pledge to offer financial support, or value-in-kind, to a nominated Oxfordshire charity		N/A to OCC  OX Place plan to do this through the volunteering opportunities offered		N/A to OCC  OX Place continue to do this through the volunteering opportunities offered.  ODS: Staff have nominated a charity of the year partnership with Cancer Research UK.	
35. As an employer we pledge to offer work experience to a local school/college student		OCC-Internships and placements in partnerships with schools, and universities		OCC - we have identified 2 priority schools wo will we support in 24/25 with work placements as well as supporting them with careers and mock interviews.  ODS: Over the last year, ODS has equipped Oxfordshire students for future careers through work experience and careers advice at EMBS College, Greyfriars School, and The Oxford Academy. We've attended careers fairs and mock interviews at local schools, such as Abingdon and Witney College, and offer work experience placements for secondary schools. There are 14 apprentices in the business, levy underspent donated to OxLEP Skills.	
36. As a employer or individual we pledge to contribute to the work of a local food bank		OCC Locality Hub support to community food larders.  Could again be an OX Place volunteering Opp in the future.		OCC Locality Hub continuing support to community food larders-linked to providing community spaces for local food banks.  ODS: have an annual collection to support food banks and supported Oxford Mutual Aid with E van used for food deliveries.	
37. As an employer we pledge to introduce an employee volunteering policy		OCC: An options paper is being drafted.  OX Place would adopt as part of OCC HR practice.		OCC: In place.  ODS: volunteer bank - 200 shared hours to volunteer locally.	
38. As an organisation we pledge to offer the use of equipment or premises to local community groups		OCC: Opportunities being explored currently		OCC: Examples of providing the use of premises for community food larders and equipment include the hire of electric van for food deliveries etc.	
<b>Provide fair wages - Ensuring employees have a fair and decent wage</b>					
39. As an employer we pledge to pay the Oxford Living Wage		OCC: We are a Real Living Wage employer, accredited by the Real Living Wage Foundation and run our own Oxford Living Wage accredited scheme. Note: this does not cover currently apprenticeships		OCC: We continue to be a Real Living Wage employer, accredited by the Real Living Wage Foundation and run our own Oxford Living Wage accredited scheme. Note: this does not cover currently apprenticeships	

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**To:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 03 September 2024  
**Report of:** Executive Director (Communities and People)  
**Title of Report:** Annual Safeguarding Report 2023-24

Summary and recommendations	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present the Annual Safeguarding Report 2023-24
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Lubna Arshad, Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Thriving Communities
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Council Strategy 2024-28
<b>Recommendation(s): That the Committee resolves to:</b>	
1. <b>Note and comment on</b> the report and agree any recommendations.	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Oxford City Council Safeguarding Annual Report 2023-24

## Introduction and background

1. The Safeguarding Annual Report 2023-24 is included at **Appendix 1**. The report details the roles and responsibilities of the Council in working with partners across Oxfordshire to safeguard children and adults with care and support needs.
2. The Council's responsibilities are governed by Oxfordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, which are the collective response to the statutory requirements placed upon the county by the Care Act 2014, the Children's Act 2004, other acts of parliament and statutory guidance.
3. The report includes examples of where the Council meets its responsibilities in the services it provides, in recognition of the important role that the Council plays in safeguarding tenants, young people, and the citizens of Oxford.

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**Background Papers:** None

# Oxford City Council

## Safeguarding Annual Report 2023-24



**DRAFT – to be finalised following Scrutiny Committee**

“We are pleased to present to you Oxford City Council’s Safeguarding Annual Report for the year 2023.

The report details the roles and responsibilities the Council has in working with partners across Oxfordshire to safeguard children and adults with care and support needs. These responsibilities are governed by Oxfordshire’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, our collective response to the statutory requirements placed upon us by the Care Act 2014, the Children’s Act 2004, other acts of parliament and statutory guidance.

The report includes examples of where the Council meets these responsibilities in the services we provide, as we recognise the important role the Council plays in safeguarding our tenants, young people, and the citizens of Oxford.

We commend this comprehensive overview of our activities, initiatives, and safeguarding responses during 2023-24.

Signature

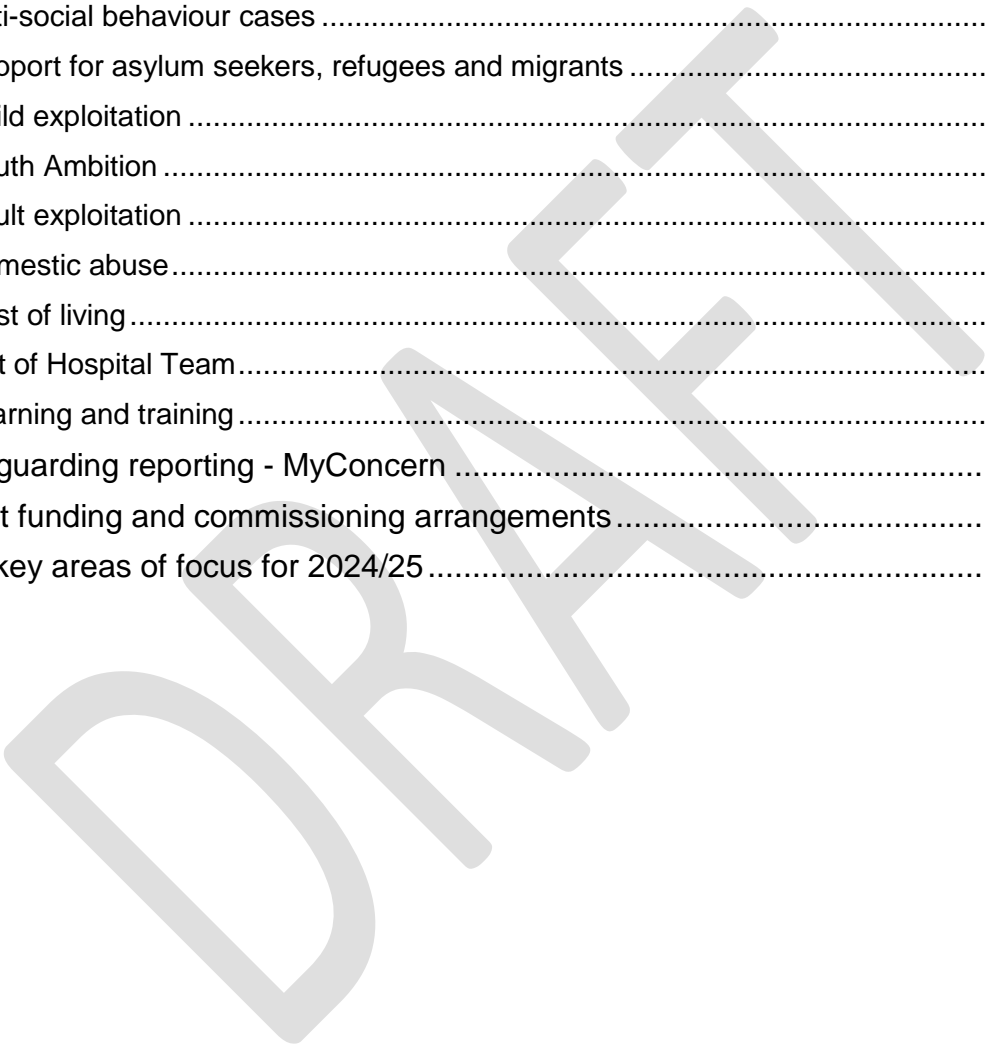
Signature

Peter Matthew  
Executive Director for Communities and People

Cllr Lubna Arshad  
Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford

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## The Council's safeguarding responsibilities

1. Oxford City Council has a legal duty to ensure children and adults with care and support needs are safeguarded when using the Council's facilities, services, and activities. The Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014 require us to:
  - promote the welfare and development needs of children and adults with care and support needs
  - 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.
  - provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities or resources which will reduce the needs for care and support of adults, in turn preventing the requirement for a statutory safeguarding referral.
2. The Council's Safeguarding Policy, available on our website, sets out how the Council fulfils these obligations and supports staff, Members, and volunteers in all aspects of safeguarding. The policy is reviewed annually, the latest review being May 2024.
3. In support of our policy, we have staff Safeguarding Procedures that set out how staff and contractors should respond to safeguarding incidents. These procedures are reviewed alongside our Safeguarding Policy. The Safeguarding allegations against staff policy was also reviewed and updated in early 2024.
4. An internal safeguarding audit was undertaken in December 2023 which sought to confirm:
  - Policies and procedures are accessible, understood and adhered to
  - Safeguarding training is up to date
  - Monitoring of recorded concerns in relation to teams' cases
  - Safeguarding supervision is undertaken
  - Pastoral support is available
  - Safeguarding response to individual casesFindings from the audit have been shared with managers of the teams audited. Actions identified in the audit are included in the annual Safeguarding Action Plan.
5. Within the Council, Executive Director for Communities and People is the accountable officer for safeguarding, with the Community Safety Service Manager responsible for embedding these safeguarding duties within Oxford City Council. This role is known as a Designated Safeguarding Lead of which there are three in the Council.
6. Council staff are supported in their safeguarding duties through mandatory training, line management support, a Safeguarding Champions network, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and the Safeguarding Coordinator.
7. The Safeguarding Champions are volunteers from across the organisation who help to identify training needs in their service areas, review trends in safeguarding reports, and support the implementation of new safeguarding activities.

8. The Council records all safeguarding concerns on a central database. These reports are reviewed within 24 hours to ensure the appropriate actions have been taken. Reports are published in Safeguarding newsletters and in our Corporate Dashboard to identify and respond to safeguarding themes and trends.

## **Oxfordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)**

9. Since the introduction of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Oxfordshire County Council, the Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board and Thames Valley Police have had statutory responsibility for 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. Responsible for the development, delivery and quality monitoring of safeguarding service provision in Oxfordshire are two Boards and their working groups: the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB).
11. Oxford City Council are represented on both Boards and OSCB's Child Exploitation Sub-group. Cherwell District Council represent the district and city Councils on all other working sub-groups.
12. Details of the Boards' work can be found on the websites below:
  - <https://www.oscb.org.uk/>
  - <https://www.osab.co.uk/>

## **Oxford City Council safeguarding activities in 2023/2024**

### **Safeguarding Audit 2023**

13. Section 11, Children Act 2004 requires Oxford City Council to complete an annual self-assessment of its safeguarding activities. This has been developed into a joint self-assessment audit between the OSCB and OSAB.
14. In 2023, the Council was required to evidence its Standards in the following areas:
  - Leadership, Strategy and Working Together
  - Commissioning Arrangements
  - People's Experiences of Safeguarding
15. To inform the self-assessment Oxford City Council staff complete an annual safeguarding questionnaire. In October 2023, 384 responses were completed.
16. The evidence for each Standard was 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

17. Oxford City Council were rated Green against all Standards, and this was upheld at a Peer Review event in February 2024.
18. The review recognised Oxford City Council's high levels of staff engagement.

### **Homeless Prevention Team**

19. Tenancy Sustainment Officers and Homeless Prevention Officers work directly with vulnerable families to maintain their tenancies and work closely with families by supporting them at multi-agency meetings as well as attendance at case conferences.
20. The Homeless Prevention Team manage homeless prevention duty cases which provides a legal offer of support to help the tenant or family avoid eviction, where a tenant or family is at risk of eviction and a warrant is to be authorised.
21. Tenants at Risk, a multiagency meeting for adults, successfully prevents homelessness of children and adults. Additionally, the Council are members of the Housing Safeguarding Network where safeguarding concerns are discussed.
22. Tenancy Sustainment Officers and Homeless Prevention officers arrange and attend multi-agency Tenants At Risk (single persons), FAROH (Families at Risk of Homelessness) and MARAC meetings for families. Agencies include Social Care, AMHT, the Police, Elmore, Connections, and advice centres.

### **Single Homeless and Rough Sleeping Team**

23. OxSPOT, St Mungo's outreach team is commissioned to assesses people experiencing homelessness and help them access accommodation and support to prevent them from returning to the streets.
24. Homeless Oxfordshire has 56 beds at O'Hanlon House and there are 22 beds at Matilda House, run by A2Dominion and was opened in September 2019.
25. As people progress towards independent living, they move into supported accommodation, usually provided in shared housing around the city. The Council fund accommodation provided by A2Dominion, Connection Support, Homeless Oxfordshire, Aspire and Response Housing.
26. The Council also fund day services for people experiencing homelessness, provided by The Gatehouse and The Porch Day Centre. These services are available to all and include hot food, showers, laundry and activities to support people into work and training. We also fund Aspire Oxford to provide employment and training opportunities for homeless and vulnerably housed people.

### **Adult homeless support in adverse weather**

27. During winter extra emergency beds are provided every night the Met Office forecasts freezing overnight temperatures. From 1 January until the end of March, a group of Oxford churches also offers beds for verified rough sleepers in the Oxford Winter Night Shelter.
28. This winter saw the successful countywide approach to Severe Weather Emergency Protocol that provided emergency accommodation to rough sleepers on 24 nights where the temperature was forecast to be below freezing.
29. During the long hot spells of summer 2024, the Council coordinated activities to ensure people who were rough sleeping were protected from extreme heat.

## **Anti-social behaviour cases**

30. The Council's Community Response Team and Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team work with Thames Valley police, mental health teams, social services and other partners to prevent and respond to anti-social behaviour, often involving safeguarding concerns.
31. Cases include noise nuisance, cuckooing, substance misuse and hoarding which, upon identification, is referred to the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. All staff dealing with ASB are trained in all relevant legislation including equality, diversity, mental health including capacity, and safeguarding.
32. Prior to formal enforcement action, the case officer will ensure all reasonable steps have been taken to identify any vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs, and that all appropriate supportive actions have been considered.
33. During an investigation, an officer may come across a person whose welfare may raise concerns. Whether or not the subject has a direct connection to the case under investigation, it remains the duty of officers to ensure that these concerns are properly logged on the Council's safeguarding reporting system and passed to social services through the Council's safeguarding procedures.

## **Support for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants**

34. 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.
35. Oxford City Council supported increasing access to interpreting services to ensure that residents from all nationalities can access appropriate services safely and the Council have a designated contract to offer translation services where required. The Council has now commenced its third phase of resettlement, the first family arrived in April 2024.
36. The Council has been given approval to apply for City of Sanctuary accreditation as an "Authority of Sanctuary". This project has now commenced and will be seeking lived experience and collaboration with stakeholders and partners to inform and deliver the associated action plan and to achieve accreditation. The project will focus on the whole Council, creating a more welcoming environment for all in the community and will also look to work with its partners as to how the city can become more accessible.

## **Child exploitation**

37. The Community Safety Service Manager attends the OSCB Child Exploitation Subgroup that leads on policy development in Oxfordshire. The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team Officers attend the police Tactical Tasking and Coordination Group (TTCG) meetings that identifies and support young people at risk, and coordinates activities to tackle their exploiters.
38. Sexual Violence and Exploitation Network meetings were relaunched in early 2024, which the Safeguarding Coordinator attends on behalf of Oxford City Council.



39. The Council is a Responsible Authority for the Oxford Community Safety Partnership, chairs and facilitates partnership meetings and coordinates plans to address the community safety priorities in the city. The current priorities include violence against women and girls, serious and organised crime, anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related violence and modern slavery. All priorities have an important safeguarding element running through them, with Council and partner staff trained, planning for, and responding to child safeguarding issues.
40. Toolkits provided by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board are used by colleagues, specifically the Strengths and Needs tool by Homeless Prevention officers to ensure Early Help support is offered at the right time.

## **Youth Ambition**

41. The City Council's Youth Ambition Team provide engagement and diversion activities for young people in the city. The team work with local Youth Partnerships and communities to deliver a range of activities for young people aged 12 – 17.
42. Youth Ambition ensure staff have a range of skills and knowledge to support young people with care and support needs. Current staff roles include:
  - Education, Employment and Training Youth Worker
  - Mental Health Youth Worker
  - Female Participation Lead Youth Worker
  - Mentoring Youth Worker

## **Adult exploitation**

43. Oxford City Council's Anti-Slavery Coordinator developed new Oxfordshire Adult Exploitation Guidance and Pathways for partners across Oxfordshire. Since the launch of this new pathway, there has been a significant increase in adult exploitation alerts 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.
44. In 2023, Oxford City Council continued its work with partners, including Thames Valley Police, University of Oxford and Brookes University on the Violence Against Women and Girls: Safe Journey, Safe Destination project. The project increased safety in the night-time economy and complemented the police's Project Vigilant and NightSafe policing operation.
45. The project continued to support the Oxford City Angels who help vulnerable people during the evening period, expanded the network of Safe Places as respite locations for people in need and continued taxi marshals in Park End Street.

## **Domestic abuse**

46. Oxford City Council's ASBIT Manager and domestic abuse lead works on the development and delivery of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy, the Safe Accommodation Strategy, and the DRIVE Perpetrator programme which provides interventions for high risk/high harm perpetrators of domestic abuse.

47. Domestic Homicide Reviews are a responsibility of the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership, with the Council leading on the commissioning of the reviews. There was one review in 2023.
48. The Council continued its work on achieving the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation. A group of Domestic Abuse (DA) Champions has been identified with all champions attending or enrolled on accredited DA Champions training, accessing a learning channel which provides up-to-date resources, and created an ethos of mutual support and advice.
49. The Council has developed and delivered bespoke DA training. This included DA Awareness, and Lunch-and-Learn sessions for all staff, and training for managers to support clients and staff who are DA victims or survivors. 85 staff members including managers, attended these courses in 2023.
50. Internal policies and procedures continue to undergo review to ensure all are in line with DAHA recommendations. Attendance at internal steering groups including Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, has ensured heightened awareness of Domestic Abuse.
51. Multiple forums are utilised, including building robust partnerships with colleagues in our district councils, specialist DA services, sharing information and best practice. Communications have been released via the internal intranet to raise awareness and air podcasts.

## **Cost of living**

52. Through the dissemination by Localities of the Household Support Fund to tackle the cost-of-living crisis, the Council has provided a variety of support to vulnerable people across the City. Financial support has been provided to the city's advice centres to enable them to work with residents in financial crisis.
53. The food network which distributes food to the city food banks and larders has also been supported by the Council. Supermarket vouchers are provided by front line staff to residents who may be most in need to support them with food and fuel costs.
54. Locality Managers provide financial support to groups and organisations who work with vulnerable residents, including Asylum Welcome to support Asylum Seekers with white goods and food whilst they await their Universal Credit Claims, Support to Youth Organisations for non HAF funded young people supporting families who are in need but not in receipt of benefits and cooking classes for migrant families.
55. The Council's Energy Advice team provide free advice on energy costs to Council tenants and Oxford City Council's Home Improvement Agency helps with home adaptations, repairs, and falls prevention for older, disabled, and vulnerable people so they can live safely in their own home.
56. The Oxford City Council website provides extensive advice and links to agencies and charities who can support customers with the cost-of-living crisis.

## **Out of Hospital Team**

57. In February 2023, the Council employed a Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM) Coordinator, in line with the national approach to multiple disadvantaged vulnerable adults. The MEAM Coordinator works with a cohort of 12 of the City's most vulnerable people, identified through the Countywide MEAM steering group.

58. Positive results have been shared via a report to the Homelessness Directors Group. Safeguarding leads and Homelessness Mortality Review colleagues are briefed on the MEAM outcomes and work in partnership with the coordinator.

## **Learning and training**

59. Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Coordinator volunteers as an OSCB trainer and attends the Learning, Development and Training OSCB subgroup.
60. In 2023, 28 internal safeguarding briefings were delivered to 425 Oxford City Council staff. Two safeguarding briefings were delivered to Councillors in May and July, attended by 15 Councillors.
61. The safeguarding awareness briefing training evaluation form is completed by participants, in line with the Safeguarding Boards' evaluation process. Any Strongly Disagree or Disagree responses are followed up by the Safeguarding Coordinator to ensure officers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
62. Feedback is used to inform future safeguarding training and scenario discussions. Where appropriate, comments are responded to by the Safeguarding Coordinator.
63. 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.
64. Five rapid reviews were returned to the CSPR subgroup in 2023. 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.
65. Homeless Mortality Review scoping requests are responded to by the Rough Sleeping and Single Homeless Manager. The Domestic Abuse Lead leads on Domestic Homicide Reviews for the Council.
66. The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures were reviewed and updated in May 2024, with updates shared widely via various communications. The Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff Policy was reviewed and updated in early 2024.
67. Newsletters have been released quarterly throughout the year to all staff.

## **Safeguarding reporting - MyConcern**

68. In 2023-24, 276 safeguarding reports were recorded on MyConcern. The Council's Business Improvement Service which includes the Council's Contact Centre, raised the most concerns followed by Housing Services and the Community Safety Service. The most frequently reported concerns were:
  - Child Safeguarding
  - Self-Neglect
  - Suicidal threat
  - Mental Ill Health
  - Domestic Abuse
69. Team-specific training was delivered in response to these trends. In addition, one officer has volunteered as a safeguarding trainer within the last year, bringing the

number of trainers to three. Trainers meet quarterly to review and update the training package in line with local and national updates and evaluation forms.

70. Upon recording a new MyConcern, colleagues are signposted to pastoral care via the Employee Assistance Programme and team of Mental Health First Aiders.

## Grant funding and commissioning arrangements

71. Following scrutiny recommendations for the 2023 Safeguarding report, the Grant Fund application was updated to include two questions in relation to organisations' safeguarding arrangements.
72. Organisations who did not meet the additional safeguarding requirements were contacted by the Safeguarding Coordinator for support and advice.
73. In response to the additional safeguarding requirements in the grant application, organisations have created or updated safeguarding policies, arranged safeguarding training and have a better awareness and understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.
74. Oxford City Council's response to section three of the safeguarding self-assessment lays out our commissioning arrangements. The self-assessment is a background paper to this report.

## The key areas of focus for 2024/25

75. Operational areas of focus for 2024-2025 are:
  - Increase referral recording rate using MyConcern in order to monitor internal referrals in addition to external referrals, and referral outcomes.
  - Increase uptake of pastoral support for staff.
  - Identify appropriate training for individual teams and promote uptake.
  - Scope the Safeguarding Audit 2024.
76. A safeguarding referral audit commenced in April 2024, as requested by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board's Performance, Information and Quality Assurance subgroup and will be presented alongside district colleagues' audits later in the year.

### Background Papers:

1. [Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Policy 2023-2026](#) (reviewed May 2024)
2. [Safeguarding Self-assessment 2023](#)