

Agenda

Cabinet

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Wednesday 9 July 2025**

Time: **6.00 pm**

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

For further information please contact:

Dr Brenda McCollum, Committee and Member Services Officer,
Committee Services Officer

📞 01865 252784

✉ DemocraticServices@oxford.gov.uk

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

- may submit a question about any item for decision at the meeting in accordance with the [Cabinet's rules](#)
- may record all or part of the meeting in accordance with the Council's [protocol](#)

Details of how City Councillors and members of the public may engage with this meeting are set out later in the agenda. Information about recording is set out later in the agenda and on the [website](#)

Please contact the Committee Services Officer to submit a question; to discuss recording the meeting; or with any other queries.

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mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk.*

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

Cabinet Membership

Councillors: Membership 10: Quorum 3: No substitutes are permitted.

Leader/ Chair

Cabinet Members

Councillor Susan Brown	Leader, Partnership Working
Councillor Ed Turner	Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management
Councillor Lubna Arshad	Cabinet Member for a Safer Oxford
Councillor Nigel Chapman	Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Cabinet Member for Planning and Culturey
Councillor Chewe Munkonge	Cabinet Member for a Healthy, Fairer Oxford and Small Business Champion
Councillor Anna Railton	Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford
Councillor Linda Smith	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

Apologies received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting.

Decisions come into effect after the latest of the expiry of the post-meeting councillor call in period; reconsideration of a called-in decision; or Council's agreement of recommendations.

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

Agenda

Items to be considered at this meeting in open session (part 1) and in confidential session (part 2).

Future items to be discussed by the Cabinet can be found on the Forward Plan which is available on the Council's [website](#)

	Pages
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Declarations of Interest	
3 Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public	
4 Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda	
5 Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues	
6 Items raised by Cabinet Members	
7 Scrutiny Reports	
The Scrutiny Committee will meet on 1 July 2025 to consider the following items. Report and recommendations arising from the meeting will be published as a late supplement.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users• Tourism (Scrutiny-commissioned)• Citizen Experienced Strategy• National Homelessness Property Fund 1• Annual Review of the Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28	
8 Appointment to Outside Bodies 2025-26	13 - 34
The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) submits a report to request that Cabinet agree appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2025/2026 Council Year.	

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	<p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve appointments to charities, trusts, community associations and other organisations as set out in Appendices 1A – 1D; and note the appointments to partnerships as detailed in Appendix 1E; 2. Note the guidance for appointees in Appendix 2; and 3. Delegate authority to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and where appropriate with other group leaders, to make any changes to appointments to Outside Bodies as required during the Council year 2025/2026. 	
9	<p>Community Rents Policy</p> <p>The Director of Property and Assets submits a report to seek Cabinet approval to agree the Community Lettings Policy.</p> <p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <p>Approve the Community Lettings Policy in Appendix 1</p>	35 - 58
10	<p>Citizen Experience Strategy Refresh</p> <p>The Director of Communities and Citizens' Services submits a report to Cabinet to review the Citizen Experience Strategy 2025-27 and seek approval on the updated action plan.</p> <p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <p>Approve the Citizen Experience Strategy for 2025-27 and the accompanying Action Plan.</p>	59 - 104
11	<p>Annual Review of the Housing, Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28</p> <p>The Director of Housing submits a report to Cabinet to provide an update on the progress made in Year 2 of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 and to seek approval for the implementation of the Year 3 action plan.</p>	105 - 206

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Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Note** the progress made in Year 2 to implement the Housing, Homelessness, and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan and the emerging risks and challenges for delivery over next year and beyond;
2. **Approve** the adoption of the new Strategy Action Plan for Year 3 (25-26); and
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to update the Action Plan when required.

12 Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users

207 -
238

The ASBIT Manager and Domestic Abuse Lead submits a report to Cabinet to seek approval for the Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the Domestic Abuse Policy for Service users (Appendix 1)
2. **Delegate** authority to the Domestic Abuse Lead, to make minor changes in the future to reflect any relevant changes in legislation, guidance or practice.

13 National Homelessness Property Fund One

239 -
250

The Director of Housing submits a report to seek a decision on the future of the Council's investment in NHPF1.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the principle of Oxford City Council moving its current £10m investment in National Homelessness Property Fund One, into a new “evergreen” property fund, in order to preserve nomination rights to 69 homes in Oxfordshire alleviating homelessness.
2. **Delegate** to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Deputy Leader (statutory) for Finance and Asset Management, the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)

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and Group Finance Director (S151) the authority to enter in to such agreements as necessary to make the reinvestment in to the new “evergreen” property fund subject to reassurance from the fund that all or majority of the homes owned in Oxfordshire are retained through the reinvestment and satisfactory approval of the terms of the investment agreement.

14 Making Oxford a Truly Walkable City

251 -
260

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability submits a report to Cabinet to respond to Council motion of 25 November 2024, which requested (subject to a Cabinet decision) a plan for making Oxford a truly walkable city.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Note** the Council motion of 25 November 2024 and note those elements which do not rely on additional resources beyond those in the Council’s budget which are currently being implemented.
2. **Not to support** the production of a new plan for walking or a walking map for Oxford as these are County Council responsibilities and would duplicate what is currently available through online and retail outlets.

15 Post Print Contract Re-Tender

261 -
296

The Director of Communities and Citizen Services submits a report to Cabinet to request the commencement of procurement of a contract for postage and printing of council correspondence, and to delegate approval to award the contract to Deputy Chief Executive, Citizen & City Services.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Give project approval** for the procurement of a hybrid print and post contract for a term of four years to replace the existing contract, which expires on 31st October 2025; and
2. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive of City and Citizen Services to take any decisions and actions required to award a contract for the supply of a hybrid print and post solution for the Council.

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16 Direct Award for Apprenticeship Training

297 -
334

The Organisational Development Manager submits a report to Cabinet seeking approval to award a contract without competition for apprenticeship training to the current training provider, Multiverse Group Ltd.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the award of a contract without a competitive procurement process for training in AI, Data and Business Transformation to Multiverse Group Ltd with an approximate value of £600k for cohort 2 (2025/2026/2027). This is a Cabinet and key decision due to the aggregated value of income to Multiverse, following previous appointment of them by the Council for apprenticeship training, being more than £750K (across years 2025/2026/2027). The current spend is approximately £495K (2024/2025)
2. **Delegate** to the Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizen's Services authority to award further contracts if required, in accordance with Councils procurement processes.

17 Minutes

335 -
346

Recommendation: That Cabinet resolves to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on **18 June 2025** as a true and accurate record.

18 Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

13 August 2025

17 September 2025

22 October 2025

All meetings start at 6.00 pm.

Decisions come into effect after the latest of the expiry of the post-meeting councillor call in period; reconsideration of a called-in decision; or Council's agreement of recommendations.

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Matters Exempt from Publication

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

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

Part Two – matters exempt from publication

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Information for those attending

Recording and reporting on meetings held in public

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

The Council asks those recording the meeting:

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

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

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

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

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

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

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

Declaring an interest

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

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

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

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.

How Oxford City Councillors and members of the public can engage at Cabinet

Addresses and questions by members of the public (15 minutes in total)

Members of the public can submit questions in writing about any item for decision at the meeting. Questions, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am two working days before the meeting (eg for a Tuesday meeting, the deadline would be 9.30am on the Friday before). Questions can be submitted either by letter or by email (to cabinet@oxford.gov.uk).

Answers to the questions will be provided in writing at the meeting; supplementary questions will not be allowed. If it is not possible to provide an answer at the meeting it will be included in the minutes that are published on the Council's website within 2 working days of the meeting.

The Chair has discretion in exceptional circumstances to agree that a submitted question or related statement (dealing with matters that appear on the agenda) can be asked verbally at the meeting. In these cases, the question and/or address is limited to 3 minutes, and will be answered verbally by the Chair or another Cabinet member or an officer of the Council. The text of any proposed address must be submitted within the same timescale as questions.

For this agenda item the Chair's decision is final.

Councillors speaking at meetings

Oxford City councillors may, when the chair agrees, address the Cabinet on an item for decision on the agenda (other than on the minutes). The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one working day before the meeting, stating the relevant agenda items. An address may last for no more than three minutes. If an address is made, the Cabinet member who has political responsibility for the item for decision may respond or the Cabinet will have regard to the points raised in reaching its decision.

Councillors speaking on Neighbourhood issues (10 minutes in total)

Any City Councillor can raise local issues on behalf of communities directly with the Cabinet. The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one working day before the meeting, giving outline details of the issue. Priority will be given to those members who have not already addressed the Cabinet within the year and in the order received. Issues can only be raised once unless otherwise agreed by the Cabinet. The Cabinet's responsibility will be to hear the issue and respond at the meeting, if possible, or arrange a written response within 10 working days.

Items raised by Cabinet members

Such items must be submitted within the same timescale as questions and will be for discussion only and not for a Cabinet decision. Any item which requires a decision of the Cabinet will be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

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To: Cabinet

Date: 9 July 2025

Report of: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)

Title of Report: Appointments to Outside Bodies 2025/2026

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To agree appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2025/2026 Council Year
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader, and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working and Inclusive Economic Growth
Corporate Priority:	Support Thriving Communities.
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2025-2029.

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:	
1.	Approve appointments to charities, trusts, community associations and other organisations as set out in Appendices 1A – 1D; and note the appointments to partnerships as detailed in Appendix 1E;
2.	Note the guidance for appointees in Appendix 2; and
3.	Delegate authority to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and where appropriate with other group leaders, to make any changes to appointments to Outside Bodies as required during the Council year 2025/2026.

Information Exempt From Publication	
N/A	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1A	Community Associations 2025	No
Appendix 1B	Other Organisations 2025	No

Appendix 1C	Trusts 2025	No
Appendix 1D	Charities 2025	No
Appendix 1E	Strategic Partnership 2025	No
Appendix 2	Guidance for Members (Updated 2025)	No

Introduction and background

1. The Council currently has representatives on a total of 51 outside bodies (15 community associations, 17 other organisations, 8 trusts and 11 charities). These are detailed in Appendices 1A – 1D. Many Council representatives sit on the committee of the organisation to which they have been appointed, with many acting in a non-voting advisory role or simply being invited to attend meetings as an observer. Councillors who have been appointed to charities and trusts generally serve as Trustees on those bodies.
2. The Council also has representatives on 15 strategic partnerships (see Appendix 1E). These appointments are either made by the individual partnership or determined by virtue of a councillor's position as a portfolio holder on the Council's Cabinet.
3. Guidance for Council representatives on these organisations is provided upon appointment, to ensure that all appointees understand their role and responsibilities in representing the Council on the organisation. A copy of the guidance is attached at Appendix 2.
4. The list of outside bodies and the appointment of representatives to those organisations is determined by the Leader of the Council, who seeks Cabinet agreement on the nominations. This is reviewed annually in July.
5. Proposed changes to individual nominations or to the list of outside bodies will be reported to the Cabinet as required during the year. Since 2017, the authority to approve any in year change to the representation on an individual organisation has been delegated to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and where appropriate with other group leaders. This delegation is restated annually to ensure good governance and clear decision making.
6. In 2019, the Cabinet endorsed the Leader's preferred approach, based on custom and practice, that nominations for Council representatives to outside bodies should be drawn from the cohort of serving councillors; and that existing representatives who were no longer serving councillors should be permitted to serve out their terms of office should they wish to do so.

Categories for Appointments to Outside Bodies

7. The list of organisations to which the Council makes appointments has evolved over time. The justification for the inclusion of many of the organisations on the list is self-evident, but in some cases the reasons for the Council to continue to appoint to an organisation is less obvious.
8. To address this, the following categories are used to provide some rigour to the decision-making underpinning the Council appointments to outside bodies:

A.	Appointments to organisations that have a significant impact on the achievement of the Council's corporate policy objectives and service priorities and/or organisations which receive funding from the Council
B.	Appointments to organisations with established historical links to the local community, the city of Oxford or the City Council on which representation is desirable and should be maintained as a matter of local goodwill and for as long as nominations are forthcoming from members
C.	Appointments which will allow the Council to influence policy at a national or regional level
D.	Appointments which are a statutory requirement and/or to a partnership

Proposed Appointments and Changes to Representation in 2025/2026

9. Appendices 1A – 1D set out the proposed nominations to charities, trusts, community associations and other organisations for 2025/2026.
10. The Leader of the Council has proposed the following specific changes to the list of organisations for 2025/2026:

Outside Body	Decision
Appendix 1B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen Advice Bureau 	Removed – now trading under Citizens Advice Oxfordshire covering all of Oxfordshire, no requirement for appointments to their Board
Appendix 1E <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Meeting Infrastructure Advisory Sub-Group Planning Advisory Sub-Group Housing Advisory Sub-Group Environment Advisory Sub-Group 	Removed – future meetings have been cancelled following the update to the Oxfordshire Joint Leaders Committee Terms of Reference (formally Future Oxfordshire Partnership)
Appendix 1E <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) 	Removed – Now trading as Enterprise Oxfordshire from April 2025
Appendix 1E <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ox-Cam Pan Regional Partnership 	Removed – organisation closed in May 2025

Financial Implications

11. The appointments proposed in this report have no direct financial implications for the Council.

Legal Issues

12. Representation on outside organisations presents legal implications for the Council if the roles and responsibilities of those involved are not clearly defined. Council representatives are provided with detailed written guidance on their roles and responsibilities (Appendix 2).

Level of Risk

13. Representation on outside organisations should benefit both the Council and the organisation concerned. There is a risk that such benefit may be lost to either or both parties if representation is withdrawn or inadequately resourced or briefed.

Equalities Impact

14. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. The Council seeks to appoint nominees that represent as far as possible the diverse nature of the outside bodies and the communities that they serve.

Report author	Jonathan Malton
Job title	Committee and Member Services Manager
Service area or department	Law, Governance and Strategy
Telephone	01865 602767
e-mail	jmalton@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:	
1	Companies House - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
2	Being a company director - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
3	Directors' duties and responsibilities Factsheets IoD
4	7 duties of a company director – Companies House (blog.gov.uk)
5	The Charity Commission - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
6	The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
7	Charity trustee: what's involved (CC3a) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
8	Charity types: how to choose a structure (CC22a) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
9	Unincorporated associations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Appendix 1A: Community Association Nominations 2025-2026

These appointments are annual. The local ward councillors are usually appointed to Community Associations.

Names struck through are no longer councillors.

		2024-2025 Appointment(s)	2025-2026 Ward Councillor Nomination(s)
1.	Barton Community Association	Cllr Asima Qayyum	Cllr Asima Qayyum
2.	Bullington Community Association	Cllr Mark Lygo Cllr Ajaz Rehman	Cllr Mark Lygo Cllr Judith Harley
3.	Cuttleslowe Community Association	Cllr Laurence Fouweather Cllr Jo Sandelson	Cllr Laurence Fouweather Cllr Jo Sandelson
4.	Donnington Community Association	Cllr Rosie Rawle Cllr Max Morris	Cllr Rosie Rawle Cllr Max Morris
5.	Donnington Doorstep Family Centre	Cllr Rosie Rawle Cllr Max Morris	Cllr Rosie Rawle Cllr Max Morris
6.	East Oxford Community Association	Cllr Jemima Hunt Cllr Alex Powell	Cllr Jemima Hunt Cllr Alex Powell
7.	Florence Park Community Association	Cllr Ian Yeatman Cllr Amar Latif	Cllr Ian Yeatman Cllr Amar Latif
8.	Headington Community Association	Cllr Chewe Munkonge Cllr Chris Smowton	Cllr Chewe Munkonge Cllr Chris Smowton
9.	Jericho St Barnabas Community Association	Cllr Lizzy Diggins Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	Cllr Lizzy Diggins Cllr Alex Hollingsworth
10.	Littlemore Community Association	Cllr Tiago Corais	Cllr Tiago Corais
11.	North Oxford Association	Cllr James Fry Cllr Katherine Miles	Cllr James Fry Cllr Katherine Miles
12.	Northway Community Association	Cllr Nigel Chapman Cllr Barbara Coyne	Cllr Nigel Chapman Cllr James Taylor
13.	Risinghurst Community Centre	Cllr Chewe Munkonge Cllr Chris Smowton	Cllr Chewe Munkonge Cllr Chris Smowton
14.	South Oxford Community Association	Cllr Anna Railton Cllr Naomi Waite	Cllr Anna Railton Cllr Naomi Waite
15.	West Oxford Community Association	Cllr Lois Muddiman Cllr Susanna Pressel	Cllr Lois Muddiman Cllr Susanna Pressel

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Appendix 1B: Nominations to Other Organisations 2025-2026

Names struck through are no longer councillors.

		2024-2025 Appointments	2025-2026 Nominations
1.	Fusion – Oxford’s Community Arts Agency	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	Cllr Mark Lygo
2.	Historic England South East - Heritage Champion	Cllr Mary Clarkson	Cllr Mary Clarkson
3.	Homeless Oxfordshire	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth Cllr Linda Smith	Cllr James Taylor Cllr Linda Smith
4.	Modern Art Oxford	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth Cllr Jemima Hunt	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth Cllr Jemima Hunt
5.	Mortimer Hall Management Committee	Vacancy	Cllr Louise Upton
6.	Oxford and District Sports and Recreation Association for the Disabled (OXSRAD)	Cllr Barbara Coyne	Cllr Louise Upton
7.	Oxford Asian Cultural Association	Cllr Asima Qayyum Cllr Roz Smith	Cllr Asima Qayyum Cllr Roz Smith
8.	Oxford Sports Council	Cllr Chewe Munkonge Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	Cllr Chewe Munkonge Cllr Alex Hollingsworth
9.	Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action	Cllr Mark Lygo	Cllr Mark Lygo
10.	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	Cllr Chris Smowton	Cllr Susan Brown
11.	Oxfordshire Museums Council	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth
12.	Oxfordshire County Council School Organisation Stakeholder Group	Cllr Chewe Munkonge	Cllr Chewe Munkonge
13.	South East England Councils	Cllr Anna Railton	Cllr Anna Railton
14.	South Oxford Adventure Playground Executive Committee	Cllr Naomi Waite	Cllr Naomi Waite
15.	The Porch	Cllr Linda Smith	Cllr Linda Smith
16.	LGA General Assembly (appointment normally reserved for Leader of the Council)	Cllr Susan Brown	Cllr Susan Brown
17.	Local Government Information Unit	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth

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Appendix 1C – Nominations to Trusts 2025-2026

OCC preference is to appoint serving councillors to vacancies on Trusts

Names struck through are no longer councillors.

		Current Appointment	Expiry	Status and length of appointment	Nominations 2025-2026
1.	Katherine Rawson Trust	Cllr Laurence Fouweather	2028	Trustee x 3 (with voting rights) 4-year term	
		Cllr Jo Sandelson	2026		
		Cllr Steven Goddard	2026		
2.	Old Marston Charities Trust	Cllr Kate Robinson	2028	Trustee x 2 (no voting rights) 4-year term 2 meetings per year	
		Cllr Mary Clarkson	2028		
3.	Oxford Leon Trust	Cllr Mike Rowley	2026	Trustee x 2 4-year term	
		Cllr James Fry	2027		
4.	Oxford Playhouse Trust	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	2025	Observer Annual	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth
5.	Oxford Poverty Action Trust	Cllr Simon Ottino	2025	Trustee x 1	Cllr Simon Ottino
6.	Oxford Preservation Trust	Cllr Lizzy Diggins	2025	Trustee x 2 (with voting rights) 3-year term	Cllr Lizzy Diggins
		Cllr Louise Upton	2025		Cllr Louise Upton
7.	Oxfordshire Building Trust	Cllr Mary Clarkson	2025	Trustee x 1 3-year term	Cllr Mary Clarkson
8.	Pegasus Theatre Trust	Cllr Simon Ottino	2025	Non-voting observer Annual x 1	Cllr Simon Ottino

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Appendix 1D – Nominations to Charities 2025-2026

Names struck through are no longer councillors.

		2024-2025 Appointment	Expiry	Status and length of appointment	2025-2026 Nominations
1.	Agnes Smith Advice Centre	Cllr Lubna Arshad	2025	Attends Management Committee Annual x 1	Cllr Lubna Arshad
2.	Alice Smith Trust and Sarah Nowell Educational Organisation	Cllr Simon Ottino	2025	Trustee x 1 4-year term	Cllr Simon Ottino
3.	City of Oxford Charity	Cllr James Fry	2027	Trustee x 6 3 from 2026 4-year term	
		Cllr Susanna Pressel	2025		Cllr Susanna Pressel
		Cllr Edward Mundy	2026		
		Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	2026		
		Cllr Barbara Coyne	2027		
		Cllr Chris Snowton	2026		
4.	Elder Stubbs	Cllr Judith Harley	2028	Trustee x 3 4-year term	
		Cllr Ian Yeatman			
		Cllr Mohammed Azad			
5.	The Gatehouse	Cllr Simon Ottino	2025	Member of Management Committee Annual x 1	Cllr Simon Ottino
6.	Headington Parish Charity	Cllr Mary Clarkson	2027	Trustee x 2 4-year term	
		Cllr Chris Snowton	2025		Cllr Chris Snowton

7.	Non Ecclesiastical Charities of St Mary's Magdalen	Cllr Susan Brown	2025	Trustee x 1 4-year term	Cllr Susan Brown
8.	Parochial Charities of St Clement, Oxford	Cllr Jemima Hunt	2026	Trustee x 2 Cllr term of office	
		Cllr Chris Jarvis	2028	<i>(Should be councillors for St Clements or St Mary's wards)</i>	
9.	Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre	Cllr Tiago Corais	2025	Attend meetings of Board of Trustees	Cllr Tiago Corais
		Cllr Ed Turner	2025	Annual x 2	Cllr Ed Turner
10.	St Aldate's Parochial Charity	Cllr Naomi Waite	2025	Trustee x 1 4-year term	Cllr Naomi Waite
11.	Susan Kidd Charity	Cllr Louise Upton	2026	Trustee x 2 4-year term	
		Cllr James Fry			

Appendix 1E – Strategic Partnership Appointments 2025-2026

Partnership		Cabinet Member and Portfolio
1.	Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP)	Cllr Susan Brown
2.	Economic Growth Steering Group	Cllr Susan Brown
3.	Low Carbon Oxford	Cllr Anna Railton
4.	Oxford Safer Communities Partnership	Cllr Lubna Arshad
5.	Stronger Communities Steering Group	
6.	The Oxfordshire Joint Leaders Committee	Cllr Susan Brown
7.	Fast Growth Cities	Cllr Susan Brown
8.	Safer Oxfordshire Partnership	Cllr Lubna Arshad
9.	Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel	
10.	Health & Well Being Board	Cllr Chewe Munkonge
11.	Health Improvement Board	
12.	Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership	Cllr Nigel Chapman
13.	Youth Partnership Board	Cllr Chewe Munkonge
14.	Oxfordshire Sport Partnership	
15.	Oxford International Links Committee	Cllr Ed Turner

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Guidance for Members who are appointed by the Council to serve on Outside Bodies

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This guidance is intended to help councillors understand their duties when appointed to outside bodies, and how to handle the conflicts of interest that can arise. The guidance relates only to nominations or appointments made of councillors by the Council to outside bodies or by the outside bodies themselves.
- 1.2. If a councillor is appointed to an external body in any other capacity, (i.e., not as a councillor) they do not owe the council any duties in relation to the way that they carry on their membership of the outside body. However, the councillor will need to record their role in the members' register of interests. The guidance does not attempt to provide a comprehensive guide. If you have any further queries, you can obtain advice from the Monitoring Officer. Councillors may be appointed to a wide range of outside bodies. Most appointments are made by the Cabinet.
- 1.3. The roles of Councillors on outside bodies will depend upon the legal nature of that organisation and the capacity in which they are appointed to act. Councillors must:
 - act according to the framework set by the outside body
 - take an informed role in the management of the outside body's affairs
 - attend meetings on a regular basis
 - carrying out their duties to the best of their abilities.
- 1.4. The fundamental principles of this guidance are as follows:
 - Councillors will act according to the rules, constitutions and frameworks set by the relevant outside body and, where possible, with those of the Council
 - Councillors will make independent and personal judgements based on their responsibilities to the outside body
- 1.5. The guidance addresses three specific circumstances which arise from time to time and as a result of which potential conflict can arise. These are:
 - Where the Councillor is appointed Director of a Company
 - Where the Councillor is appointed as a Trustee
 - Where the Councillor is appointed to an Unincorporated Association
- 1.6. Councillors will report back on their involvement with the outside body – you will be asked to complete a feedback form each year about the organisation to which you are appointed for consideration by the Cabinet.

2. What might your appointment be?

2.1. If you are appointed by the Council to an Outside Body, this may be either:

- **as a member** e.g. of the management committee, board of directors, or committee of trustees of the outside body.

If you serve in a decision-making capacity or have a position of general control or management on the outside body, whether company, trust or other association, you owe duties and responsibilities to that body which are separate and distinct from your duties owed to the council. It will be important for you to be clear what those duties are by referring to the constitution or relevant governing documents.

On occasion, it is possible that duties owed to the outside body and to the council, will conflict e.g. if you are the treasurer of an outside body who has applied to the council for grant funding and the rest of this guidance gives more detail on this; or

- **as an ‘observer’**, or an ordinary member, or undertaking a monitoring role, or facilitating exchanges of views or information as an extension of your council duties but taking no part in the outside body’s management or governance, other than to attend and participate in meetings. Here, you will be mainly concerned with representing the council and will not have responsibilities for decision making or the governance of the body.

3. What sort of Roles does it apply to?

3.1. This guidance applies where you are a “member”, which could be:

- a director of a company in which the Council has an interest; a member of another public body;
- a trustee of a charity;
- or a person appointed to the management board of an unincorporated body.

3.2. Your responsibilities will depend on the type of body you are appointed to. The main types are as follows (see further guidance later in this document):

- Companies
- Unincorporated Associations:
- Charities:
- Other statutory bodies:

4. The application of the council's Code of Conduct

4.1. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Members’ Code of Conduct which has been adopted by Council. When Councillors are representing the Council on another body, they must follow the Code of Conduct unless it conflicts with a legal duty owed to the other body.

- 4.2. You should ensure that you enter any appointment to an Outside Body on to your Register of Interests (including those where you are appointed in a private capacity).
- 4.3. Where you are representing the Council on an Outside Body or where you are appointed to an outside body and a matter relating to that Outside Body is to be discussed at a meeting of the Council:
 - If you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in a matter to be considered at the meeting you must declare as such, and you must leave the room during any discussion of, or vote on, any matter in which you have a DPI.
 - if a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (ORI) you must disclose as such and you must leave the room during any discussion of, or vote on, any matter in which you have such an interest.

5. Bias and Predetermination

- 5.1. Even where your duties as a director, or trustee, or member of a management committee of an external body do not amount to a disclosable pecuniary interest, they may well be regarded, on an objective appraisal, as giving rise to a perception of bias, especially having regard to the desirability of maintaining public confidence.
- 5.2. Participation in the decision making at a Council meeting by a Councillor who is biased could potentially invalidate the decision of the Council where there is an issue of pre-determination and bias.
- 5.3. Examples may include where you have sat on an Outside Body and taken a decision to apply to the Council for funding. You should then not participate in the decision of the Council as to whether to award that funding or not.
- 5.4. Where the Council's wishes may conflict with the best interests of the outside body you must nevertheless, if taking decisions for that outside body, act in its best interests. If you consider that any such conflict prevents you from taking a decision for the outside body it is likely to be advisable not to participate in that decision.
- 5.5. Where membership of the outside body is on an advisory or consultative basis, bias will not be assumed from mere membership. However, once the outside body has a line which is being advocated by you, this could potentially be viewed as bias, and the Council's decision on the issue could be vulnerable to challenge if you participate in those circumstances. It will depend on the facts, and in such circumstances, advice should be sought from the monitoring officer

6. Insurance & Indemnities

- 6.1. Councillors who participate in external bodies may be indemnified in relation to liabilities they incur in that capacity, though this is subject to certain limitations.
- 6.2. Indemnity by the outside body:
 - a) Directors:

Directors cannot be indemnified by the company against liability for negligence, default, breach of duty and trust. Companies can however purchase insurance to protect directors against claims of negligence, default, breach of duty and trust. Those appointed as directors should ensure that appropriate insurance is in place. Companies can, if their Articles of Association allow, provide for directors to be indemnified for the costs of defending such a claim if they are granted relief by the court or acquitted.

b) Trustees:

Provided a charitable trustee act properly, and within his/her powers, indemnity can be given from the trust fund. Trustees can take out insurance to protect themselves from personal liabilities, but not for criminal acts such as fraud. If the premiums are to be paid out of the charitable funds, the consent of the Charity Commissioners will be needed.

c) Unincorporated Associations:

Members may be entitled to an indemnity if they act in accordance with the Constitution of the association and are not exceeding their powers. However, regard must be had to the terms of the constitution. The constitution will determine whether insurance can be paid for by the organisation.

d) Other statutory bodies:

Members may be entitled to an indemnity if they act in accordance with the terms of reference of the body and are not exceeding their powers. However, regard must be had to the terms of the constitution.

- 6.3. You should establish as soon as you are appointed what, if any, insurance is held by the Outside Body that covers you in your role including what insurance the organisation itself holds for other purposes, for example third party liability insurance and employers liability insurance (the second of which is a legal obligation for all organisations which employ staff)
- 6.4. The Council may provide an indemnity where Councillors are acting on an outside body at the request of the Council.
- 6.5. The indemnity the Council can provide is subject to limitations. In general terms, if a Councillor is acting properly, within their powers and in good faith, the power to indemnify will usually apply. However, the Council cannot, for example, provide an indemnity in relation to any action or failure by any Member which constitutes a criminal offence, or for any action or failure by any Member which is the result of fraud, or other deliberate wrongdoing or recklessness on the part of the Member.
- 6.6. When you are serving on an outside body, the Council's indemnity will only apply after any indemnity or insurance from the body itself. There are further limitations and it is advisable to be clear about the scope of the Council indemnity that may be available to you. You can seek further advice on any indemnity from the monitoring officer.

7. Appointment as a Director of a Company

- 7.1. Companies are separate legal entities. The company is distinct from its members, who may be either shareholders or guarantors. The Council itself may be a member of the company, either a shareholder or guarantor
- 7.2. If the body is a limited company, and you are asked to be involved, it is likely that you will be appointed as a company director. [The duties of a company director](#) are now set out in the Companies Act 2006.
- 7.3. The management of a company is usually the responsibility of the Board of Directors. Directors' powers are usually set out in the company's Articles of Association. Another important document is the Memorandum of Association, which sets out the Company's objectives and powers.
- 7.4. The duties of a company director are not the same as your responsibilities as a Councillor. Basically, when involved in company business, the company must come first. Directors must act in the interests of the company, and not in the interests of other parties, including shareholders. You cannot vote simply in accordance with the Council mandate, to do so would be a breach of duty as a Director.
- 7.5. A general duty of care and skill to the company is imposed, but a Director requires no greater skill than might reasonably be expected of someone of that individual's particular knowledge and experience. A Director is not deemed to be an expert, but is expected to use due diligence and to obtain expert advice if necessary
- 7.6. If a director fails to carry out his/her duties, action can be brought for breach of duty, either by the company itself, or by a liquidator if the company goes into liquidation, or with the consent of the court, by a shareholder. Such actions are unlikely where the company is properly controlled by the directors.
- 7.7. Some important considerations are:
 - It is not always easy to reconcile the various factors which must be taken into account when reaching a major decision. The important thing as a director is to show that you are aware of and have taken account of the relevant factors, and have exercised due care and diligence in giving them all fair consideration.
 - It may be difficult to be certain whether benefits may be regarded as giving rise to a conflict of interest. If you are unsure take advice from the company's advisers.
 - Make sure you are aware of the company's constitution; its Memorandum and Articles of Association, so that you know what it can and cannot do. You must take this into account when making decisions, as well as any shareholder decisions that are relevant.
 - Be diligent, and make sure you are well informed about the company's affairs. Make sure you are well briefed when taking up the role, and that you receive regular briefings throughout your term of office.
 - Attend training and briefing sessions
 - Ensure insurance is in place.
 - Some Board decisions may be reviewed on a future occasion. Make sure detailed minutes show that all necessary factors have been considered

when major decisions are being taken. Obtain expert advice where necessary e.g. regarding impact of a decision on the environment.

- Take legal advice where there are doubts about a director's duty in relation to a particular matter

7.8. There may be actual or potential conflicts between the interests of the Council and the interests of the company. In such circumstances it would be inappropriate for the Councillor to take part in discussions upon such topics both as a Councillor and as a Director. You should decide in which role you are to act on the matter. If in doubt, Councillors should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about any potential conflicts of interest

8. Where the Councillor is appointed as a Trustee of a Charity

- 8.1. Some companies and unincorporated associations are established for charitable purposes. Councillors should note that you can be both a Trustee and a Director, where the charity operates both models and you are appointed as such. Ensure you understand what role you are appointed to at the outset.
- 8.2. A charity is an organisation which:
- is established for [charitable purposes](#) only, and
 - falls to be subject to the control of the High Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction with respect to charities.
- 8.3. Those who are responsible for the control and administration of a charity are referred to as trustees, even where the organisation is a company limited by guarantee where they are not strictly trustees.
- 8.4. Trustees of a charity retain personal liability and can only delegate to the extent that the constitution authorises them so to do. Generally, a trustee may incur personal liability if they:
- act outside the scope of the trust deed
 - act in a way that falls below the required standard of care
 - act otherwise than in the best interests of the charity, in a way which causes loss to the charity fund
 - makes a personal profit from the trust assets
- 8.5. Trustees must take care to act in accordance with the Trust deed and to protect the charity's assets. They are also responsible for compliance with the Charities Acts and the Trustee Act 2000.
- 8.6. Trustees have a number of [trustee duties](#) which they must comply with.
- 8.7. If in doubt, always consult the [Charity Commission](#). You may avoid personal liability for breach of trust if you act in accordance with their advice

9. Where the Councillor is appointed to an Unincorporated Association

- 9.1. Unincorporated associations are informal organisations / groups which are neither limited companies nor charitable trusts may be "unincorporated associations" which have no separate legal identity from their members.

- 9.2. The rules governing the members' duties and liabilities will (or should) be set out in the organisation's constitution, which is simply an agreement between members as to how the organisation will operate.
- 9.3. Usually the organisation's constitution will provide for a management committee to be responsible for the everyday running of the organisation. Management Committee members must act within the organisation's constitution and must take reasonable care when exercising their powers.
- 9.4. Because the association has no legal existence separate from its members, the liability of the members is not limited. Each member can incur personal responsibility for liabilities incurred on behalf of the association and relies on the membership agreement to be able to recover his/her costs from the other members. Councillors appointed to such bodies should familiarise themselves with the Constitution to understand the nature of their role, responsibilities and liabilities, and should assess the risk of personal liability, and the extent to which it has been covered by insurance.

10. Other Statutory Bodies

- 10.1. These are public bodies established by statutory provisions which will set out their functions, the parameters of their jurisdiction and the way in which they are governed.
- 10.2. This includes bodies such as the Police and Crime Commissioner Panel.
- 10.3. The details of representation of the council on such bodies may be set out in statute or regulations, or in terms of reference or constitutions established in accordance with the statutory provisions.
- 10.4. You should be clear about whether you are sitting on such bodies to make delegated decisions on behalf of the council, or purely as members of a board or committee of that body.
- 10.5. You will need to be clear about how decisions are made, any parameters relating to these, and how you declare your interests and how any potential conflicts are managed.
- 10.6. Much will depend upon whether the body is exercising its own statutory functions or whether you are exercising council functions whilst sitting on the body.

Emma Jackman
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy
May 2024

Useful Links

Directorships:

[Companies House - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Being a company director - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Directors' duties and responsibilities | Factsheets | IoD](#)

[7 duties of a company director – Companies House \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://blog.gov.uk)

Trustees / Charities:

[The Charity Commission - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Charity trustee: what's involved \(CC3a\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Charity types: how to choose a structure \(CC22a\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Unincorporated Organisations:

[Unincorporated associations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

To: Cabinet
Date: 09 July 2025
Report of: Jane Winfield Director of Property and Assets
Title of Report: Community Lettings Policy

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To agree the Community Lettings Policy.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet member for Finance and Asset management
Corporate Priority:	Well run Council
Policy Framework:	Asset Management Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
1. Approve the Community Lettings Policy in Appendix 1

Information Exempt From Publication
N/A – no exempt documents

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Community Lettings Policy	No
Appendix 2	Risk Register	No
Appendix 3	Equalities Impact Assessment	No
Appendix 4	Financial Implications	Yes

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent approach to the rental charges for community lettings within community centres directly managed by the Council. Currently rents within Community Centres vary and some benefit from subsidy. By implementing market rent for community lettings charges and encouraging and supporting community groups to seek grant funding, either from the Council or third parties, the Council aims to ensure transparency and equity in the support provided to community groups.
2. This approach is set out in the Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet on 14th June 2022.
1. The Council operates and manages Rose Hill Community Centre, East Oxford Community Centre, Blackbird Leys Community Centre. In addition to this the Council owns a further 12 community centres, with these sites being operated and managed by community associations.

Community Lettings Policy

3. The policy, which can be found in full at Appendix 1, is intended to apply only to those Community Centres directly managed by the Council. Its intention is to create a transparent and fair rent policy relating to these centres as there is significant discrepancy on a tenant-by-tenant basis. Currently, some tenants are benefitting from additional subsidy through either paying a peppercorn rent or paying a reduced rent.
4. The policy would introduce three tiers for tenants within the centres and rent would be based on turnover. The tiered rent structure with two additional categories beyond the commercial tier has been introduced after conducting sensitivity analysis and discussions with the communities' team.

Tier	Definition	Rent per sqft
1 - Commercial	A lease to a commercial operator	£19.50-£24
2 - Medium-sized charities and non-profits	Medium-sized charities or non-profits with an income over £100,000 per annum, averaged over three years.	£10
3 - Small charities and non-profits	A small charity or non-profit with an income under £100,000 per annum, averaged over three years.	£6

5. This three-tier structure enables fairness and transparency in community centre lettings. The first tier, designated for commercial lettings, will pay a market rent for a commercial letting. The second two tiers set market rents which are lower and appropriate for this particular type of occupier, which is essential to be able to accommodate smaller, localised charities. Charities and non-profit companies will be classified under the Council's definition of Community Letting. The two categories within the Community Letting section are designed to support local

charities by offering them a market rent which reflects the nature of the different occupiers. The rents have been sensitivity tested, and expectations for tenant placement are detailed in the attached Excel sheet.

6. The policy is intended to be implemented incrementally through new tenancies and via rent reviews and lease renewals for existing tenants. This will phase the introduction at Rose Hill over circa 5 years in line with existing lease events. Blackbird Leys and East Oxford will see the introduction of the policy upon opening of each of the centres.

Financial implications

2. Moved to non-disclosed information in the appendix.

Legal issues

3. There are no legal implications.

Level of risk

4. A Risk Register is shown in Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

7. The Equalities Impact Assessment is shown in Appendix 3.

Carbon and environmental considerations

5. Not required, as for key decisions only.

Report author	Emma Gubbins
Job title	Corporate Asset Lead
Service area or department	Corporate Property
Telephone	07483 011033
e-mail	egubbins@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None

Appendix 1 Community Lettings Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent approach to the rental charges for community lettings within community centres directly managed by the Council. By implementing market rent for community lettings charges and encouraging community groups to seek grant funding, the Council aims to ensure transparency and equity in the support provided to community groups.

This approach is set out in the Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all community lettings within Council owned and managed Community Centres

3. Policy Statement

3.1 All community lettings will be charged at Market Rent for Community Letting.

This policy ensures that all groups are treated equitably and that the Council's support for community activities is transparent and justifiable.

3.2 Community groups are encouraged to seek grant funding to cover the costs associated with rent. The Council may provide information and guidance on potential funding sources but will not directly offer a rent concession.

3.3 Where there is a commercial letting within a community centre the Market Rent will be applicable

4. Definitions

Market Rent: The amount that a property would command in an open market setting, determined by an assessment of comparable properties in the area.

Market Rent for Community Lettings: The amount that a property would command should the use be restricted to community lettings, taking into account the financial strength of the community group

Community Letting: The rental of property by a community group for activities that benefit or provide support services to the community.

5. Implementation

5.1 Assessment of Market Rent for a Community Letting: The Council will conduct regular assessments to determine the rent for properties available for community lettings. These assessments will consider factors such as location, property size, community use and amenities.

5.2 Lease Agreements: All lease agreements for community lettings will clearly state the rent and the expectation for the tenant to seek grant funding. Lease agreements will also include provisions for periodic rent reviews in line with market conditions. Leases will be granted outside the security provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. New leases will be granted for a maximum of 10 years, with a break provision at year 5. Unless this would prohibit the Community Group sourcing grant funding in which case the length of term, and inclusion of a break notice will be negotiated individually.

5.3 Support for Grant Funding: Community groups are responsible for the timely submission of their grant applications and for meeting all requirements of the funding bodies.

6. Considerations

There is a current lack of consistency on rent per square foot across the Community letting portfolio. It is recognised that this policy is not intended to create financial hardship for community groups and it will therefore be phased in through the existing rent review and lease renewal cycles. There are initially 3 community centres impacted. A further report detailing the impact is shown in Appendix 1.

It is recommended that where a Community group can demonstrate the increase in rent will cause hardship, subject to the production of a fund-raising plan appropriate transition arrangements will be considered.

7. Responsibilities

Council Officers: Responsible for conducting rent assessments, preparing lease agreements, and providing guidance on grant funding where appropriate.

Community Groups: Responsible for securing grant funding to cover rental costs and adhering to the terms of their lease agreements.

9. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or Council objectives. Monitoring of the policy's implementation will be carried out by Corporate Property Team, with updates provided through the annual reporting on the Asset Management Action Plan.

10. Related Policies and Documents

11. Contact Information

For further information or clarification regarding this policy, please contact:

Emma Gubbins

12. Approval and Adoption

This policy was approved by [Approving Body] on [Date] and is effective from [Effective Date].

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Why do an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

1. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is part of Oxford City Council's **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010)**.

The General PSED enables Oxford City Council to:

- a. **identify and remove discrimination,**
 - b. **identify ways to advance equality of opportunity,**
 - c. **foster good relations.**
2. **An EqIA must be done before making any decision(s)** that may have an impact on people and/or services that people use and depend on.
 3. An **EqIA form is one of many tools** that can simplify and structure your equalities assessment.
 4. We are passionate about equalities, and we highly recommend that **Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports and all projects must attach an EqIA.**

For questions, queries, and a chat about how to do your EqIA, please email your EDI officers:

1. Mili Kalia – milkalia@oxford.gov.uk
2. Sobia Afridi- safridi@oxford.gov.uk

Please do refer to our [SharePoint Page](#) for support such as FAQs and Examples, etc.

A good EqIA has the following attributes:

1. **Comprehensively considers the 9 protected characteristics.**

1. Age	6. Race & Ethnicity
2. Disability	7. Religion or Belief
3. Gender Reassignment	8. Sex
4. Marriage & Civil Partnership	9. Sexual Orientation
5. Pregnancy & Maternity	

2. It has **considered equality of treatment** towards service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
3. Sufficiently considered **potential and real impact** of proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members.
4. **Systematically recorded and reported** any potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
5. **Collected, recorded, & reported sufficient information and data** on how your policy or proposal will have an impact.
6. Offers **mitigations or adjustments** if a PSED has been impacted.
7. Provides clear **justifications** for your decisions.
8. It is written in **plain English** with simple short sentence structures.

Section 1: General overview of the activity under consideration

1.	Name of activity being assessed. For example: -New policy, -Review of existing policy, -Changes in service(s), -New project(s), etc.	Review tenancy lease rates in community facilities	2.	The implementation date of the activity under consideration:	01/04/2025
3.	Directorate/Department(s):	Communities and People; Law and Governance; Property	4.	Service Area(s):	Community Services; Legal; Property
5.	Who is (are) the assessment lead(s): Please provide: -Name -Email address	Shabnam Sabir, ssabir@oxford.gov.uk Samuel Condon-Baxendale scondon-baxendale@oxford.gov.uk	6.	Contact details, in case there are queries: Please provide: -Name -Email address	sSee 5
7.	Is this a new or ongoing EqlA?	New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extension to existing EqlA <input type="checkbox"/>	8.	If this is an extension of a previous EqlA, please indicate where the previous EqlA is located and share the link to the said EqlA.	NA
9.	Date this EqlA started:	27/08/2024			
10.	Will this EqlA be attached to Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports/updates, which will be published online?	Unsure			
11.	Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CMT.				

Section 2: About the activity, change, or policy that is being assessed.

12.	Type of activity being considered: Check the most appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change to an existing activity.
		<input type="checkbox"/> New Activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Others. Please		
13.	Which priority area(s) <u>within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2020-2024)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enable an inclusive economy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Deliver more affordable housing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support thriving communities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pursue a zero carbon Oxford.
14.	Which priority area(s) within <u>Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsive services and customer care.	<input type="checkbox"/> Diverse and engaged workforce.	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership & organisational commitment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.	Aims: To create a fair and consistent rental agreement for all tenant organisations leasing spaces in City Council community facilities.		Objectives: To ensure all tenant organisations are given lease rates based on their income banding criteria. Each organisation will fall into Tier 1, 2 or 3.	Priorities: Ensure all tenant organisations are informed of changes in lease rates with due notice

16.	<p>Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.</p> <p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Existing activity does not fulfill Corporate Objectives, -existing activity is discriminatory and not fulfilling Council's PSED, ... to name a few. 	Existing activity is discriminatory. Current tenancy lease rates vary on a case by case basis.	

Section 3: Understanding service users, residents, staff and any other impacted parties.

17.	<p>Have you undertaken any consultations in the form of surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups?</p> <p>Please provide details—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -when, -how many, and -the approach taken. 	No	
18.	<p>List information and data used to understand who your residents or staff are and how they will be impacted.</p> <p>These could be-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -third-party research, -census data, -legislation, -articles, -reports, 		

	-briefs.	
19.	<p>If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?</p> <p>Please list the details –</p> <p>-when,</p> <p>-with whom, and</p> <p>-how long will you collect the relevant data.</p>	<p>We haven't yet collected data and information on this matter, but we plan to consult with the Communities Review Group to get their approval before communicating the proposal to tenants. When discussing this with tenants, we will review their accounts, and if it is demonstrated that the rent increases are unaffordable, we would consider offering them a phased rent.</p>

Section 4: Impact analysis.

20.	Who does the activity impact?	Service Users	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Check as needed.</p> <p>The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.</p>	Members of staff	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		General public	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		City Councillors	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>

21.


Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?

Check as needed and provide evidence-driven conclusions.

Good Practice is to keep it simple and list your, evidence, insights, and mitigations.

Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Disability (Visible and invisible)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Gender re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group?

						How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group?
						How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some groups such as the Chinese Community Association have been using the facility free of charge so any new charges introduced may be highlighted as discriminatory towards them. Ackhi is also another group that have used the centre for little rental charges. They may also feel they cannot support their communities when increased rates are introduced.	What is the data telling us about impact on this group?
						How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)? We should engage with each charity individually regarding the rent increase and explore options for phasing the rent to mitigate the impact.
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group?


						How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence 	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bk Luwo group at East Oxford Community Centre, provides support to women in isolation. As they rely heavily on funding, the proposed increase in rent and service charges may impact the women they serve.	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)? We should engage with each charity individually regarding the rent increase and explore options for phasing the rent to mitigate the impact.

Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Other (voluntary consideration) For example: Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Other (voluntary consideration) For example: Socio-economic status (income, wealth, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Previously, the centre was operated on minimal charges supporting local community groups but with the redeveloped centre, this will lead to increase in charges which will impact those in East Oxford that cant afford the increased rents and rates. With increaing costs and low incomes	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?We should engage with each charity individually regarding the rent increase and explore

					we may drive out the most vulnerable community groups who would otherwise use the centre.	options for phasing the rent to mitigate the impact.
Other For example: - Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population - Council suppliers & contractors - Cabinet Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	List the other groups Evidence	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?

Section 5: Conclusion(s) of your Full Impact Assessment

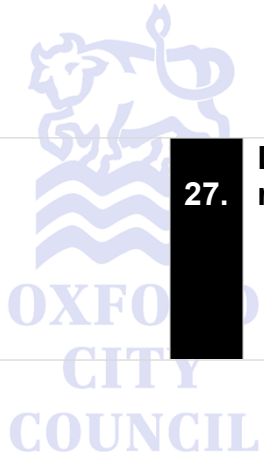
22.	Conclusions. Check as needed.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stop and reconsider the activity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adjust activity before beginning the activity and continue to monitor.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No major change(s) or adjustments	<input type="checkbox"/> No major change(s) or adjustments and

					and continue with activity but continue to monitor.	continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
23.	Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.	<p>Currently there are no set rates for community facilities tenancy irrespective of the type of tenants occupying the spaces. Tenancy charges vary considerably. In order to manage budgets, and ensure consistency across all community facilities a tier banding system is required. This will ensure all tenants are given a tier rate based on their financial accounts.</p> 				

Section 6: Monitoring and review plan.

The responsibility for maintaining a monitoring arrangement of the EqIA action plan lies with the service/team completing the EqIA.

These arrangements must be built into the performance management framework such as KPIs or Risk Registers.

24.	Who or which team or service area will be responsible for monitoring equalities impact?			
	<p>For example-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc. 			
25.	Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?			
26.	How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?			27.
	<p>For example-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -quarterly, -yearly, etc. 			

Section 7: Sign-off

Name:

Job Title:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Suggested list of people to include are:

- 1) Project lead/manager.
- 2) Head of service area or team.

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

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You have now reached the end of the assessment.

⚠ Please appended this to any reports and project files for reference.

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

Document is Restricted

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To: Cabinet
Date: 9 July 2025
Report of: Director of Communities and Citizens' Services
Title of Report: Citizen Experience Strategy Refresh for 2025-27

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To review the Citizen Experience Strategy 2025-27 and seek approval on the updated action plan.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman, Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	Support Thriving Communities and Well-Run Council
Policy Framework:	Citizen Experience Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:	
1	Approve the Citizen Experience Strategy for 2025-27 and the accompanying Action Plan.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Citizen Experience Strategy 2025-27 and Action Plan
Appendix 2	Stakeholder Engagement Findings
Appendix 3	CEX Readiness Model & Self-Assessment Tool
Appendix 4	Citizen Experience Strategy Risk Register
Appendix 5	Citizen Experience Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The Citizen Experience (CEX) Strategy sets out our approach to delivering a positive and consistent experience for everyone accessing City Council services or engaging with us; whether they live, work, or visit Oxford; by working in collaboration with other organisations and community groups to provide the right support.

2. The original CEX Strategy was approved at Cabinet in July 2023 and over the last 2 years we have made significant progress in advancing our core citizen experience. However, there remains much work to be done. To ensure continued progression and improvement, we have refreshed the strategy for the next two years, incorporating minor adjustments, updating data where possible, and revising the action plan.
3. The City's demographic profile continues to show increasing diversity; profound health inequalities, significant parts of the city experiencing extreme poverty and a digital divide where some citizens experience digital disadvantage.
4. As a result, the strategy sets a vision for modern, inclusive and accessible services. It embraces the benefits of digital technology and automation to make the experience quicker and easier whilst also meeting the needs of Oxford's diverse communities, with access to the appropriate specialist methods for more complex interactions. The Council is equally committed to ensure that no-one gets left behind, utilising a range of contact channels, including face to face options, to make that possible.
5. A comprehensive review of this strategy will take place in 2027, in conjunction with a review of the Council's Thriving Communities Strategy, to assess whether a unified approach would best serve the interests of our communities and citizens.

Integrating our approach with other strategies

6. The CEX Strategy is strongly aligned with the Council's Equalities, Inclusive Economy and People Strategies. It also supports the Thriving Communities Strategy, particularly as the Citizen Experience Strategy aims to strengthen support within communities and work collaboratively with partners, agencies and community groups giving 'right first-time' solutions and advice. This is not just about solving short term day to day issues but ensuring early intervention, improving resident outcomes overall and reducing the call on council services, so it can focus on the most complex needs.

Strategy overview

7. The Strategy Vision remains to:
'Put communities and citizens at the heart of how we work, ensuring they actively shape our services and that the right support is available for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.'
8. To bring this to life there are four strands that accord with the Customer Service Excellence Standard. They are:
 - Citizen focused:
 - Designing services to meet needs through a variety of contact channels.
 - Developing a learning culture that actively listens, works collaboratively with our communities and uses insights to continually improve our offer to citizens.
 - Positive Citizen Experience (CEX):

- Making access to our services quicker, easier and better, ensuring we get the basics right and setting clear expectations for our citizens.
- Ensuring our staff are supported to give a professional and helpful experience with access to the right tools and technologies and empowered to embrace the CEX culture.
- Inclusive Access:
 - We will deliver modern, accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities and promote our equalities objectives.
 - We will deliver face to face and other assisted support and help the most vulnerable people to ensure their complex needs are met and no one gets left behind.
- Get it right first time:
 - We will work collaboratively with partners, agencies and community groups to ensure early intervention.
 - We will ensure our systems and processes reduce unnecessary contact, so our citizen's needs are resolved at the first point of contact where possible.

9. Strategy delivery progress 2023-25 - Citizen focused

Key progress in this area includes:

- Retaining Customer Service Excellence accreditation (since 2014) across all areas and achieving “beyond best practice” against 16 specific criteria, which is a key part of our learning culture and continuous improvement.
- Launching our new Comments, Complaints and Compliments system with improved automation and reporting. This will ensure we can monitor feedback, use it to improve our processes and utilise our collective insight to track trends.
- Re-launching our Residents Panel of up to 1,000 residents who have agreed to provide feedback on Council initiatives, policies, and services through online surveys and engagement exercises.
- Introducing Customer Service Officers into Community Larders on a regular basis to provide relevant information and support for some of our most vulnerable citizens.
- Delivery of a cross-service project between Community Services and Business Improvement that explored how the organisation could support citizens to have better access to digital technology and skills. This included surveying local citizens about their technology and digital needs and then working with Activate Learning to use this insight to design digital skills training in Blackbird Leys to support citizens to access online services.
- Adding a Citizen Engagement section into the corporate Horizon Scan for services to share planned citizen engagement activities so to encourage collaboration and to avoid duplication.

- Providing a bank of customer satisfaction questions to support more areas of the Council to proactively and regularly seek and utilise feedback.
- Reviewing our Customer Service Standards and updating the relevant webpages so this information is available and clear for citizens.

10. Strategy delivery progress 2023-25 - Positive citizen experience

Key progress in this area includes:

- Launching our new website with improved search functionality, making it easier and quicker for citizens to find the service and support they require.
- Developing webforms to increase the opportunities for citizens to help themselves and reduce the need for unnecessary telephone or face to face contact.
- Reviewing some of our processes to drive efficiencies, create a better experience and set clear expectations in services including Licensing, Building Control, Housing and Waste & Recycling.
- Developing a template for Services to use when launching a new digital solution to ensure information, advice and guidance are provided to citizens in a timely and appropriate manner so to deliver a positive experience.
- Launching our Cultural Maturity self-assessment to help Services understand and review their citizen experience related culture, highlight strengths and agree ways to improve.
- Rolling out training to support teams to improve their communications. This approach will improve the quality of the communication, reduce demand and ensure our citizens get the right message first time.
- Launching our online Tenant Portal to make it quicker and easier for tenants to request repairs, check rent payments and manage their council housing tenancy.
- Improving our staff apprenticeship offer to better meet the needs of staff and the Council; developing in-house skills around transformation, leadership and Artificial Intelligence.

11. Strategy delivery progress 2023-25 - Inclusive access

Key progress in this area includes:

- Delivery of a forum with Community Services for 60+ partners at Rose Hill Community Centre to explore how we can work better together to ensure no one gets left behind.
- Setting up a Digital Cafe at Westgate Library in partnership with the local Integrated Care Board to provide digital skills training and advice.

- Delivery of a cross-service project between Community Services and Business Improvement that explored how the organisation's workforce and culture could be more representative and engaging of the communities we serve. This included developing case studies to provide a better understanding of the range of opportunities within the Council and engaging young people in the community to understand how the application process could be made more accessible.
- Re-launching our Youth Panel to improve opportunities for young people to provide their feedback and help shape our services.
- Delivery of a new Freedom of Information (FOI) requests system with 98% of FOI requests now responded to within time.
- Updating our policy for how the Council engages with citizens and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs and facilitate meaningful involvement in the decisions that affect them.
- Rolling out more Chip n Pin devices for citizens to be able to make payments quicker and easier at some of our Community Centres and for some services provided by Oxford Direct Services.
- Adding a 'Translations' page to our website which uses Google Translate to translate the site into dozens of languages.

12. Strategy delivery progress 2023-25 - Getting it right first time

Key progress in this area includes:

- Workshops held with the city's Advice Agencies to make sure we work better together to resolve citizen's queries at the point of first contact.
- Delivery of Digital Skills training for staff to increase confidence and capabilities that will allow us to better support citizens.
- A database has been developed and shared across the Council, capturing key external agency information and updates on community projects helping staff to signpost citizens to key support services as appropriate.
- In the Contact Centre a dedicated 'Vulnerable Resident' line has been implemented to support those citizens more in need and calls are triaged to ensure the appropriate support is provided by the officers.
- Delivering three pilots to improve communications with citizens and reduce unnecessary contact, leading to the development of a toolkit for use within the organisation.
- Developing a Channel Management Plan to rationalise the number of contact channels we have to interact with our citizens, provide a consistent and improved citizen experience and create efficiencies through better demand management.

- Training staff on the Local Insight platform to enable better use of local data to make informed decisions about improving our services.
- Launching our new staff intranet with improved content, search functionality and a better staff directory.
- Engaging a Data Management Consultant to help us understand the options for cleansing our citizen contact data to support increased utilisation of digital contact channels.

Stakeholder engagement 2025 summary

13. Refreshing the CEX Strategy for 2025-2027 has been led by the CEX Delivery Board, which is made up of Emma Jackman (Director of Law, Governance and Strategy), as Strategic Lead, Helen Bishop (Director of Communities and Citizens' Services), as Delivery Lead, Vicki Galvin as CEX Programme Manager and colleagues from Customer Services, ICT, the Change Support Team and our Change Agent Network.
14. As the core elements of the strategy remain unchanged, the CEX Delivery Board determined that a full consultation with staff, partners and citizens would not be appropriate. As a more balanced approach, we instead sought valuable input by sharing the refreshed strategy with the following key groups:
 - Policy Officers Group
 - Artificial Intelligence Working Group
 - Website Working Group
 - Change Agents Network
 - Tenant Ambassadors
 - Community Champions
15. The main feedback from these groups included:
 - Strong support for translation services and simple access tools, though highlighted the need to better promote these.
 - While digital improvements were supported, there were calls for simpler online processes, mobile-friendly options, and continued human support.
 - Suggestions to improve the structure, language, and visual presentation of the document.
 - Other suggestions included broader staff training, improved visibility in community spaces beyond traditional community centres, and clearer communication of City vs. County Council responsibilities.
16. Recommendations regarding the readability of the strategy were welcomed, and adjustments have been made to enhance accessibility and understanding.
17. All feedback will inform improvements. The full responses from these groups can be found at Appendix 2.

18. A full consultation with staff, partners and citizens will take place when the CEX Strategy is fully reviewed in 2027.

How we have updated the Action Plan

19. In refreshing our Citizen Experience Strategy, we have revisited the data and insights that originally helped shape our approach. We have also reviewed the latest versions of these datasets, where applicable, and drawn-out key findings that are now incorporated into our updated action plan. This ensures our strategy remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of our citizens. The key updates and findings are as follows:

20. Population Growth and Changing Demographics

- The expected population growth, particularly the increase in our ageing population, those in social housing, and residents where English is not their first language, will place increasing demands on the Council. Meeting these needs will require ongoing investment in effective systems, processes, and partnerships to manage these demands efficiently.
- We remain committed to keeping face-to-face and telephone services available, as they are vital for residents with complex queries and those who are most vulnerable. Our focus will be on optimising our contact channels to ensure that in-person or telephone support is available promptly to those who need it, while strongly encouraging and supporting those able, to use our online services.
- In addition, we will strengthen our efforts to raise awareness of available translation services, ensuring that all citizens can access the information and support they need.

21. Resident Feedback and Online Service Usage

- The latest results from our Residents Survey show a positive trend in the use of online services, alongside a significant reduction in residents reporting uncertainty about how to access these services. However, barriers to access still exist for some residents. Insights from the survey have provided valuable information about these barriers, and we will take action based on this feedback.

22. Citizen Experience Cultural Maturity and Service Standards

- Insights from the Citizen Experience Cultural Maturity self-assessments completed by various services within the Council indicate the need for teams to clearly define their own Citizen Experience Standards. Establishing clear ambitions and expectations for what constitutes an outstanding citizen experience will ensure that services align their delivery to a shared vision, enhancing consistency and impact across the Council.

23. Enhancing Self-Service Options

- We will continue to increase the availability of webforms, online booking systems, and online payment options. This will empower citizens to self-serve at

any time, improving convenience and accessibility when applying for, booking, or paying for services.

24. Data-Driven Service Improvement

- We will make better use of existing data and insight, strengthening the mechanisms for collecting, utilising, and sharing citizen feedback. This will enable us to co-create services with the people who use them, ensuring that their voices shape our improvements.

25. Consistent Measurement of Customer Satisfaction

- Consistently measuring customer satisfaction across all services will be a key focus. We will leverage this feedback to inform continuous service improvements, ensuring we consistently meet the evolving needs of our citizens.

26. Building a Citizen-Focused Culture

- Fostering a culture within the Council that is deeply focused on the citizen experience and continuous improvement will remain a priority. Every individual in the organisation plays a role in delivering excellent citizen experience, and we will continue to support this with ongoing staff training and development.

27. Integrated Local Support Services

- We will maximise opportunities to provide 'joined up' access to services within local communities. This ensures citizens receive the best possible support and advice.

28. Leveraging Artificial Intelligence

- Exploring and implementing Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions will be essential in enhancing our citizen experience, managing demand, and driving efficiency. We will seek out AI technologies that help streamline processes and create more responsive services.

29. Transparent Communication and Updates

- Ensuring transparency in how we are progressing with the delivery of this strategy will be crucial. We will share updates, lessons learned, and success stories with staff, partners, and citizens, fostering a collaborative approach to achieving our ambitions.

Monitoring and reporting

30. Delivery of the Citizen Experience Strategy action plan is overseen by the Citizen Experience Delivery Board and reported on to the Organisational Change Board. Annual updates on progress will continue to be drawn up for the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to share more widely.

31. We will be continuing to measure how successfully citizens use our new digital services and their satisfaction with our web, contact centre and face to face services. These will be stretching targets that sit alongside clear plans for improvement.

32. The action plan is maintained as a live document on Smart sheet where it is updated regularly and where it will be added to as needed across the next two years.
33. To ensure a coordinated approach to delivering this strategy and to drive engagement across the entire organisation, a Citizen Experience Readiness Model and self-assessment tool were developed last year. These resources, which centred around four key focus areas, were used by several Service Areas to guide their efforts and identify relevant service-level actions.
34. We have updated the Citizen Experience Readiness Model with four new focus areas for 2025-27 (see Appendix 3) and we will again encourage Service Areas to utilise these resources to determine what actions they need to specifically achieve within their own areas of work. These actions, where appropriate, will be added to the main Citizen Experience Strategy action plan.
35. The focus areas for 2025-27 will be:
- Enhancing citizen experience through consistent service standards
 - This means ensuring all service areas align with a clear, high standard of citizen experience, underpinned by measurable performance and feedback loops.
 - Digital inclusion and access for all
 - This means bridging the digital divide and ensuring inclusive access to services, information, and support for all communities and citizens.
 - Smart use of data and technology to improve services
 - This means using data and technology to proactively meet needs, streamline services, and personalise citizen engagement.
 - Seamless and efficient service delivery
 - This means optimising processes and contact channels to reduce friction, increase efficiency, and improve the end-to-end citizen journey.

Financial implications

36. Implementing this strategy contributes savings already included in the medium-term financial plan (MTFP) and currently requires no additional funding beyond that already identified in the MTFP. Should any additional requirements or savings surface over time, they will be included in the budget process in the usual manner.

Legal issues

37. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. In delivering services the Council must be mindful of the public sector equality duty to consider how its policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to

the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services, including internal policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.

Level of risk

38. See Appendix 4.

Equalities impact

39. On advice of the Equalities Steering Group an overarching Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) was developed for the strategy (see Appendix 5) which highlights the EDI implications under each strand, but each of the individual high level workstreams (where appropriate) are required to develop their own EqIAs so the specific impacts can be thought through, assessed and mitigated as far as possible.

Carbon and environmental considerations

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

Report author	Helen Bishop
Job title	Director of Communities and Citizens' Services
Service area or department	Communities and Citizens' Services
Telephone	01865 252233
e-mail	hbishop@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:	
1	Citizen Experience Strategy 2023-25



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CITIZEN EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2025 – 2027

*For everyone that lives in, works in or visits
the city of Oxford*



Foreword

Every day, hundreds of Oxford's citizens interact with Oxford City Council—whether through accessing services, attending events, raising concerns, or contributing ideas. These moments of contact shape not only the Council's reputation but also the quality of life across Oxford's communities. That's why meaningful engagement matters. It's about far more than just a transactional relationship; it's about building trust, encouraging collaboration, and ensuring that everyone has a voice in the decisions that shape the city.

Over the past two years, the Council has made significant strides in delivering its Citizen Experience Strategy, remaining firmly focused on putting communities and citizens at the heart of how we work.

We've retained our externally assessed Customer Service Excellence accreditation with top-tier recognition in 16 areas, demonstrating the Council's continued commitment to learning and improvement.

We've strengthened the Council's feedback and engagement channels; re-launching the Residents Panel and introducing improved systems to capture comments, complaints and compliments so we can better understand and respond to citizens' needs. Council teams have also embedded customer service support directly into the community, such as in local larders and through targeted digital skills initiatives, helping to bridge the gap for those who need it most.

We have also worked hard to ensure a positive and inclusive experience for all. From the launch of a more accessible website and a new online Tenant Portal, to developing clear service and communication standards; we are helping residents access what they need, when they need it. The Council's work around inclusive access has re-engaged young people through the Youth Panel, and delivered tangible improvements like easier payments online, translation services, and improved Freedom of Information response times. Crucially, we are focusing on getting it right first time; empowering staff with better tools, training, and data to deliver joined-up, effective support from the very first interaction.

Together, these efforts are making the Council's services more responsive, more inclusive, and more citizen-focused than ever before; evident in our success measures, which show an increase of over 6,000 webforms submitted by citizens last year compared to the previous year, alongside rising customer satisfaction across the Council's face-to-face services, contact centre telephone calls, and website interactions.

We know there is still more to do. But with a clear vision, dedicated teams, and continued engagement with the communities we serve, I am confident that we are on the right path. This strategy is not just about improving services—it's about empowering citizens, embracing innovation, and making sure everyone in Oxford has the opportunity to thrive.



Councillor Nigel Chapman

Cabinet member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies

Introduction

In this strategy, “Citizens” are those who live, work in and visit Oxford. The outcomes and actions in this strategy also cover the Council’s relationships with businesses, communities and partners.

This Citizen Experience Strategy outlines the approach Oxford City Council will be taking to provide a positive experience for all citizens in accessing its services and engaging with the Council as a provider of them. It will ensure that all of the Council’s services are in tune with the approach and are embracing other organisations and community groups to provide the right support for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.

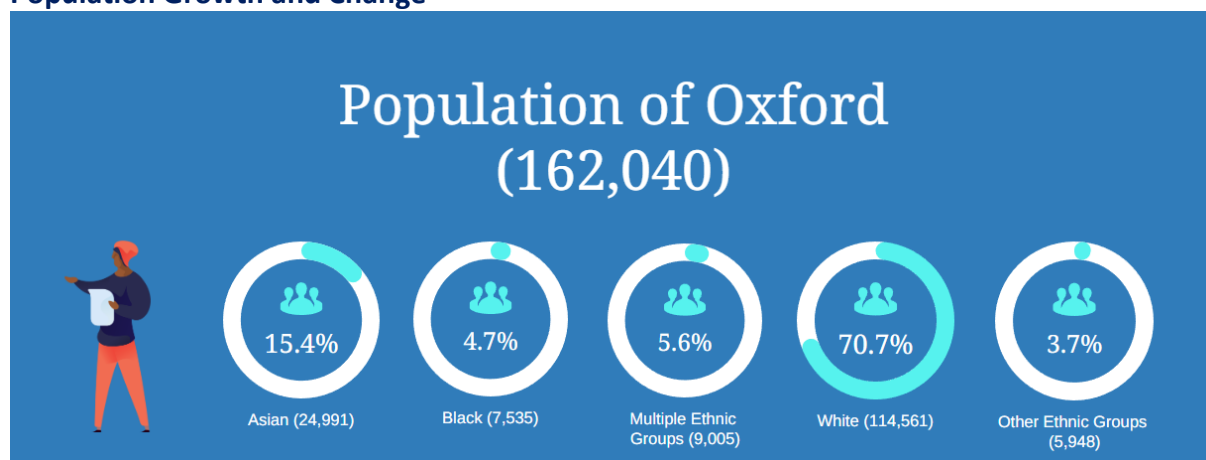
Since the launch of the Council’s original Citizen Experience Strategy in 2023, significant progress has been made in delivering a much-improved service. However, there remains much work to be done. To ensure continued progression and improvement, the Council has refreshed the strategy for the next two years, incorporating minor adjustments, updating data where possible, and revising the action plan.

A comprehensive review of this strategy will take place in 2027, in conjunction with an assessment of the Council's Thriving Communities Strategy, to determine whether a unified strategy would best serve the interests of Oxford’s communities and citizens.

Current Context

To ensure any strategy developed by the Council is relevant and impactful, it is crucial to understand the key demographics of the city’s citizens. Oxford is a dynamic and changing city, marked by increasing diversity, a growing population, and notable socioeconomic challenges.

Population Growth and Change



Oxford’s population stood at 162,040 according to the 2021 Census. This number is projected to rise to 170,800 by 2031 (a 5.41% increase) and further to 176,000 by 2040 (an

8.62% increase). The city also has a significant number of private renters, contributing to the fluidity and diversity of its population.

Alongside overall growth, Oxford is also experiencing demographic shifts, notably an ageing population. In 2021, there were 8,881 residents aged 75 years and over. This group is expected to grow to 13,656 by 2040; an increase of approximately 53.8%.

Health and Social Inequality

Oxford continues to face profound health and social inequalities. Several parts of the city are marked by high levels of deprivation. One area (Northfield Brook) ranks within the 10% most deprived areas nationally, and nine others fall within the 20% most deprived. These include The Leys, Barton, Littlemore, Rose Hill, and Carfax.

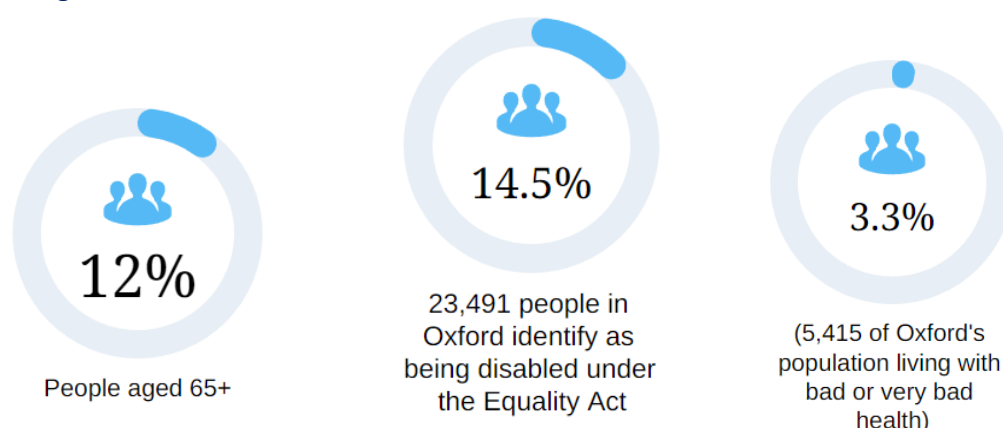
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Between 2011 and 2021, the number of Oxford residents born outside of the UK increased by approximately 13,500. Additionally, the number of residents who do not speak English, or do not speak it well, rose by around 1,000. These shifts reflect the growing cultural and linguistic diversity of the city.

Digital Inclusion and Engagement

Digital access and skills remain uneven across the population. Nationally, 25% of UK adults are reported to have 'very low digital capability'. In Oxford, this digital divide is especially pronounced among lower-income households and minority ethnic communities. Age UK's own research also shows how older people can struggle and often feel 'offline and overlooked'.

Despite these challenges, digital engagement is improving. The 2024 Residents Survey found that 75% of residents now use online council services, up from 68% in 2023. Notably, increased usage has been observed among social renters, unpaid carers, citizens with health issues, and ethnic minorities. There has also been a 24% decrease in residents who reported not knowing how to use the Council's online services.



Economy and Employment

Oxford's economy is supported by 4,580 registered businesses within the city boundaries. These businesses provide approximately 113,900 jobs and rely on efficient, responsive engagement with the Council to support their success and that of the local economy.

Tourism and Visitor Experience

Oxford remains a popular destination, welcoming approximately 7 million daytime and overnight visitors each year. Ensuring a positive experience for these visitors is essential to maintaining the city's status and economic vitality.

Sources:

- *Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021*
- *Oxfordshire County Council, Housing-Led Forecasts*
- *Greater London Authority, Trend-Based Population Projections*
- *English Indices of Deprivation 2019*
- *2023 UK Consumer Digital Index*
- *Oxford City Council, Residents Survey 2024*

Current Service



** 56% customer satisfaction with the Council's website is the combined Good and Average scores from GovMetric and benchmarks well when compared with other Local Authorities.*

The scale of Oxford City Council's frontline operations remains significant, with a continued focus on delivering responsive, accessible, and customer-centred services.

Commitment to Customer Service Excellence

Since 2013, the Council has held the Customer Service Excellence accreditation; a national quality mark that recognises organisations that consistently place customers at the heart of service delivery. In its most recent assessment (November 2024), the Council met all 57 assessment criteria and was awarded 16 Compliance Plus ratings. These commendations recognised areas where the Council was judged to be performing "above and beyond" standard expectations.

Community Access and Support

The Council delivers face-to-face services from the Westgate Library three days per week. In addition, Customer Service Officers are deployed to support residents at Community Food Larders across the city; providing assistance where it is needed most.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council launched locality hubs to provide coordinated support and advice to communities. This approach has since evolved into a broader locality network model, where the Council are working to bring together Council services, statutory agencies, and community organisations. These networks aim to ensure residents can access the best possible support, wherever they live.

This community-based model is essential for addressing deep-rooted health and poverty inequalities. It also supports efforts to bridge the digital divide, which is increasingly recognised as a key factor in improving individual and community wellbeing.

Inclusive Communication and Language Support

Recognising Oxford's growing diversity and changing demographics, the Council has invested in comprehensive language support services. These include:

- Telephone and face-to-face interpreting
- British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters
- Video interpretation services
- Document translation

These services are currently provided by Word360. In addition, the Council has launched a 'Translations' page on its website, enabling users to translate web content into dozens of languages using Google Translate. This helps make vital information more accessible to all residents, regardless of language proficiency.

The Citizen Experience Strategy

The vision is to:

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

The Council pledges to deliver these simple and ambitious outcomes:

Citizen Focused

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

Positive Citizen Experience

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

Inclusive Access

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

Get it Right First Time

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

In summary the Council will:

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

- Ensure no-one gets left behind, by providing a range of ways to engage with the Council with access to specialists for more complex enquiries.
- Make the most of data and insight, whether that is using citizen feedback to improve processes, involving citizens in service design, or utilising data to spot trends and support business policy and decisions to ensure services meet the needs of citizens.
- Strengthen support within communities and work together with partners, agencies and community groups to give holistic, right first-time solutions and advice to ensure the early prevention of issues.

Updated Action Plan

The delivery of this action plan will be driven by the Citizen Experience Delivery Board, overseen by the Council's Change Boards with progress reported to the relevant Cabinet portfolio holders.

Outcome	Workstream	Start Date	Finish Date
Citizen Focused	Maintaining Customer Service Excellence accreditation	Next annual assessment date is November 2025	
	Reviewing the Council's corporate standards, key performance indicators and service offer to ensure they are fit for purpose	April 2025	November 2025
	Collecting and utilising Customer Satisfaction feedback more consistently across the organisation through use of an improved question bank	January 2025	November 2025
	Defining what excellent citizen experience looks like for each of the Council's Service Areas to support service planning	September 2025	March 2026
	Implementing the Low-Income Families Tracker to identify families with unmet support needs and connect them with the assistance they are entitled to reduce poverty and increase household income in a proactive way	April 2025	March 2026
Outcome	Workstream	Start Date	Finish Date
Positive Citizen Experience	Completing the website improvement project including developing new webforms and maximising automation opportunities	September 2024	September 2026

	Re-working how the Council captures customer satisfaction scores on the website to improve feedback	September 2025	March 2026
	Delivering process review projects to improve service delivery e.g. HMO Licensing	Continuous	
	Ensuring a more consistent approach to payments with online payment options more widely available	September 2025	April 2027
	Developing an Artificial Intelligence Strategy that outlines the Council's ethical and responsible approach to AI adoption, governance and integration.	April 2025	September 2025
Outcome	Workstream	Start Date	Finish Date
Inclusive Access	Supporting communities to have access to digital technology and better digital skills through various community initiatives	Continuous	
	Developing and delivering a Communications Plan to raise awareness of the translation options available for accessing the Council's services	September 2025	March 2026
	Expanding and encouraging wider use of Community Ladders by the organisation to support citizen outreach	April 2025	March 2026
	Driving wider utilisation of the Community Led Solutions database to signpost citizens to the right support	April 2025	March 2026
	Using video walkthroughs on the Council's Community Centre websites to show the facilities available and access options	April 2025	March 2026
Outcome	Workstream	Start Date	Finish Date
Get it Right First Time	Embedding a continuous improvement culture with staff through self-assessment tools and training in areas such as SharePoint and Artificial Intelligence	Continuous	

	Expanding the availability of online booking functionalities to make the process quicker and easier	September 2025	July 2027
	Completing call intent analysis to understand how Artificial Intelligence may be able to support service improvements for the Council's Contact Centre	May 2025	September 2025
	Implementing the Channel Management Plan to rationalise and improve use of the Council's contact channels	January 2025	March 2026
	Utilising data and insight from the new 3Cs system to improve services and inform decision making.	July 2025	Continuous

Success Measures

The Council will be continuing to improve digital access to services for citizens and improving back-office automation that will mean less manual intervention by staff.

The Council will be measuring the extent and success of how citizens use these new digital processes.

It will also continue to measure customer satisfaction with its web, contact centre and face to face services. These will include stretching targets that sit alongside clear plans for improvement.

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Comment/Query/Suggestion

Champions appreciated the effort to simplify the strategy but still found some of the language too technical or unclear.

There was strong support for the focus on translation services and using simple tools to aid access.

The lack of promotion of available translation services was noted; champions recommended using short, simple explanatory videos to raise awareness.

Agreed that improving website usability is important but emphasised that not everyone can access or navigate it easily.

Found online services overly complicated, with too many steps; they suggested creating a simple mobile app for easier access on the go.

Navigating waste and bin services online can be challenging, often resulting in the need to call the council.

Champions found the idea of automating simple tasks helpful, but warned against removing the human touch for those who need personal support.

Champions appreciated being asked for their input and expressed a desire for more inclusive and accessible engagement methods in the future.

There was a call for wider and ongoing upskilling of City Council staff regarding the full range of services offered, to prevent knowledge gaps that also affect citizen understanding. For example annual, corporate-wide training or quiz for staff on service responsibilities.

Felt disconnected from both the City and County Councils, with perceived little council presence or engagement. We do not see the Council visibility within community ladders beyond community centre based ladders.

There is misunderstanding of the responsibilities of City and County Council. Recommended a collaborative approach between City and County Council to clearly communicate who is responsible for what - possibly through a physical resource sent to households, like a simplified bin guide like ('what goes into which bins') included with Council Tax letters.

It was noted that not all residents respond well to online communication; there is a need to strengthen face-to-face engagement across the city.

Emphasised the importance of reimbursing/renumerating/acknowledging/compensating community members for their time and contributions to co-production efforts for equality. Highlighted that some residents face multiple disadvantages and on no/low income and cannot afford to volunteer time that is needed in co-production work.

Suggested gathering broader feedback from residents, not just champions, to understand public trust levels and perceptions of the councils.

Stressed that engagement should not be a one-off event; there needs to be an ongoing dialogue with communities over time.

There was a concern that too many printed materials can lead to information overload; champions advised more thoughtful, targeted communication approaches.

Name (Optional)
Adil
Adil
Fatou
Ridwan

Nikki

Ridwan

Adil

Nicole

Response/how we will use this feedback
<p>We will ensure a concise, clear summary of the strategy that uses plain English is included when the strategy is published on the Oxford City Council website this summer.</p> <p>We will also re-consider the language across the whole strategy when it is reviewed fully in 2027.</p>
Great to hear!
We will share this suggestion with the Communications Team who will be leading on this action.
<p>Absolutely, ensuring we are making accessing our digital services as easy as possible and supporting people to do so is very important.</p> <p>There are a number of ongoing actions in place with local initiatives to signpost and support our more vulnerable citizens to access digital skills training and technology.</p> <p>And ultimately our face-to-face and telephone services will remain in place for those that need them.</p> <p>We have a programme of work already underway and ongoing to simplify our processes and utilise automation where possible and appropriate to make accessing our services quicker and easier.</p> <p>Our website and webforms should be mobile-accessible so there are no plans for a mobile app at this time, but again we will share this feedback with the Communications Team for consideration.</p> <p>These webpages are actually currently being reviewed as part of the website development plan and so changes and improvements should be seen soon! ☐</p> <p>manage our contact channels so that those who need to access our services via telephone or face-to-face can do so with little delay and those that can utilise our digital channels are encouraged and supported to do so.</p> <p>We are utilising automation and AI to improve the efficiency of our service delivery, rather than replacing staff.</p> <p>We will pass this feedback on to our Consultation Officer and will ensure this is taken on board for the full review of the Citizen Experience strategy in 2027.</p>
<p>We will share this feedback with our People Team for consideration for our staff training programme and our annual staff briefing event.</p> <p>There is actually a plan being developed to broaden the Customer Service outreach to other community facilities as well as Community Larders.</p>



Citizen Experience Readiness Model & Self-assessment Tool

CITIZEN EXPERIENCE
FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Citizen Experience strategic principles



Our CEX Strategy sets out ambitious outcomes under 4 key principles, which align with those of Customer Service Excellence:

Citizen Focused

Positive Citizen Experience

Inclusive Access

Getting It Right First Time

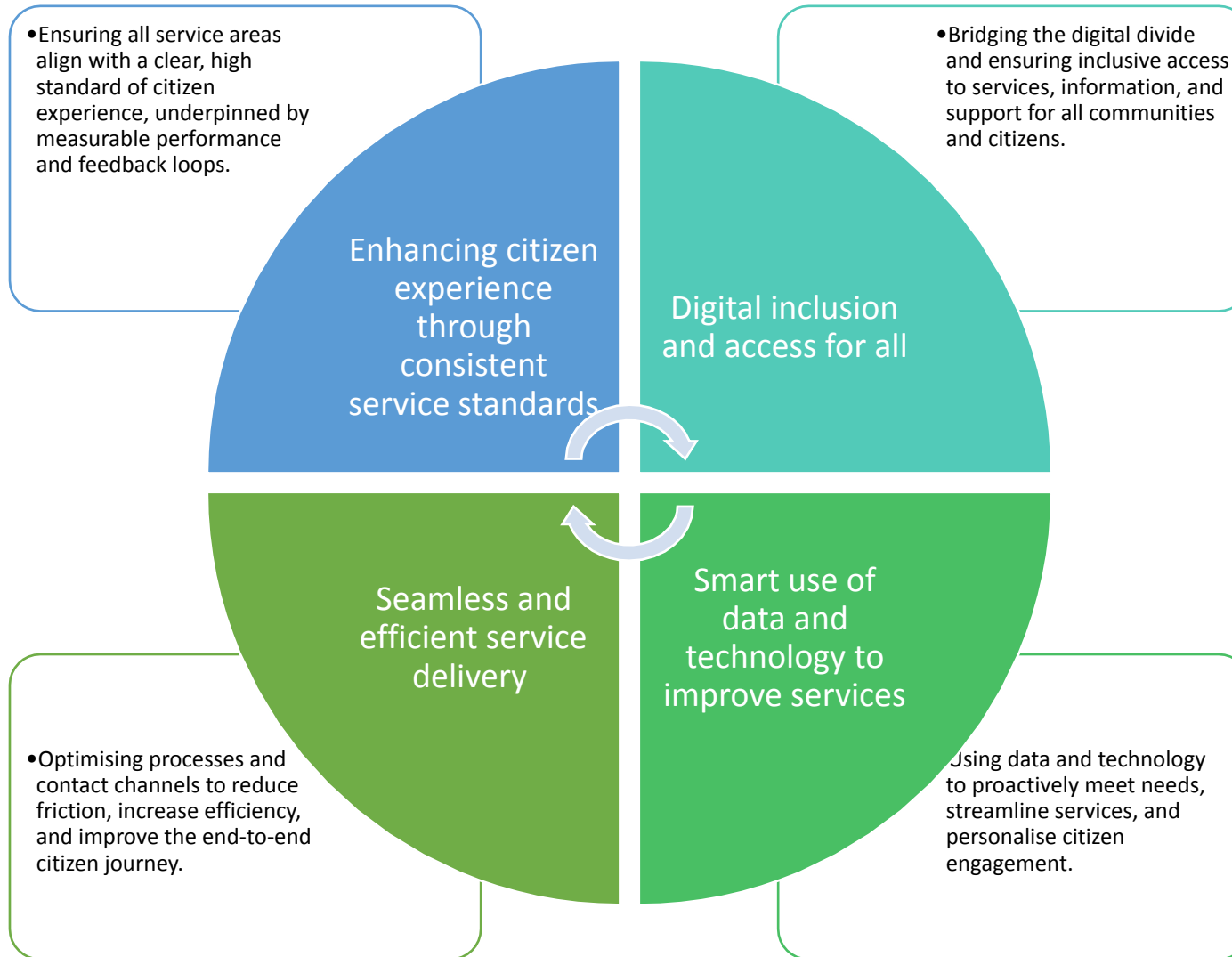


The 4 focus areas in the CEX Readiness Review Model support one or more of these principles and relate to the organisation's CEX Strategy Action Plan.

Overview of the model and tool



- Developed in 2024 in response to a challenge received as to how the CEX Strategy translates to Service Delivery.
- The Readiness Model has four focus areas to help galvanise delivery of the current strategy and action plan across the organisation.
- It is supported by a self-assessment tool for teams/services to measure the current state and desired future state against each of the focus areas. This will help identify strengths and areas for further action.
- The focus areas for 2025-27 are:
 - Enhancing citizen experience through consistent service standards
 - Digital inclusion and access for all
 - Smart use of data and technology to improve services
 - Seamless and efficient service delivery

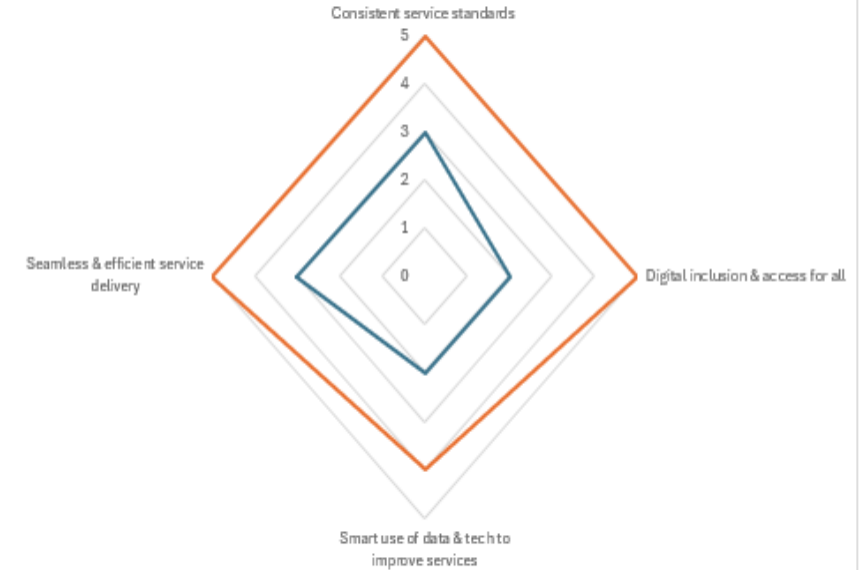


CEX Readiness Review Model

CEX Readiness Self- Assessment Tool

CEX Readiness Self Assessment Tool

		Current	Desired
1	Consistent service standards	3	5
2	Digital inclusion & access for all	2	5
3	Smart use of data & tech to improve services	2	4
4	Seamless & efficient service delivery	3	5



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Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	Gross			Current			Target		Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
							P	I	Score	P	I	Score	P	I					
		Scope of activities and resources to deliver strategy outcomes cannot be agreed with services	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	3	4	12	3	4	12	2	2	CEX Readiness Model and self-assessment tool developed.	31/03/27	Ongoing	50%	CEX Programme Manager
		The level and rate of efficiencies/savings realised is reduced by descoping or delay	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	4	4	16	4	4	16	3	3	ICT Roadmap regularly shared and reviewed. Robust Front Door of Change process and review Board in place. Good governance in place via fortnightly CEX Delivery Boards and OCB.	31/03/27	Ongoing	90%	CEX Programme Manager
		Ongoing, increased and improved digital offer is delayed due to deployment of ICT on other projects	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	3	3	9	3	3	9	2	2	Webforms and website refresh reported on under CEX tracker to help prioritise and align objectives. ICT/Digital a standing item at the CEX Delivery Board weekly meeting to discuss inter-dependencies and timelines. Front Door of Change (FDOC) and FDOC Board in place whih helps to understand new requests and impact on ICT capacity. Website Working Group also in place as Change Control for anything that impacts on website. ICT Roadmap shared for regular review.	31/03/27	Ongoing	100%	CEX Programme Manager
		Channel shift outcomes delayed/not realised	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	4	4	16	4	4	16	3	3	Channel Management Plan developed and being implemented. Closely monitoring the corporate KPI re: online form usage - quarterly meetings in place.	31/03/27	Ongoing	70%	CEX Programme Manager
		Digitally excluded citizens are negatively impacted by these changes	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	2	3	6	2	2	4	2	2	Equality Impact Assessment in place for Strategy with individual EIAs for relevant workstreams which should be annually reviewed. Ensure a fit for purpose F2F offer is still in place within the community.	31/03/27	Ongoing	70%	CEX Programme Manager
		Capacity and commitment in services to lead and deliver on projects.	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	3	4	12	3	4	12	2	2	Robust Terms of Reference agreed in scoping meetings complete with RACI to ensure roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear from the start of each project. Project Leads attend CEX Delivery Board to provide update and raise any issues/blockers each fortnight and are asked to provide monthly updates on CEX tracker. All issues and blockers escalated Change Board when necessary.	31/03/27	Ongoing	100%	CEX Programme Manager
		Lack of awareness and understanding of Fit for the Future and CEX strategy/programme across the organisation causes duplication and low engagement	Threat	Reduce	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	3	3	9	3	3	9	2	1	Work closely with internal comms. Comms campaigns delivered early 2025. Monthly intranet articles shared. New Sharepoint intranet page in place	31/03/27	Ongoing	100%	CEX Programme Manager
		Local Government Re-organisation impacts scope of the strategy and resources for delivery.	Opportunity	Contingency Plans	14/05/25	Emma Jackman	5	5	25	5	3	15	5	2	Impact of this very unknown at this stage, but this risk will continue to be reviewed as potential plans unfold.	31/03/27	Ongoing	10%	CEX Programme Manager
									0			0							

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

Service Area: Financial Services and Communities & Citizens' Services 95	Section: Fit for the Future – Change Support Team	Key person responsible for the assessment: Helen Bishop (Director of Communities and Citizens' Services and Citizen Experience Delivery Lead) Vicki Galvin (Senior Programme Manager for Citizen Experience)	Date of Assessment: May 2025	
Is this assessment in the Corporate Equality Impact Assessment Timetable?			Yes	No
Name of the Policy to be assessed: Citizen Experience Strategy			Is this a new or existing policy	Existing

<p>1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy</p>	<p>This Citizen Experience Strategy outlines the approach we will be taking to provide a positive experience for all our citizens in accessing our services and engaging with us as a provider of them.</p> <p>This strategy will ensure that all the City Council Services are in tune with the approach and embraces other organisations and community groups so that together, we provide the right support for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.</p> <p>The Citizen Experience (CEX) Strategy Vision is to:</p> <p>‘Put communities and citizens at the heart of how we work, ensuring they actively shape our services and that the right support is available for anyone living, working or visiting Oxford.’</p> <p>To bring this to life there are 4 key principles that accord with the Customer Service Excellence Standard. They are:</p> <p>Citizen focused: Positive Citizen Experience (CEX): Inclusive Access: Get it right first time:</p> <p>The CEX Strategy is strongly aligned with the Council’s Equalities, Inclusive Economy and People Strategies. It also supports the Thriving Communities Strategy, particularly as the Citizen Experience Strategy aims to strengthen support within communities and work collaboratively with partners, agencies and community groups giving ‘right first-time’ solutions and advice. This is not just about solving short term day to day issues but ensuring early intervention, improving citizen outcomes overall and reducing the call on council services, so it can focus on the most complex needs.</p>
<p>3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and in what way</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All citizens of Oxford which includes residents and businesses • Our staff • Our Members • Partners • Visitors <p>Strengthening support within communities and enhancing the role of prevention, this strategy will improve citizen outcomes overall and</p>

	<p>reduce the call on council services, which can then focus on the most complex needs.</p> <p>Technology, systems and processes will be integrated between the customer operations and operational services, to ensure the needs of our citizens are met in a seamless way, whilst staff can focus their efforts where they are most needed.</p>
<p>4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy?</p> <p>Outcomes have been defined under each of the four main principles of the strategy. The current known workstreams to deliver these outcomes and the potential EDI implications for each of these have been set out below.</p> <p><u>Citizen focused</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting our Citizens at the heart of everything we do • Using insight and feedback, developing a learning culture to continually improve our offer to citizens <p>The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:</p> <p>97</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining Customer Service Excellence accreditation. • Reviewing our corporate standards, key performance indicators and service offer to ensure they are fit for purpose. • Collecting and utilising Customer Satisfaction feedback more consistently across the organisation through use of an improved question bank. • Defining what excellent citizen experience looks like for each of our Service Areas to support service planning. • Implementing the Low-Income Families Tracker to proactively identify families with unmet support needs and connect them with the assistance they are entitled to. <p>The EDI implications here are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Service Delivery: Ensure all initiatives are designed to meet the diverse needs of all communities, including those who are marginalized or disadvantaged. • Accessible and Representative Feedback: Collect customer satisfaction data in accessible formats and analyse it across different demographic groups to identify and address inequalities. • Equity in Standards and KPIs: Embed EDI considerations into corporate standards and performance indicators to ensure fairness and accountability. • Diverse User Engagement: Involve a broad range of citizens in defining excellent service to reflect varied experiences and expectations. • Proactive and Sensitive Support: Use tools like the Low-Income Families Tracker in a respectful, non-stigmatizing way to connect under-supported families with essential services. <p><u>Positive Citizen experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure the experience is quicker, easier and better 	

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

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:

- Completing the website improvement project including developing new webforms and maximising automation opportunities.
- Delivering process review projects to improve service delivery e.g. HMO Licensing
- Driving wider utilisation of the Community Led Solutions database to signpost citizens to the right support
- Ensuring a more consistent approach to payments with online payment options more widely available

The EDI implications here are

- **Digital Accessibility:** Ensure all website improvements, webforms, and automated services meet accessibility standards and are usable by people with disabilities, low digital literacy, or limited internet access.
- **Inclusive Process Design:** Review service delivery processes (e.g. HMO Licensing) to remove barriers faced by underrepresented or vulnerable groups and ensure equitable access.
- **Equitable Signposting:** Use the Community Led Solutions database to connect all citizens—especially those from disadvantaged or hard-to-reach groups—to relevant, culturally appropriate support.
- **Fair Access to Payments:** Provide multiple, inclusive payment options to avoid excluding those who are digitally excluded or unbanked.
- **Engagement and Communication:** Involve diverse communities in testing new systems and communicate changes in multiple formats and languages to ensure understanding and uptake.

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Inclusive Access

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

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:

- Supporting our communities to have access to digital technology and better digital skills through various community initiatives.
- Developing and delivering a Communications Plan to raise awareness of the translation options available for accessing our services
- Expanding and encouraging wider use of Community Ladders by the organisation to support our citizen outreach
- Using video walkthroughs on our Community Centre websites to show the facilities available and access options

The EDI implications here are

- **Reducing Digital Inequality:** Ensure digital inclusion initiatives prioritise those most affected by the digital divide, such as older adults, low-income households, and people with disabilities.
- **Language Accessibility:** Promote and expand translation services to support non-English speakers and those with limited literacy, ensuring equitable access to information and services.

- **Inclusive Community Outreach:** Use Community Ladders strategically to reach underserved populations, considering cultural sensitivities and barriers to access.
- **Accessible Communication:** Ensure video walkthroughs are inclusive, featuring captions, voiceovers, and clear navigation for users with sensory or cognitive impairments.
- **Targeted Engagement:** Collaborate with diverse community groups to raise awareness of available resources and tailor approaches to local needs and preferences.

Get it right first time

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

The following current/future high level workstreams will help deliver these outcomes:

- Embedding a continuous improvement culture with staff through self-assessment tools and training in areas such as SharePoint and Artificial Intelligence
- Expanding the availability of online booking functionalities to make the process quicker and easier
- Completing call intent analysis to understand how Artificial Intelligence may be able to support service improvements for our Contact Centre
- Implementing the Channel Management Plan to rationalise and improve use of our contact channels
- Utilising data and insight from the new 3Cs system to improve services and inform decision making.

The EDI implications here are

- **Inclusive Staff Development:** Ensure all staff have equitable access to training and tools, with support for varying digital skills and learning needs.
- **Accessible Digital Services:** Design online booking systems and AI-supported tools to be user-friendly and accessible for people with disabilities or low digital confidence.
- **Bias-Free AI and Data Use:** Monitor AI and data-driven insights for potential biases, ensuring fair treatment and representation of all demographic groups.
- **Equity in Channel Access:** Implement the Channel Management Plan to retain inclusive, non-digital contact options for those who prefer or rely on them.
- **Responsive Service Improvement:** Use 3Cs data to identify and address service gaps affecting underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.

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

5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engagement, buy-in and commitment to implementing the strategy and action plan • Perceived capacity for implementing and embedding the action plan • Level of cultural change achieved in some areas • Leaders consistently leading by example • Local Government Re-organisation
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6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Oxford citizens • Our staff – including ODS and OX Place • Our Members • Unions 	7. Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy?	Oxford City Council – all services
8. Are there concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a differential impact on racial groups.	We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010).</p> <p>The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.</p>		
9. Are there concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a differential impact due to gender	We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	

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

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010).</p> <p>The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.</p>		
12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on people due to their age	We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010).</p> <p>The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.</p>		
13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on people due to their religious belief	We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate	N	

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>Oxford City Council does not discriminate or restrict access to their services on the grounds of; Age, Disability, Gender, Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race/ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010).</p> <p>The council are committed to equality and diversity and to ensure that services are reflective and responsive to local need.</p>						
14. Could the differential impact identified in 8-13 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy	Y	N	This will be determined as we implement the action plan. We will complete more detailed EIAs for the individual workstreams as appropriate.				
15. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason	Y	N	TBC – see above.				
16. Should the policy proceed to a partial impact assessment	Y	N	If Yes, is there enough evidence to proceed to a full EIA		Y	N	
			Date on which Partial or Full impact assessment to be completed by				
17. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	YES		NO	18. Date the Service Plan will be updated	All Service Areas are expected to include references to this strategy in their emerging Service Plans each year.	19. Date copy sent to Equalities Officer in Policy, Performance and Communication	

20. Date reported to Equalities Board:			Date to Scrutiny and EB	1 st July 2025	21. Date published	
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Signed (completing officer): _ _ Signed (Lead Officer) _ _

To: Cabinet
Date: 9 July 2025
Report of: Director of Housing
Title of Report: Annual Review of the Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To provide an update on the progress made in Year 2 of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 and to seek approval for the implementation of the Year 3 action plan
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable homes
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 – 2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the progress made in Year 2 to implement the Housing, Homelessness, and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan and the emerging risks and challenges for delivery over next year and beyond; Approve the adoption of the new Strategy Action Plan for Year 3 (25-26); and Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to update the Action Plan when required.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Year 2 Action Plan 2024-25
Appendix 2	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Year 3 Action Plan 2025-26
Appendix 3	Risk Register
Appendix 4	Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Introduction and background

1. Following implementation of the Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, considerable progress has been made towards actions within the Year 2 (24/25) action plan. Despite this progress, the Council faces significant and emerging challenges impacting the delivery of the Strategy, stemming from the local housing market, national policy and other sources, and therefore we have revised the action plan for Year 3 (25/26) to ensure it continues to drive forward progress to meet the objectives as outlined in the Strategy while addressing new risks and developments. The year 2 action plan and progress rating can be found in Appendix 1.
2. As part of the agreed governance of the Strategy, an annual report is provided to Cabinet and this report sets out progress made against the year 2 action plan for the five priority areas and seeks approval to implement the new year 3 action plan which is set out in Appendix 2. The overarching risks are detailed in the Risk Register in Appendix 3 and this report also sets out key governance, financial, environmental and equalities considerations.

Progress on the 5 Strategy priorities

Priority 1 – Providing more affordable homes

3. The affordable housing supply programme is currently on course to delivery 1,512 homes over the next four years, this is slightly below the ambitious four-year delivery target of 1,600 however it will exceed its target for social rented units, with 1,008 units projected to be delivered, against a target of 850. In 24/25, 109 affordable homes were handed over – 86 social rent, 2 affordable rent and 21 shared-ownership properties.
4. Agreements have been signed previously with three District Councils on the allocation of Social Housing for Oxford's unmet need. One remaining agreement with Cherwell District Council is pending sign off and officers are working on progressing this. These Councils have agreed to allocate several thousand affordable homes over the coming years to help meet Oxford's housing need.
5. These "unmet need" agreements are starting to deliver units for the people of Oxford. In 24/25 over 140 lets were made through the Vale of White Horse housing register for applicants that had an Oxford City connection or dual connection, including at least 75 cases where Oxford City Council had an active homelessness duty, where households are at immediate risk of becoming homeless or were already homeless in Temporary Accommodation (TA), securing them affordable housing close to the city.
6. There has been further progress on the Council's property acquisition programmes. In 24/25, utilising grant funding through Social Housing Accommodation Programme (SHAP) and Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF), the Council purchased 7 new council homes for Housing First and 10 homes to accommodate homeless households and resettled refugee families. We have also utilised Retained Right To Buy Receipts (RTRBR) to purchase 12 additional homes which will now be available at social rent to households on the housing register, which means 29 units were delivered through acquisition programmes overall.
7. The supply team have been proactively engaging with landlords; this has resulted in several development opportunities being brought forward this year and Officers have reviewed feasibility on a number of small sites across the city to try and increase housing supply.
8. In 24/25 there have been well publicised issues with Thames Water and the possible objection by the Environment Agency to future housing developments in Oxford due to improvements requires at the Oxford Sewage Treatment Works. Joint work between Oxford City Council, Thames Water and the Environment Agency has led to a new sewage

infrastructure deal whereby the Environment Agency is satisfied for Thames Water to introduce an interim scheme in 2027 to provide improved wastewater capacity, ahead of a full upgrade in 2031, enabling continued housing supply in the Oxford area from the end of 2027.

Priority 2 – Great homes for all

9. The Council continues to work to ensure the Council's housing stock and our services to tenants are fully compliant with the regulatory regime introduced as part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act and new consumer standards. Work is on-going to drive service improvement across Council services for tenants, with transformation underway in our landlord services and property teams, to ensure compliance over a number of areas.
10. Significant work has been undertaken on the Housing Revenue Account assets, with a new Asset Management Strategy and 5-year capital investment programmes agreed at Cabinet in December 2024, with continuation of rolling stock surveys to monitor property stock condition to ensure homes meet or are brought up to decent homes standards.
11. Work is on-going to reset our approach to resident involvement, ensuring an empowered tenant voice that shapes and influences our services. An initial roadshow in February 2025 reached 400 residents with significant work in train for the coming year.
12. Work to ensure private rented properties are compliant with property licencing schemes continues, with enforcement of both HMO and selective licensing schemes now aligned and additional staffing in place to proactively inspect properties. Through the licensing team, in total 17,195 properties are now covered by our property licensing schemes (when including individual flats under block licenses) including selective and HMO Licensing and the regulatory team continue with landlord engagement through landlord forums.

Priority 3 – Housing for a net zero housing future

13. OX Place continues to work on exceeding current building regulations and continues to use energy quality assurance on all schemes in contract and explore how to increase environmental standards.
14. Our Asset Management Strategy now informs our planned maintenance programme, which includes delivery of elements of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C and above. As detailed within the environmental section further down in this paper, the Council has clear aims to ensure Oxford meets its commitment to become a net zero city, however future delivery timelines and programmes will need to be balanced against funding parameters.
15. We continue to invest in energy efficiency and measures to decarbonise our council homes with surveys and designs to be rolled out across the remaining sub-EPC C properties in preparation for delivery in 2026 onwards.
16. The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) 2 ended on 31 March 2025 with over £250k awarded in grants to make homes more energy efficient. Oxford City Council has joined a consortium with Oxfordshire County Council which has been awarded £3.75 million for 3 years under the Warm Homes: Local Grant. The award announcement was made in March 2025. The scheme will start in April 2025. Active promotion of Warm Homes: Local Grant will begin once the County have confirmed delivery partner and communication and engagement plan for the scheme, and this is likely to be in summer 2025.

Priority 4 – Preventing Homelessness and creating a rapid rehousing response

17. Homelessness has increased in Oxford in recent years, in line with the national trends, driven by cost-of-living pressures, rising interest rates and strong rental inflation. Despite growing demand, the service has continued to transform, enabling a more effective

response. Homeless prevention services have been expanded, with a majority of homelessness cases in Oxford in 24/25 picked up at the prevention stage, and 63% of cases ending in a positive outcome preventing homelessness through either tenancy sustainment or rehousing.

18. The Council has also continued to transform its approach to rehousing homeless households and in its provision of temporary accommodation (TA). A renewed approach to private rented sector lets, and a reviewed social housing letting approach, led to increased TA move on, with 139 homeless households being housed into the private rented sector in 24/25. Temporary accommodation supply has been boosted in response to rising hotel and B&B use, with approximately 200 new TA units set to be delivered over the next 18 months. This includes over 30 private leased units, the leasing of units from housing associations, new partnerships with local charities who provide accommodation, and changing use of lower demand housing stock the council owns.
19. We continue to focus on providing a better digital offer to customers, building on the introduction of the online general housing register form this year. Over the next 12 months, we will look to develop our online offer to include transfer applications, and eventually Personal Housing Plans when meeting the Council's homelessness duties. We are seeking to procure a new housing needs ICT system and currently assessing bids, the aim of this procurement is to support further transformation of services.
20. Following the conclusion of an internal review of the Councils social housing allocations policy, the Council intends to consult on changes to inform a new policy, helping to meet the challenges the Council currently faces.
21. The Refugee and Resettlement Team continues to lead the response to growing refugee and asylum demand work within the City. The team led on securing the Council of Sanctuary Award which is a council-wide initiative and approval of the Council of Sanctuary Framework 2025-2028 and action plan. The team has successfully delivered the corporate resettlement commitment of 8 families a year.
22. The Council has secured another year's funding for its successful Out of Hospital programme, via the Better Care Fund, funding Step Down beds and other interventions to avoid people becoming homeless leaving hospital and other health facilities.
23. There is work on-going across Oxfordshire to create a new forum of registered providers, the aim of the group will be to enable regular conversations between housing associations and councils to discuss issues that are important to residents including housing management, repairs, allocations and homeless prevention, alongside affordable supply.

Priority 5 – Ending Rough Sleeping

24. The Council has made good progress in its efforts to end rough sleeping in 2024/25. The Council and its partners continue to invest in and transform services to move people off the street. This has resulted in a decline in the street count this year with data records showing a high of 90 individuals rough sleeping in August 2024, which had dropped to 35 by March 2025, this reduction is within a period where the country and many of our comparator authorities have recorded increases.
25. A review of key work areas within the commissioned Homelessness Alliance took place during summer 2024, which has led to the development of a transformation plan for the Alliance which is now being implemented. This comprehensive plan sets out the steps to change the Alliance's services and bring them into line with our strategic priorities, this includes greater specialisation of supported accommodation, the creation of a Housing-Led offer, expansion of Somewhere Safe to Stay services, and improvements in prevention and outreach services.
26. The Countywide Homelessness partnership has been making good progress. Two Housing Summits were held at the end of 2024 to bring together all key parts of the public

sector and registered providers to look at the homelessness and supply challenges Oxfordshire faces. This has helped inform an updated Countywide action plan, which includes work on joint commissioning, improving joint working across homelessness and Adult social care teams, and other key work.

27. Good progress has been made against our commitment to provide Housing First accommodation. Through a combination of acquisitions and the releasing of existing units from Council and A2 Dominion stock, we have secured 17 lettings this year giving a total of 47 units. By the end of March 2026, we expect to have 58 people in accommodation

Year 2 Strategy Action Plan

28. As outlined above, we have made good progress against our Year 2 action plan, but significant challenges remain. Within the Year 2 Strategy action plan document attached within Appendix 1, Officers have provided a narrative description of progress against each action with a rag rating to show progress.
29. The majority of actions are either on track or have minor delays as a significant number of work streams have been developed, implemented or in progress, to meet the various actions as set out within the Strategy.
30. Whilst there has been good progress against individual actions there are several over-arching risk themes that have emerged. These are highlighted below, alongside how Officers propose to mitigate these risks.

Emerging Risks and Challenges

31. A number of significant risks and challenges have emerged in the housing and homelessness area over the past year to 18 months and these are captured within the Risk Register in Appendix 3.
32. Due to the evolving context and challenges the strategy needs to be updated and flexible to meet changing demand, otherwise it risks becoming outdated and this is the first over-arching risk captured in the risk register. We plan to mitigate this risk through a flexible approach, adapting the action plan annually, with the ability to make changes more frequently if necessary. The Year 3 action plan is detailed within Appendix 2 and seeks to respond to the changing demands and pressures placed on the Council.
33. The second over-arching risk relates to the regulatory landscape and the compliance requirements of the Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023 provisions and all consumer standards, which ensure the Council complies with the requirements from the Regulator of Social Housing. Officers are mitigating this risk with work underway across the authority to ensure compliance with the standards, learning from the other Councils who have gone through an inspection. This includes our work on tenant involvement, which is now moving at pace, with the new governance structures mapped out in the delivery phase and the Asset Management Strategy and 5-year capital investment programmes agreed at Cabinet in December 2024.
34. Oxford City Council continues to see high and rising homelessness in the city, and a high temporary accommodation (TA) placement rate, in line with national trends, which is the third over-arching risk captured within the risk register. Cabinet have supported a number of mitigations in order to increase the supply of TA, create a new TA procurement process, increase private and social housing move on options and increase homelessness prevention activities. Despite this the Council has limited ability to change the overall rate of homelessness in the city, which is principally driven by the wider economy, rental prices and government policy, and the Council will continue to be exposed to high levels of demand and rising TA use for the foreseeable future and need to continue to respond at pace.

35. The government has consulted on significant changes to local government funding for homelessness services (Homelessness Prevention Grant). If implemented these will result in large funding reductions for Oxford and other authorities in the South East of England that experience high rates of homelessness. This is due to moving the main measure of demand from homelessness duties to local benefit claim rates. This, if it goes ahead, could result in service reductions or a greater burden on the core Council finance. This is the fourth key risk captured within the risk register. Officers are engaging central government on the effect of these significant changes and seeking to raise awareness to influence governmental policy.
36. The transformation of our approach to rough sleeping is facing a critical 12 months ahead and is the fifth over-arching risk. We have agreed a new budget and transformation plan for the Homelessness Alliance for 25/26 to mitigate this risk, which will see fundamental changes to their accommodation and support offer. However, transformation covering six organisations, in a period of high demand, and stretched budgets bring considerable challenges. The governments short-term funding arrangements also pose a risk and Officers continue to engage with government to advocate for a long-term funding settlement to tackle homelessness.
37. Local government re-organisation is the sixth over-arching risk captured within the risk assessment. This could have a significant effect on the Council's or any successor Council's statutory remit as it could merge with other District or County Local Authorities and the boundaries are re-drawn, as well as causing significant upheaval. It will also influence agreements such as the Countywide Strategy (which expires in 2026) captured in paragraph 25 above. At present proposals for Local Government Re-organisation in Oxfordshire are being drawn up and will be submitted to central government by November 2025. Officers are in regular contact with government, who have indicated that the earliest date for reorganisation for councils in Oxfordshire will be in 2028 and therefore at present Officers are monitoring this risk but do not believe it will have an immediate impact on the aims and delivery of the Strategy in Year 3 (2025/26)
38. The Council has committed to a number of development programmes to increase the supply of housing including in partnership with OX Place. To be able to achieve the Council's stated aim, there is a requirement to ensure the right level of resourcing and expertise are in place, which will need to be reviewed and actioned as pipeline schemes go through the development process, this forms the seventh key risk. Failure to do so may lead to slippage or delays in schemes being completed. To mitigate this risk, we now have an agreed programme risk register covering a series of mitigations set out in it. These risks sit at Corporate; Service; Programme; and Scheme level, with the internal officer Delivery Review Group (Housing) meeting overseeing it.
39. The HRA's 40-year Business Plan was presented to cabinet in December 2024 and approved. The Council has adopted the plan which details expected incomes, expenditure on housing management, housing repairs and capital maintenance over the next 40 financial years. It also models approved proposals for additional council house building and acquisitions. The plan shows that the Council is able to fund planned expenditure over the medium term as set out in the 2025/26 Budget and medium term financial plan proposals. The Business Plan confirms the reasonably good health of the HRA over the next 40 years, however previous rent caps, high inflation and interest rates have put pressure on the HRA, whilst at the same time increasing demands on delivery. There are a number of options that have been adopted within the plan to improve the financial position and will act as mitigations against this financial risk which forms the eighth over-arching risk detailed within the risk assessment.

Year 3 Strategy Action Plan

40. To respond in overarching risks as well as progress against the year 2 action plan, a new year 3 action plan has been developed, updating the current action plan after consideration of progress and to ensure the strategies, actions and priorities are adapted to the emerging challenges. The new action plan for year 3 can be found in Appendix 2.
41. We have worked closely with colleagues across the Council, Oxford Direct Services and OX Place as well as key external partners to develop this action plan and have ensured that our actions are aligned with other Council strategies, business plans and work priorities. The Action plan contains 5 year objectives, alongside year 3 actions, to ensure gradual progress towards our stated goals within the Strategy.
42. The Action Plan will be reviewed regularly to monitor and report on our progress against our commitments in the Strategy. To ensure it can respond quickly to emerging priorities and risks, we have requested approval to revise the plan throughout the year as required in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities.

Strategy governance

43. The Strategy document outlines the governance arrangements that will be put in place to ensure progress against the Strategy, outline accountability to those who need to deliver actions, and to support and inform the annual updating of the action plan over the duration of the Strategy.
44. Routine monitoring of the Strategy is done internally, with identified Officer Groups responsible for the delivery of the Strategy. As large parts of the Strategy sit across other departments and teams in the Council, regular review meetings are held with relevant colleagues across the organisation to ensure the Strategy is joined up.
45. Progress against actions will be updated on a quarterly basis, with regular updates made to the Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and the Communities, and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
46. A full review of the Action Plan and progress is completed on an annual basis and the recommendations for revisions to the action plan are presented annually to Cabinet for approval.

Next Steps

47. Subject to approval by Cabinet, the year 3 Action Plan 25-26 will be implemented in July 2025. Work on the monitoring framework for the action plan will begin immediately, with the governance and reporting structure resuming.

Environmental Implications

48. There are considerable environmental implications resulting from the actions contained within the Strategy. The majority of actions contained within the Strategy will either benefit or have no impact on the environment. This is because measures include considerable investment in energy efficiency improvements in our Council housing stock, higher standards for new builds being developed through our investment, and work in the Private Rented Sector to bring up standards.
49. Any development brings benefits and costs to the environment and is noted that there are risks associated with the costs to delivery on the Council's net zero ambition. Overall, the Council is clear in its Council Strategy that the delivery of more affordable housing is a priority to meet housing need, and therefore by developing to higher environment and energy efficiency standards this Strategy is helping to lower environmental implications of future development.
50. As significant schemes, projects and funding roll out in coming years that have significant impacts on the environment, those that have to go to Cabinet to be approved will have individual environment impact assessments in line with the Council's Constitution. The proposal complies with the City Council's policies and commitments

relating to carbon and the environment and brings us closer to our commitment to becoming a zero carbon council by 2030 and a zero carbon Oxford City by 2040.

Financial implications

51. Throughout its development, the new Strategy is informed by the current financial context the Council finds itself in. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been considered when developing the Strategy. The current economic climate including increased regulatory costs will have major financial impacts on the Council's finances, and this will also have an impact on the levels of funding that the Council will be able to allocate to deliver actions under the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
52. Particularly, the significant increase in homelessness presentations over the last year to 18 months which has caused a sharp increase in demand for temporary accommodation, leading to the frequent use of expensive nightly charge accommodation and increased regulatory regime and compliance requirements. This will continue to be a significant financial risk to the Council over the coming years. Preventing and tackling all forms of homelessness is a priority for the Council and despite the financial pressures, we have been able to increase spending on homelessness over the last few years. This is due to our success in obtaining external grant funding.
53. The delivery of the Strategy over the coming years is contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan, of which a net budget of £7.180 million has been allocated for Housing Services within the general fund is detailed below:

2025/26 Approved MTFP Budget:

	Latest Approved Budget
Strategy & Service Development	£520,132
Garages (Landlord Services)	£91,143
Homelessness Prevention	£598,330
Rapid Re-Housing	£4,208,712
Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness	£1,594,685
Other homelessness costs	£167,735
	£7,180,737

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is intended to record expenditure and income on running a council's own housing stock and closely related services or facilities, which are provided primarily for the benefit of the council's own tenants. A breakdown for 25/26 is found below:

<u>Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</u>	<u>Approved Budget</u>
Dwelling Rent	(£56,887,000)
Service Charges	(£3,066,000)
Garage Income	(£288,000)
Miscellaneous Income	(£1,006,000)
Net Income	<u>(£61,247,000)</u>
Management & Services (Stock Related)	£15,524,000
Other Revenue Spend (Stock Related)	£990,000
Misc Expenditure (Not Stock Related)	£834,000

Bad Debt Provision	£994,000
Responsive & Cyclical Repairs	£18,211,000
Interest Paid	£15,290,000
Depreciation	£12,040,000
Total Expenditure	£63,884,000
 Net Operating Expenditure/(Income)	 £2,637,000

54. The Council, and other Local Authorities, have relied heavily on funding from central government for any increased spending on homelessness, in particular in relation to preventing and tackling single person homelessness and rough sleeping, over the last few years. These funding pots have been short-term, which presents us and service providers with challenges as we cannot plan and commit funding to long term solutions. We currently have confirmed grant funding only up to March 2026. Following the government's spending review publication in June 2025 we hope to be informed of a multi-year grant settlement that will allow longer term planning, which will help facilitate further transformation.

55. As outlined in the Council zero carbon strategies, we have a clear commitment to improve energy efficiency standards for our homes which are ambitious, and it is important that we make good progress on this to meet the challenges of the climate emergency. However, the work that needs to be carried out to meet the commitments outlined in this Strategy requires significant levels of investment. The Council operates in an increasingly challenging financial position, impacting all providers of social housing. This is at the same time as we need to invest in our housing stock overall. Significant central government funding will be required in this area to fulfil ambitions.

Legal issues

56. We are required by law to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in place. This must be based on a review of all forms of homelessness in the local area and this Strategy should be refreshed at least every 5 years. The current Strategy came into place in April 2023. There is no such legal requirement to have a Housing Strategy, however, it is seen as best practice. Due to the link between the supply of housing and levels of homelessness, the Strategies are interlinked and cannot be easily separated. We have therefore brought these interdependent strands together to create one cohesive Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Level of risk

57. Individual risks and rag rating against progress are captured within the year 2 action plan and progress description.

58. Over-arching risks are summarised within this report and captured in the risk assessment which is attached as Appendix 3. Please note this risk assessment is for the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Strategy itself includes many projects which will each have their own individual risk assessments.

Equalities impact

59. An equality impact assessment was completed as part of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028, and this has been reviewed for this cabinet paper and can be found in Appendix 4.

60. A number of actions in the year 2 action plan were set in relation to improving the delivery of the Strategy and in relation to individuals or groups with a protected

characteristic and in relation to delivering actions related to equalities, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

61. Positive progress has been made including a project to analyse the characteristics of households approaching the Council as homeless, OCC tenants and General Housing Register applicants. Officers have developed comprehensive data sets and plan to use this data to inform service planning and targeted initiatives in 2025/26 alongside related service delivery and existing projects.
62. Building on the progress in 24/25, the Year 3 action plan has set a number of actions related to EDI to ensure we give due regard to negative impacts on equalities and seek actions to mitigate any such impact.

Report author	Stephen Cohen
Job title	Refugee and Resettlement Manager
Service area or department	Housing Services
Telephone	01865 252569
e-mail	scohen@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:	
1	<u>Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28</u>
2	<u>Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 Year 2 Action Plan</u>

RAG Rating for the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028

June 2025

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Priority 1 - Providing more affordable housing

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by	End of Year 2 comments	End of Year 2 RAG rating Green - on track Amber - minor issues and/or delays Red - significant issues and/or delays Blue - completed
Increase the rate of affordable housing development, including Council homes through the affordable housing supply programme.	Build over 1,600 affordable, high quality and energy efficient homes through OX Place, the Council and housing association partners	Continue to make good progress towards the target of 1,600 by delivering high quality, energy efficient homes.	P1-1	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The affordable housing supply programme is currently on course to delivery 1,512 homes over the next four years, this is slightly below the ambitious four-year delivery target of 1,600 however it will exceed its target for social rented units.	
	Deliver over 850 affordable homes available at a social rent, delivered by OX Place, the Council and housing association partners.	Continue to deliver affordable homes at social rent to meet target of 850 by March 2026	P1-2	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The affordable supply programme will exceed its target for social rented units, with 1,008 units projected to be delivered, against a target of 850. In 24/25, 109 affordable homes were handed over – 86 social rent, 2 affordable rent and 21 shared-ownership properties.	
	Ensure significant investment from the Council's Housing Revenues Account goes into the development of new affordable homes during the strategy period.	Ensure the investment of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funds are in line with the HRA Business Plan and contributes towards the number of affordable homes	P1-3	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The new HRA (40 year) business plan was approved by Cabinet in December 2024 and the HRA capital budget 2025/26 and MTFP (medium term financial plan 5 years) was agreed at Council in February 2025. This allows sufficient funding to continue the current programme as proposed, with the potential to amend one scheme in favour of bringing forward some new opportunities into the pipeline over 2025.	

		that become available in the city.				
	Take available steps to secure and deploy public investment where this is available to make further affordable housing development viable in Oxford and Oxfordshire, including Homes England funding and wider infrastructure funds.	Bid for relevant funding when available, including an estimated 7 bids where funding has already been announced.	P1-4	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Alongside on-going schemes, one further scheme accepted onto the Homes England Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) 2021-26. Homes England has confirmed grant funding for Northfield Hostel phase 1 with the AHP 2021-26 programme. This scheme will benefit from £4.29m to deliver 51 affordable homes (27 Social Rented (SR) and 24 Shared Ownership (SO). Contract signing will take place in April with a Start On Site (SOS) anticipated later this same month.	
	Offer support and partnership to developers, landowners, social landlords and community-led housing groups to encourage delivery of new affordable homes.	Enhance our partnerships with housing associations by establishing regular meetings to discuss feasibility of development.	P1-5	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Regular 'strategic partnership' annual/ bi-annual meetings are in place with each of the developing/ large stock holding Registered Providers in Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) partnership.	
		Proactively engage with landowners about potential developments on sites.	P1-6	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Through the additional acquisitions from the Retained Right to Buy Receipts programme (April 2024 Cabinet) several development opportunities have been brought forward this year as 100% affordable schemes. Subject to any outstanding approvals, contract and governance this includes Maltfield House (15 homes), Sandy Lane the Bungalow (12 homes), Laburnum Road (TBC 10 homes), Rose Hill (TBC 8 homes) and Westlands Drive (TBC 2 homes) which are intended to deliver within the four-year programme.	
		Continue to review land supply for affordable housing development as part of the Local Plan	P1-7	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Further recent engagement with Planning Policy with regards to possible site allocations/ call for sites for the preparation of the Local Plan.	
	Explore options and feasibility of	Initial feasibility assessment carried	P1-8	Economy, Regeneration	Work on-going, continuing to engage with partners. Five sites are being prepared for development using BLRF	

	developing small and adjoining sites	out for a number of small sites across the city.		and Sustainability	(Brownfield Land Release Fund) funding. Working with OCLT (Oxford Community Land Trust) on developing the Balfour, Harebell and Pegasus garage sites. The pre-application meeting was in February 2025. In procurement for the design of the Leiden and Underhill Circus sites to be developed by OCHL. Further sites identified for additional feasibility studies to assess development potential.	
		Develop an approach for the development of small and adjoining sites.	P1-9	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The desktop study result and mapped sites have been completed and will be shared with Members in April 2025 for easy access and reference. Feasibility studies to commence on a further c.8 sites in Q1 2025/26.	
	Support and encourage the use of factory-built housing and modular construction	Start on-site with a modular contractor for at least one OX Place development	P1-10	OX Place	Modern Methods of Construction for modular housing as an industry is not sufficiently mature or reliable enough to be a viable option for the foreseeable future.	Action removed. To be re-considered at end of year 3 annual review
	Work to ensure that new affordable homes delivered meet established and projected housing need	Monitor and update housing need in relation to affordable housing in the city, e.g. size, tenure, location, number of units etc.	P1-11	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Regular review and updating of housing needs data; communication and joint working across teams. The last housing needs update was provided in March 2025 and submitted to Development Review Group (Housing) in April 2025. This action will be amended for Year 3 action plan to reflect current demands.	
		Senior Housing Management team to continue with regular reviews of housing needs data and delivery forecasts, to influence affordable housing supply, ensuring demand and the Council's priorities inform the supply of affordable accommodation, including the accommodation delivered by OX	P1-12	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Regular review and updating of housing needs data; communication and joint working across teams. The last housing needs update was provided in March 2025 and submitted to Development Review Group (Housing) in April 2025.	Merged with P1-11 in the Year 3 Action Plan

		Place and our partners.				
		Using need for affordable housing to drive development in the city and spend of Housing Revenue Account funds.	P1-13	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	As above. Regular review of housing needs data allows affordable housing delivery to reflect current priority need within the wider strategy and policy framework.	Merged with P1-11 in the Year 3 Action Plan
		Ensure that steps are taken to meet high demand of certain affordable housing types, such as 1-bedroom properties	P1-14	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	As above. Continued review and flexibility where possible to prioritise highest need. Currently this is reflected in the delivery of one-bedroom units as part of the RRTB and SHAP acquisition programmes.	
		Monitor the effects of First Homes requirements as per national legislation in new developments on the local development of 1-bed social rented properties. Consider effects and potential mitigations	P1-15	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Ongoing monitoring of policy and legislative decisions. Subject to confirmation of planning amendments on one final scheme where it is intended that the First Homes on the site will be converted to a mix of social rent and shared ownership, there are now no First Homes anticipated to deliver in Oxford. Removed from year 3 action plan as no longer required following change in government policy.	
		Review outstanding actions from the Older Persons Review and make progress to complete relevant actions.	P1-16	Housing Services	Guidance on the different types of older persons housing in the city is available on the OCC website. Information on the different schemes available will be kept under review to ensure up to date information is available to housing applicants.	
Provide homes for those struggling in the Oxford housing market	Deliver shared ownership programme	Deliver shared ownership properties as part of our commitment to deliver 1,600 affordable homes	P1-17	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Shared Ownership properties remained popular in Oxford during the year. The Youngs Way scheme offered five shared ownership homes which were each reserved in advance of completion. There is a high level of interest in these schemes with OX Place advertising homes in advance of completion.	

		by the end of March 2026.				
	Continue to bring empty homes back into occupancy	Continue to work with and support property owners to bring properties back into domestic use.	P1-18	Housing Services / Planning and Regulation	Work is on-going to encourage landlords to bring empty homes back into through initiatives such as Council Tax changes and this action has been updated in the year 3 action plan.	
		Where possible and appropriate, take stronger enforcement action on property owners.	P1-19	Housing Services / Planning and Regulation	The Empty Property Officer post is due to be discontinued. This action has not been progressed. Therefore the year 3 action plan has been updated to reflect current initiatives.	Merged with P1-18 in the year 3 action plan
		Continue joint working with Aspire to explore the use of social investments to bring long-term empty properties back into use as part of a pilot project.	P1-20	Housing Services / Planning and Regulation	The Empty Property Officer post is due to be discontinued. This action has not been progressed, therefore the year 3 action plan has been updated to reflect current initiatives.	Action removed from Year 3 action plan.
	Review and refresh the Council's Tenancy Strategy	Review and develop a new Tenancy Strategy to replace our 2018-23 strategy.	P1-21	Housing Services	This work is being progressed in 2025/26 with the engagement of an external consultant to support the project.	
	Use Right to Buy receipts and borrowing in the Housing Revenue Account to purchase properties for social rent for people on the Housing Register	Monitor Right to Buy sales and develop plans for spending receipts. Once plans have been developed, purchase properties in line with these plans.	P1-22	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The combined acquisitions programme delivered 29 new homes this year using funds and grant from Retained Right to Buy Receipts, Local Authority Housing Funds 2 and 3 (as well as underspend from LAHF 1 and 2) and Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP - Homes England). This is the highest number of acquisitions in one year to date.	
	Lobby central government to	Continue to respond to relevant	P1-23	Planning and Regulation	Various consultations have been responded to during 2024/25 including most recently the Support Housing	

	introduce controls around the short term let market.	government consultations and use opportunities to influence in order to openly share the Council's position so that we can help guide policy making.			Regulation consultation which could bring significant changes to supported housing regulation in the City. This work is on-going as new consultations are launched.	
	Take appropriate action where a house has changed into short term let/holiday accommodation without the correct planning permission	Continue to investigate alleged breaches of planning permission on short let use	P1-24	Planning and Regulation	Officers continue to receive and investigate alleged 'change of use' of properties to short lets. The capacity to do this will increase with the creation of the new planning enforcement officer post.	
		Where breaches are identified, take appropriate action to resolve the breach.	P1-25	Planning and Regulation	Investigations into breaches ongoing; a number of Planning Contravention Notices have been served with a view to taking formal action where required. The team will have extra capacity with the creation of a new planning enforcement officer post within the team; this will allow increased/further action to be taken, including proactive, which has not been possible up to now due to capacity.	
		Prepare to implement registration scheme for short-term lets, as per the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, work closely with owners in the city to support them to understand and operate within the new legislation.	P1-26	Planning and Regulation	No further update from central government on this scheme. It is still in the proposals stage. It is outside of our control.	
Work better with our housing delivery partners and neighbouring Councils	Work with neighbouring councils to support the delivery of a number of developments in Oxfordshire.	Agreements and arrangements for allocation of social housing in Districts made with Cherwell District Council (CDC)	P1-27	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Memorandum of Understanding with CDC remains to be signed (delayed due to the capacity in the CDC legal team).	

		Establish effective monitoring to ensure that new developments are being allocated to Oxford residents in housing need.	P1-28	Housing Services	Currently, the only District delivering new homes for Oxford's Unmet need is Vale of the White Horse DC as there are effective arrangements in place between OCC and Vale, with monitoring of new lets for residents with an Oxford connection. Arrangements are on-going as progress is made by the other Districts on delivering additional homes for Oxford's Unmet Need in the future as sites develop.	
	Support and identify opportunities for community-led housing developments.	Continue our engagement with community groups and community land trusts	P1-29	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Engagement with the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust (OCLT) on three former garage sites in Blackbird Leys, and with the OCH (Oxford Co-housing) group re the potential for some Community-Led Housing (CLH) or Custom Build on the Redbridge Paddock site.	
		Progress community-led housing projects on garage sites identified through work funded by the Housing Advisers Programme	P1-30	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Desktop study of all small sites in the city completed. Short listed sites with most development potential established. To start grouping sites to increase development potential. Engagement with all Councillors on the sites due in April 2025.	
		Through our work to develop an approach to develop small sites, identify suitable sites for community-led housing	P1-31	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	As above in P1-30	
		Identify and secure suitable funding to progress feasibility stages for community-led housing on identified small sites.	P1-32	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Engagement with the OCLT on three former garage sites in Blackbird Leys. Small sites project being progressed to assess OCC owned small sites and look at viable delivery models for those best able to support housing. The OCLT is in contact with Resonance further to the Government £20m funding announcement on 25 March 2025 for community-led housing (pre-development borrowing).	

Priority 2 - Great homes for all

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by	End of Year 2 comments	End of Year 2 RAG rating
						Green - on track Amber - minor issues and/or delays Red - significant issues and/or delays Blue - completed
Improve the quality of accommodation in the private rented sector	Continue to deliver the property licensing schemes (HMO & selective) across the private rented sector.	Ensure that the majority of applications for property licenses are processed and licenses issued.	P2-1	Planning and Regulation	<p>In total, 17,195 properties are covered by our property licensing schemes (when including individual flats under block licences).</p> <p>In total, 12,545 Selective licence applications have been received of which 11,245 have been issued. From 1 September 2024, KPI to process 80% within 12 weeks of application date. Currently at 98% issued within KPI.</p> <p>In total, approx. 3000 HMO licences currently issued (this does not include pending applications). HMO new applications KPI1: to issue 80% within 16 weeks of application, currently at 91%. HMO KPI2 to issue 80% renewal applications within 6 weeks of expiry, currently at 88%.</p> <p>This demonstrates the majority of applications are processed and licences issued.</p>	

		Continue the work of investigating unlicensed properties incorporating the property licensing schemes, including number charged higher application fees	P2-2	Planning and Regulation	In total, 273 reports of unlicensed properties were received (157 Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO), 116 Selective Licences (SL). 61 applications have been secured (22%), 119 (44%) closed as exempt / not licensable / already licensed and the remaining are under investigation. 1170 Selective Licence applications were charged the higher fee for failing to apply within 12 weeks of becoming tenanted. 36 HMO licences have been charged the higher fee for failing to apply within 12 weeks of becoming an HMO. We issued 2 financial penalties for failing to apply for a licence (1 HMO, 1 SL).	
		Progress the enforcement of non-compliance with the property licensing schemes.	P2-3	Planning and Regulation	This year 18 Improvement Notices, 14 Prohibition Orders, 2 Emergency Remedial Action notices and 32 hazard awareness notices have been served. In addition, 19 other "environmental health" notices have been served. 37 HMO licences were charged the Category D fee for poor management compliance.	
	Reduce the number of privately rented homes that contain serious home hazards.	Continue inspections of properties where we have been notified of concerns with rented homes	P2-4	Planning and Regulation	This year, 133 properties have been inspected following reports of poor conditions / concerns. (This does not include HMOs where a 5-year inspection was recorded.)	

		Continue with our proactive inspection programme of HMO properties and introduce proactive inspections for properties with a selective licence.	P2-5	Planning and Regulation	<p>This year, 129 HMOs were inspected as part of the new licence application process.</p> <p>This year, 128 properties have been inspected or audited as part of our five-year HMO programme.</p> <p>This year, 319 Selective Licensing properties have been inspected (either reactively or proactively).</p> <p>Large scale inspection contract awarded, to begin 7 April 2025.</p> <p>This action can be monitored in 2025/26 for ongoing monitoring of actions to reduce homes with serious home hazards.</p>	
		Ensure compliance using education and enforcement of all appropriate legislation in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.	P2-6	Planning and Regulation	<p>Two landlord forums held in 2024/25 to educate landlords and agents on damp and mould, fire safety, carbon monoxide, HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) and energy efficiency.</p> <p>This year, 251 HMO compliance visits were undertaken where works had been included on the licence. Following revisits and checks 75% had complied and 25% had not completed the required works.</p> <p>This year, 120 properties were improved following a reactive inspection.</p>	
Continue to deliver investments into our Council homes	Develop a programme of rolling annual stock condition surveys.	Continue programme of rolling stock condition surveys that incorporate Building Surveys, Structural/Concrete surveys, Energy & Sustainability (Energy Performance Certificate, EPC) and Building compliance & Safety (Fire, Water, Asbestos) to ensure all aspects of Property Management is included in investment programmes or major works projects.	P2-7	Property Services	<p>The stock condition survey programme has been completed and will be repeated in 2025/26 to improve further on the data we hold which will facilitate budgetary forecasting, management and the development of capital programmes going forwards.</p>	

	Use stock condition surveys to ensure a consistent and updated asset management strategy is in place and provides a coordinated plan for maintenance, investment, regeneration and carbon reduction work.	Develop and implement Asset Management Strategy, reviewing and refreshing the stock data.	P2-8	Housing Services	The inhouse Data team are continuously updating and refreshing the information received from the stock condition surveys ensuring all information is captured and transferred into the relevant workstreams linked to the Capital Works Programme and this action will be updated in the Year 3 action plan to reflect current objectives and Council policies.	
	Invest £51m into Council homes in line with our asset management strategy.	Develop and deliver an investment programme for our existing stock, informed by the stock survey	P2-9	Property Services	In accordance with the strategic work undertaken by OCC with ODS in this financial year, 2025/26 is a transitional year during which capital works will be delivered according to the programme, but the transitional period will include discussions regarding specifications, costs and budget to inform the five year capital programme which will commence in 2026/27.	
Provide quality, timely and responsive services to council tenants, with high level of tenant satisfaction	Establish a transformation programme of our Landlord Services leading to improved services for our tenants, including ensuring all our	Complete transformation programme of landlord services, with a focus on the provision of quality service with high levels of tenant satisfaction and compliance with SHA and regulatory standards.	P2-10	Housing Services	Tenant satisfaction survey 2023/24 showed that overall satisfaction in 10 out of 12 measures was in the top quartile compared to other local authorities / ALMOs (Arms-Length Management Organisations).	

	tenant and leaseholder related activities are resourced sufficiently to comply with the Social Housing Act.	Finalise staffing structure of landlord services to reflect findings and recommendations from transformation work, ensuring that teams are sufficiently resourced to meet new obligations under the Social Housing Act.	P2-11	Housing Services	As above in P2-10.	
		Implement new structure, completing any required recruitment to vacant posts.	P2-12	Housing Services	As above in P2-10.	Merged with P2-11 in Year 3 action plan
	Deliver a new integrated and locality-based way of working to deliver services to our communities.	Continue to build our locality-based approach, including bringing in new council teams and working better across other statutory bodies.	P2-13	Communities and Citizens' Services	<p>Continue to deliver cross council meetings to coordinate work happening in Localities, to best meet the needs of our residents.</p> <p>Currently revising priorities for working in most deprived areas to best meet the needs of our residents and tenants with a particular focus on reducing inequalities in areas of most need.</p> <p>Now host Customer Service officer in community-based settings to be more accessible to local people.</p>	

	Repair services delivered are excellent and informed by: - making repairs at our tenant's convenience; - make the fix first time; - staying fixed	Continue to embed and evaluate new ways of working, e.g. the use of new software for tenants to book/re-schedule appointments.	P2-14	Housing Services	The tenant portal is live and tenants are using it to book repairs and other interactions with the council to enhance the digital offer to tenants.	
	Provide effective and timely response to tenants impacted by anti-social behaviour.	Ensure complaints in relation to anti-social behaviour are responded to within 5 working days.	P2-15	Community Safety	Between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2025 in 86% of cases the initial contact with the complaint was within 5 working days. Over the last 6 months the case managers have improved the timeliness of making contact with complainants following a report of ASB. There is still room for improvement and it is being monitored.	
		Support complainants and perpetrators to resolve the anti-social behaviour.	P2-16	Community Safety	Between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2025 the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team (ASBIT) logged 178 new cases. There were 94 cases of neighbour nuisance, 41 noise, 15 streetwise. There were 45 safeguarding concerns raised. 178 cases were closed. The volume of work varies across the year, however cases are becoming more complex. This is demonstrated on the amount of safeguarding concerns we have. The vast majority of cases are regarding Oxford City Council tenants.	
	Use a combination of annual tenant and leaseholder surveys, and transactional surveys to gain feedback on our services to inform service	Continue to improve our digital offer to tenants to deliver improved communications and engagement. Seeking feedback to make changes in how we deliver our services in real time.	P2-17	Housing Services	To support the promotion of the roadshows a variety of communication methods including GOV.delivery as well as Mailchimp for segmented promotion. Over 5,500 tenants are now receiving the monthly digital edition of Tenants in Touch.	

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	development and improvement.	Implement new processes and procedures for recording all complaints on QL.	P2-18	Housing Services	Completed.	
Improve tenant engagement and tenant involvement to enhance accountability and put tenant's views at the heart of decision making and service development	Establish refreshed aims and purpose for our tenant engagement and involvement activities.	Implement new Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy and accompanying action plan.	P2-19	Housing Services	The Tenant Involvement roadshows reached out to 26 locations in the city. A new interim tenant engagement lead has been recruited to create the new strategy which will start with further consultations with tenants, leaseholders and shared owners. The aim is to have the strategy in place by end July 2025. This action has been amended in the year 3 action plan to respond to current objectives and Council policies.	
	As part of the Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy, establish a scrutiny function that allows tenants to better hold the Council and Oxford Direct Services to account and to influence outcomes.	Establishing defined aims and developing a scrutiny function to enhance accountability and ensure that tenants' views inform service delivery.	P2-20	Housing Services	The new Tenant Involvement Lead has been tasked with enhancing the scrutiny function which is in progress. An initial roadshow in February 2025 reached 400 residents with significant work in train for the coming year. Further there will be a need to recruit tenants, leaseholders and shared owners to these groups undertake a skills gap analysis on those members and provide relevant training.	Merged with P2-19 in Year 3 action plan
		Design and implement a tenant & leaseholder advisory board, to serve as a scrutiny function to hold OCC & ODS to account.	P2-21	Housing Services	As above.	Merged with P2-19 in Year 3 action plan
	Ensure that tenants and leaseholders involved in engagement and involvement activities better reflect the geographic	New Tenants and Leaseholder Strategy developed and implemented, incorporating this and in line with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.	P2-22	Housing Services	In addition to comments for P2-19 above, an initial roadshow in February 2025 reached 400 residents with significant work in train for the coming year, there is a wider and more reflective demographic spread than in the existing tenant ambassador cohort.	Merged with P2-19 in Year 3 action plan

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	spread and demographic makeup of our Council tenants as a whole.					
	Release and publish results against the new national tenant consumer standards under the Social Housing White Paper.	Respond and develop process for publishing results, in line with statutory requirements.	P2-23	Housing Services	Completed.	
		Appoint senior person within the organisation to be responsible for new consumer standards	P2-24	Housing Services	A new role has been created within the landlord services structure to lead on compliance monitoring working with Senior Management.	

Priority 3 - Housing for a net zero carbon future

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by	End of Year 2 comments	End of Year 2 RAG rating Green - on track Amber - minor issues and/or delays Red - significant issues and/or delays Blue - completed
Improve standards for new Council homes built in the city	New homes built by OX Place are net zero carbon for energy use in the properties (regulated operational energy) by 2030.	OX Place to produce a plan to meet this deadline date.	P3-1	OX Place	Work to ongoing to exceed current building regulations and explore how to meet OCCs net zero carbon ambitions as outlined in the Local Plan, however this action is pending due to limited resource in the team.	Amber
	Homes built by OX Place have carbon emissions levels for new homes that are 40% below national standards (Building Regulations 2021).	OX Place designing and building homes to meet or exceed the level stated.	P3-2	OX Place	Work is ongoing to exceed current building regulations and explore how to meet OCC's net zero carbon ambitions as outlined in the Local Plan.	Green

	Homes built by OX Place use electricity only and heated through low carbon means such as air source heat pumps.	OX Place designing and building homes to be electricity heated, usually with air source heat pumps.	P3-3	OX Place	All new homes in the pipeline and going through the planning stage are being designed to be constructed not to use gas. Focus on fabric first and adopting low carbon technologies including Solar PVs, ASHP, MVHRs to accord with the emerging Local Plan provisions.	
	Build as far as possible using a 'fabric-first' approach (as per Zero Carbon Action Plan)	Design/ build homes with fabric first approach.	P3-4	OX Place	As above.	
	Tackling the performance gap (the disparity between energy consumption predicted in design stage of a building and the energy use when in actual operation) and preventing any performance issues with new technologies by using an innovative energy quality assurance service. This provides checking, training and testing throughout the full design and construction phases of development.	Using Energy Quality Assurance service on all/ majority of dwellings.	P3-5	OX Place	Energy QAs appointed on all schemes in contract presently working closely with the development team and wider construction project team.	

Invest to decarbonise our Council homes	Ensure a consistent and updated asset management strategy is in place and provides a coordinated plan for maintenance, investment, regeneration and carbon reduction work for Council properties.	Continue to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures for council homes. Completion of Social Housing Decarbonation 2.1 project in 24/25.	P3-7	Property Services	200 of 281 properties have been completed with the remaining properties to be delivered by September 2025. Surveys and designs are to be rolled out across the remaining sub-EPC C properties in preparation for delivery in 2026 onwards.	
	Tie energy efficiency works into other planned maintenance programmes to ensure a co-ordinated and less disruptive approach to delivery, improving tenant experience.	Develop and implement plan for how we will deliver works to properties, including programmes for alternative heating installation across the stock.	P3-8	Property Services	Work continues on incorporating energy efficiency measures into the planned maintenance programme and properties that fall outside of this are being considered separately. Heat pump trials are currently at feasibility stage with installation to follow.	
	Work with tenants to agree and implement a programme of energy efficiency measures that will see tenants' energy use reduced, with the aim of reducing the number of tenants refusing	As part of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) wave 2.1 delivery, work with tenants to develop an approach and lessons learned.	P3-9	Property Services	This is currently underway and lessons from different approaches being incorporated as delivery continues. There have been major resident engagement issues during the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) project and it is clear wider engagement/ education is needed with residents to get them interested in retrofit works. Case studies will be built from SHDF project satisfied tenants.	

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	energy efficiency improvements.	A full handover and demonstration will be carried out with tenants on completion of works.	P3-10	Property Services	This is being fine-tuned following the first handovers of SHDF.	
		Engagement Strategy in place.	P3-11	Housing Services	The SHDF programme should conclude the work in homes by September 2025. Efforts are being made to encourage reticent tenants to provide access for the works.	
	Continue to bid for central government funding to fund our work to increase energy efficiency for our housing stock.	Bids for SHDF and other funding sources submitted where they complement planned work steams.	P3-12	Property Services	Officers continue to investigate funding streams where they align to planned work streams which are currently under development. Funding will need to complement the planned programme so a co-ordinated approach can be delivered with the capital works programme.	
Work with other landlords, such as Registered Provides and private rented sector landlords to increase energy efficiency, both in existing buildings and new developments.	Continue to set high standards for energy efficiency/carbon reduction for new build homes through local plan policies including the new Local Plan 2040.	Progress work on new Local Plan 2040 including updated policies addressing carbon reduction in new and existing development.	P3-13	Planning and Regulation	Local Plan 2040 has been withdrawn and a new timetable agreed for the Local Plan 2042 which will result in some delay to adopting new policies, though moving fast to get back to examination. The team are currently preparing for a consultation in June, which will set out preferred approaches for policies including on net zero carbon buildings. Additional consultation on full draft plan expected end of 2025 and submission for examination planned for Spring 2026.	

	Work with partners to apply for funding and signpost homes owners, and tenants and landlords in the private rented sector to funding for energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures to increase efficiency standards for properties.	Bid for any other government funding made available to support landlords to fund energy efficiency measures.	P3-14	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) 2 ended on 31 March 2025 with over £250k awarded in grants to make homes more energy efficient. Oxford City Council has joined a consortium with Oxfordshire County Council which has been awarded £3.75 million for 3 years under the Warm Homes: Local Grant. The award announcement was made in March 2025. The scheme will start in April 2025. Active promotion of Warm Homes: Local Grant will begin once the County have confirmed delivery partner and communication and engagement plan for the scheme, and this is likely to be in summer 2025.	
		Actively promote available funding and direct those eligible to apply for such funding.	P3-15	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Active promotion of Warm Homes: Local Grant will begin once County have confirmed delivery partner and comms and engagement plan for the scheme. Likely to be in summer 2025. Continue to promote ECO4 (Energy Company Obligation Phase 4, which requires large energy suppliers to fund energy efficiency improvements in low-income and vulnerable households), GBIS (Great British Insulation Scheme) and BUS (Boiler Upgrade Scheme) through engagement comms and projects.	
	Bring improvements to energy efficiency to the private rented sector by other means.	Lobby government for further funding to raise energy efficiency standards.	P3-16	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	We have been participating in research projects undertaken by E3G, a government think tank, on changes to MEES (minimum energy efficiency standards) and PRS (private rental sector) licensing. E3G make direct recommendations to government on policy.	

		Continue to encourage landlords to be accredited landlords under the City Council's Landlord Accreditation Scheme, which includes promoting and encouraging landlords to let properties with good EPC ratings.	P3-17	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	The team continue to work with landlords to gain accreditation under the Landlord Accreditation Scheme and promote energy efficiency. At year end 2024/25, a total of 573 landlords are accredited with our delivery partner, an increase of 160 landlords compared with 2023/24.	
		Work with landlords to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES).	P3-18	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Landlord, tenant and agent engagement plan has identified, and specific priorities have been started including: Letter sent to 56 estate agents in Oxford in February on collaboration and opportunities to support our landlord engagement work. Targeted marketing for landlords on A House Like Mine project (sent to landlord mailing list 3000+ recipients).	
	Ensure residents in the city can access consistent and quality energy advice in relation to both property	Continue to fund the Better Housing, Better Health (BHBH) service.	P3-19	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	BHBH annual report not yet received. Due end of April 25. BHBH service continues to provide good value for money. BHBH are a finalist in two categories at the LGC awards - service for improving health, housing and the climate.	

	improvements and energy usage.	Have an Energy Advice Officer in place with a remit to support owner occupiers and those renting in the private rented sector, to coordinate and support delivery of energy efficiency projects, support compliance on EPC, and support community engagement and outreach work.	P3-20	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Energy Advice for private rentals and owner occupiers is given by Better Housing Better Health. Specific Energy Advice Officers are not funded and therefore not in place. Energy Advice Officers for our own council housing also no longer in post but are using BHBH Signposting to resources is on our website and via attendance at events. Work focus has been on creating engagement materials for communities.	Action to be removed and merged with P3-19 in Year 3 action plan
		Continue our outreach work via events and partnerships to promote advice and funding opportunities.	P3-21	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	Two members of staff shadowed a home visit in partnership with Better Housing Better Health in February 2025 furthering the partnership work. The team attended a workshop led by Oxfordshire County Council for the development of the Oxfordshire Retrofit Strategy and the team continue to foster on-going partnership work.	
	Work in partnership with the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership to trial innovative approaches to different retrofit measures, scale delivery, share good practise.	Continue feasibility work in Oxford to scale retrofit approaches across different building and tenure types.	P3-22	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability	A House Like Mine project successfully launched on 6/5/25. The launch included press release, ongoing social media campaign, in person promotion, printed flyers and posters. Web pages are hosted by Cosy Homes Oxfordshire. The website hits since our launch campaign on 6 March are "A House Like Mine": Your Journey page +2501 hits and "A House Like Mine" case studies page +1088.	

					Clean Heat Streets project in Rose Hill and Iffley now completed and a success with 129 sign-ups out of 600 homes, 95 free surveys completed, 31 Air Source Heat Pump installations. Two new grant funding bids are currently being developed in order to carry on the great work these two projects have started.	
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Priority 4 - Preventing homelessness and adopting a rapid rehousing response

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by	End of Year 2 comments	End of Year 2 RAG rating
						Green - on track Amber - minor issues and/or delays Red - significant issues and/or delays Blue - completed

Transform Council services to better prevent and relieve homelessness	Complete a transformation of our Housing Needs team (covering homelessness service and the Housing Register) to focus more on prevention and rapid rehousing.	Ensure new teams, new procedures and new ways of working are implemented.	P4-1	Housing Services	Teams are now established and there is an on-going focus on service development which is in place and has become business as usual.	
	Ensure a continuous culture of change and service improvement is embedded into Housing Needs.	Continue to embed transformation work across Housing Needs, roll out new team structures and ensure continued culture change within Housing Needs. Review progress after 6 months.	P4-2	Housing Services	As part of the transformation work, teams are now established, and service development continues as business as usual.	
	Embed a corporate approach to the prevention of homelessness within Oxford City Council	Develop and implement training programme for staff across the organisation.	P4-3	Housing Services	We have established strong relationships with key teams within the Council. This has led to quality partnership working and a regular flow of information between teams. Further training and partnership development will be needed upon the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act.	
		Review our corporate governance mechanism for homeless prevention.	P4-4	Housing Services	The review of governance continues with a revised structure in place that guides both the statutory and commissioned services. This aligns with the revised Housing Delivery Group (HDG) and JMG structures that are now well established. Overall, we have a much stronger and consistent approach to governance both internally and with key stakeholders.	

	Create a 'One Gateway' to our homelessness services to ensure people seeking our assistance find it easier to navigate the Council's services and get the assistance they need.	Further develop our online housing applications, with the implementation of applications to join our transfer housing register as well as homeless applications.	P4-5	Housing Services	The single gateway is now well established and clear agreed routes into the service are working well. Our triage service is providing clear and consistent advice, and we continue to work to improve the service through training and ICT improvements, this action will be expanded in the year 3 action plan to focus on digital improvements.	
		Complete procurement and prepare for implementation of new Housing Needs Housing System.		Housing Services	On track to go to Cabinet in 2025/26-subject to internal agreement.	Merged with P4-5 in the year 3 action plan
		Establish workflows and processes, including referrals to Housing Needs and statutory homelessness services.	P4-6	Housing Services	We now have clear and consistent ways into our housing needs service which ensures a consistent customer journey and effective process of identifying priority cases. These have been communicated to partners and the process is working well. As services internally and externally evolve we will keep procedures under review to ensure they meet the demands of the service.	
		Increase our face-to-face and visiting offer to those who are experiencing homelessness or threatened with homelessness	P4-7	Housing Services	We have an established face-to-face offer at the library and have expanded our visiting offer to customers at risk of homelessness. We continue to grow the offer and keep the library under review as we are aware it is not an ideal space. This review includes the installation of a private booth during 2025.	

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	Make better use of the council's data to inform the prevention and relief of homelessness	Regular review of Homeless Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) data and other internal key data with teams.	P4-8	Housing Services	Officers routinely use data to target service improvement and continued work on improving data quality.	
		Using data and information, including reasons for rough sleeping, to better understand why households become homeless or threatened with homelessness and use this to focus and improve our service delivery.	P4-9	Housing Services	Officers now have a data dashboard in place which draws data from the Council's housing data base to track trends and progress of service delivery, the information is also reported into the Countywide Steering Group.	
Focus on tackling homelessness from the Private Rented Sector	Establish a dedicated provision to provide upstream homelessness prevention for the private rented sector, which will work with both tenants and landlords, providing mediation and working in close partnership with statutory and support services	Ensure new teams, new procedures and new ways of working are implemented.	P4-10	Housing Services	All officers are now able to offer prevention duties and work is flowing to the correct team. Procedures and training plans for new starters are now in place along with quality control mechanisms and management oversight.	
		Complete review of our private rented sector support function, to ensure that households are effectively supported to remain in their accommodation.		Housing Services	Work continues to develop the support needs for customers as the demographic grows. a new model has been designed and we are in the process of developing the action plan ready for roll out with further work required in 2025/26.	

	Complete a review of the Council's private rented sector access schemes, developing and implementing changes needed to ensure that the schemes remain effective and attractive to landlords.	Complete a review of the Council's private rented sector schemes.	P4-11	Housing Services	<p>A review of PRS schemes has been undertaken with the OCC website updated to reflect the Council's private rented access schemes and how landlords can engage with the Council, a new lettings matrix was completed in 2024/25 to reflect up to date market conditions and ensure the Council remains competitive when trying to attract or retain new landlords.</p> <p>As of the end of the year 2024/25, the Council's private rented sector schemes have achieved 133 new tenancies, with 24% being self-find lets following an updated initiative to the incentives and letting matrix. This is a significant improvement from last year's 11% self-find lets. Despite a continually challenging market, the total number of new PRS tenancies has increased overall since 2023/24.</p> <p>Due to the need to expand PRS procurement a new action has been developed for the year 3 action plan to reflect this.</p>	
		Recommendations presented and considered for renewal of schemes to ensure schemes are attractive to landlords and offer good quality and offer stable and affordable accommodation for households.	P4-12	Housing Services	<p>Complete - changes have been introduced to the PRS schemes and the offer of help available.</p> <p>The PRS Team has successfully achieved the objective for 2024/25. Acquiring 30 new lets as part of the Rental Guarantee scheme expansion for single households. This achievement will be carried over into the 2025/26 period, with a target of completing an additional 30 new instructions by the end of 2025/26.</p>	

		Invest-to-save pilot, offering an enhanced property management service to landlords.		Housing Services	The invest-to-save pilot, which offered an enhanced property management service to landlords, received generally positive feedback. However, many landlords opted to use their own contractors, resulting in insufficient interest to continue the pilot into 2025/26. Despite this, the pilot led to positive outcomes, particularly in maintaining landlords and sustaining tenancies on our PRS access schemes. In 2024/25, 86 PRS tenancies ended, representing a 10% decrease from 2023/24 and a 14% decrease from 2022/23, which is encouraging given the current challenges with landlords exiting the market.	
	Continue to express our support for the abolition of section 21 notices, and when and if the Government Bill is implemented, we will ensure that the Council supports the new rules, landlord obligations and tenants' rights.	When introduced, we will put together an information campaign and work closely with landlords and agents in the city to support them to understand and operate within the new legislation.	P4-13	Housing Services	The team is actively preparing for the introduction of new legislation by developing a comprehensive information campaign. This campaign will involve close collaboration with landlords and agents in the city to ensure they understand and can effectively operate within the new regulations. The goal is to provide clear guidance and support, helping landlords and agents navigate the changes smoothly. An example was Oxford City Council's Accreditation Scheme provider, ATLAS, which held their virtual annual conference and training day on 27 March 2025.	

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Work in partnership to prevent homelessness	Prevent homelessness for those being discharged from hospitals by progressing our joint work with health services.	Continue to work with and support health services in Oxford to enable persons to be discharged from hospital setting and into accommodation without delay.	P4-14	Housing Services	<p>Our latest funding award does not cover the entire model and we have had to reduce our Step-Down capacity back to 27 beds.</p> <p>New discharge protocol largely in place and has streamlined the practice of discharging patients safely.</p> <p>Officers have plans to align the Out of Hospital team to Statutory services, ensuring people get access to statutory homelessness assistance, as well as other support needed. This action is amended in the year 3 action plan to respond to this challenge.</p>	
		Work with health and social care colleagues to seek and secure long term funding.	P4-15	Housing Services	Funding secured from BCF for most of the model in 2025/26. We will be contributing to a wider evaluation of services this year with a view to moving to baseline (BAU) funding from 2026/27.	
		Aligning Out of Hospital team to Statutory services, ensuring people get access to statutory homelessness assistance, as well as other support needed.		Housing Services	These three roles are in place and well-established. We have improved our links with Oxford City Council teams (early prevention and PRS) to ensure that our services are aligned and that we are working towards the same strategy / objectives.	Merged with P4-14 in Year 3 action plan

	Prevent homelessness for those being released from prison and probation services	Enhance partnership working with prison and probation services, including the provision of new temporary accommodation arrangements and access to accommodation in the private rented sector.	P4-16	Housing Services	Work continues in this area following a change to the Thames Valley MAPPA arrangements. We continue to work on the early intervention through effective use of Duty to Refer.	
	Work in partnership with supported accommodation providers and housing associations to establish working pre-eviction protocols.	Ensure pre-eviction protocols are updated and implemented.	P4-17	Housing Services	Pre-eviction protocols are now in place for all providers and recurring meetings in place to manage those at risk of homelessness.	
	Support and deliver refugee schemes, review current schemes and be ready to implement changes with any future government schemes*	Provide leadership on the Council of Sanctuary Accreditation, ensuring we meet all criteria and retail the accreditation.	P4-18	Housing Services	Following formal assessment from City of Sanctuary UK and local peer groups in November 2024 Oxford City Council were awarded the Council of Sanctuary Award which lasts for 3 years. As part of the award the Council of Sanctuary Framework and Action Plan has been developed and was approved at cabinet in January 2025. Officers are developing KPIs to sit behind the Action Plan and will complete a yearly annual report to cabinet on progress and this will form a new action for 2025/26 year 3 action plan. Officers are adding a specific action for this strategy in 25/26 related to	

					supporting residents who are residing in and moving on from Home Office accommodation.	
		Continue to support Countywide Homes for Ukraine service, with a focus on developing move-on options for individuals existing the scheme.		Housing Services	The Homes for Ukraine team continues to support Ukrainians living within Cherwell DC, West Oxfordshire DC and Oxford City. The team continues to see positive outcomes. There is currently only one case in interim temporary accommodation who is homeless within Oxford City and Officers continue to work with internal colleagues and external Districts to increase the supply of private sector accommodation.	
		Deliver our corporate commitment, to resettle 8 families per year for the next five years, to support the government's refugee resettlement schemes.	P4-19	Housing Services	Officers have been successful in meeting the target of eight families resettled in 2024. Progress in 2025 has been positive with five properties identified and three families already moved. Officers have been working with colleagues in the affordable supply and private rented sector team to increase the supply of properties and are in the process of the deliver phase of Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3, which will see an additional five properties delivered, three for resettlement and two for temporary accommodation.	

	Work with partner organisations to create better customer journeys between Council services and non-statutory services	Complete mapping of key partnerships and processes to ensure that homelessness prevention work is focussed and effective	P4-20	Housing Services	A new prioritisation group has been established to bring the statutory and commissioned services closer together. The homelessness prevention manager jointly chairs this and data sets are in place to ensure resources are deployed effectively.	
	Work with the County Council and providers to help those leaving the Young Persons Supported Accommodation Service to secure appropriate accommodation and make necessary changes to policy and processes to support care leavers	Continue to work in close partnership with the County Council and support providers to ensure young persons, including care leavers, have access to supported accommodation services when needed and that there are good and sustainable move on options when leaving supported accommodation.	P4-21	Housing Services	The YPSA (Young People's Supported Accommodation) commissioning arrangements are under review. Work continues to establish what the new arrangements will be from September 2025.	
	Improve support to survivors of domestic abuse and deliver good housing outcomes by fully conforming to the requirements of the new Domestic Abuse Act.	Work towards the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation.	P4-22	Housing Services / Community Safety	It was anticipated that OCC would achieve DAHA accreditation by 31 March 2025. This date has now been extended as it was decided to ensure a more robust response to domestic abuse was in place. We are currently piloting a change in procedure with the Housing Options Triage Team which ensures that there is early identification of cases, full risk assessment and accurate recording, which means the victim/survivor does not have to repeat their domestic abuse history with each department. The pilot is ongoing but early indications are that	

					there is an increase in domestic abuse cases. If the new process in Options improves the response to victims/survivors, then we want to adapt it for other housing teams. We will be liaising with the new DAHA Coach on a realistic timeframe to achieve the accreditation.	
		Continue to deliver the Sanctuary Scheme.	P4-24	Housing Services / Community Safety	The Sanctuary Scheme supported 101 victims/survivors of domestic abuse between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. The referrals come from a number of partner agencies as well as from internal departments. We have had 2 self-referrals. 65% of clients are Oxford City Council tenants. Apart from one male, the rest were female.	
	Reduce health, housing and care inequalities for people with multiple and complex needs through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting a Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coordinator who will facilitate and gather an evidence base, and embed recommendations and learning • Engage in shared training and reflective practise across services • Smart use of data to provide more targeted services 	Continue good progress made to implement MEAM approach across services	P4-25	Housing Services	MEAM report and recommendations going to PHDG (People and Housing Delivery Group) and OSAB (Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board). Executive summary due to be sent out week commencing 28 May 2025, early reception has been positive. MEAM Coordinator continues to run workshops and present learning - influence of MEAM approach being seen in changed practice. There is a further action within the year 3 action plan to expand on this and collaborate with external colleagues to improve the needs of vulnerable residents in temporary accommodation.	
		Contribute to a countywide workforce development programme; develop an offer of training and reflective spaces.	P4-26	Housing Services	We continue to deliver reflective practice and team development exercises into OHH (Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust) and other services - most recently safeguarding training.	

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		Work with King's College London (KCL) to analyse project evaluation and data; and design services based on evidence.	P4-27	Housing Services	KCL evaluation complete and available publicly. We will be contributing to a wider evaluation of services this year with a view to moving to baseline (BAU) funding from 2026/27.	
Adopt a rapid rehousing response to homelessness	Bring together within the Council structure, move-on from temporary and supported accommodation with placements into social and private rented accommodation to ensure a coordinated approach to rehousing homeless households.	Continue to embed transformation across temporary accommodation, to increase move on and bring down the length of stay in TA.	P4-28	Housing Services	<p>The Housing Needs Team has made significant progress in increasing move-on rates and reducing the length of stay in temporary accommodation (TA). This year, they have successfully moved on 158 households via the Homeless Register and 131 via new PRS tenancies, totalling 289 homeless households moving on. The service KPI for residents staying in TA for 12 months is at 15%, This has been achieved at year end 2024/25 which is a strong achievement. Additionally, the weekly placement rate has continued to increase to 9.88</p> <p>This success has been achieved through regular case monitoring and established forums for good collaborative cross-team working for tracking move-on progress, such as the monthly cross-service meeting chaired by the Team Leader for the TA Move-on Team. The action is updated in Year 3 updated in year building on transformation work completed.</p>	

		Review our lettings plan to ensure its responsive to demands and challenges across the service, in order to bring down families in TA	P4-29	Housing Services	The lettings plan was reviewed to ensure it is responsive to the demands and challenges across the service, with the goal of reducing the number of families in temporary accommodation (TA). An increase to 40% for the Homeless Register was agreed through delegated authority. To date, the team has completed 414 lets, with 38.16% going to the Homeless List. There are currently 79 offers outstanding, with 29 of these going to the Homeless List. The team is confident that the 40% lets target will be met as prescribed in the annual lettings plan. This has been a key mitigation strategy to keep TA numbers down, particularly ensuring that key service KPIs, such as the length of stay in TA not exceeding 12 months, are maintained.	
		Continue to ensure all households accommodated in temporary accommodation have a support and move on plan.		Housing Services	Due to the increased level of demand, we continue to work on this to ensure those who most need the support and those ready for move-on receive the support they need. We are in the process of recruiting additional resources to help manage the demand.	
		Review of the Council's private rented sector schemes completed to ensure there are no barriers for people moving on from temporary and supported accommodation to access these schemes.	P4-30	Housing Services	A review has been completed. As of the end of the year, the Council's private rented sector schemes have achieved 133 new tenancies. The vast majority of these tenancies have been secured for residents experiencing support needs. The PRS sustainment team have implemented a new guidance and referral criteria for supporting residents in PRS schemes making the option more viable for residents in need.	

	Make changes to current policy and process to support more rapid move-on from temporary and supported accommodation and provide support in the new permanent accommodation when possible.	Review of Allocation policies to ensure there are no barriers for people moving on from temporary and supported accommodation to access social housing.	P4-31	Housing Services	An internal review of the Allocations Scheme has been completed. The recommendations will be internally and externally consulted on and feedback considered before the final recommendations are submitted to the Cabinet for approval in 25/26. The changes will then be implemented and communicated to all parties when the new Allocations Scheme is put in place. This action is amended in the Year 3 action plan to reflect current challenges.	
		Complete review of the current Allocations Scheme, using data and best practice on the allocation of social housing.	P4-32	Housing Services	Completed – see above.	
	Review our use of temporary accommodation stock to make sure it is of good quality, and that the stock we have is the right amount and matches the need of households; and consider adopting a new temporary accommodation standard.	Use the review and analysis to inform our provision of temporary accommodation in the future, including type and amount of units required.	P4-33	Housing Services	The Housing Register currently has 3,688 applicants, with 48.51% of them needing one bedroom accommodations. The PRS schemes waiting list includes 260 applicants, with 43.31% requiring one bedroom accommodations. Temporary accommodation (TA) numbers are 279, with 52.7% being single households. This data is regularly monitored through up-to-date Microsoft packages and Power BI platforms. Current data indicates a continuing demand for single households needing settled accommodation. This review and analysis will inform our future provision of temporary accommodation, ensuring we meet the demand for the type and number of units required. By understanding these needs, we can and will better plan and allocate resources to	

					provide suitable housing solutions for those in need.	
		Continue to explore options for maximising TA stock through decommissioning of over 55 accommodation and capital investment schemes.	P4-34	Housing Services	Progressing with the aim to have additional stock ready for use as TA by Summer 2026. A project group has formed (led by landlord services management), with the first step of recruiting two Decant Officers now complete. Residents have had initial consultation with decant officers now supporting residents with moving. Exploring a number of capital schemes.	

		Continue to review need and use of temporary accommodation, ensuring that we have enough of the right type of TA and reduce the use of nightly charge accommodation.		Housing Services	<p>The Authority has successfully secured 32 leased units of accommodation from the open market, exceeding the initial target of 30, to lease and offer as temporary accommodation (TA). This initiative aims to combat the expensive nightly paid costs. The Council has increased its total TA properties to 171, a significant increase from previous years, on track to add approx 200 units over 18m. This includes, in addition to the leasing units, the council is transferring more general needs stock to meet growing demands. Additionally, the Council has entered into agreements with supported housing providers, granting exclusive nominations to units that would otherwise not be available. This initiative will help ease the demands on nightly paid accommodation rapidly moving resident on, especially for those with support needs. Other mitigations, such as establishing a new framework for procuring emergency housing, are in the final stages, with suppliers being assessed and added to the forward plan prior to formal appointment. This will ensure better quality emergency housing is used while also delivering savings and increased cost avoidance from the purchases the authority is required to make. As the placement rate continues to increase, his action will need to remain under review and monitoring into next year's objectives, which may require the authority to increase its presence in the leasing market whilst exploring other ways to increase its TA supply.</p>	To be merged with P4-33 in Year 3 action plan.
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	Complete review of our Allocations Schemes and update our Allocations Policy	Complete review of the current Allocations Scheme, using data and best practice on the allocation of social housing.	P4-36	Housing Services	An internal review of the Allocations Scheme has been completed. The recommendations will be consulted on and feedback considered before the final recommendations are submitted to the Cabinet for approval in 2025/26. The changes will then be implemented and communicated to all parties when the new Allocations Scheme is put in place.	
	Work in partnership with other commissioning bodies and registered providers to ensure there is sufficient suitable accommodation options available to meet the need for people moving on from supported accommodation	Continue to deliver Housing First units across Oxford.	P4-37	Housing Services	Housing First has successfully delivered 17 lettings this year, a significant achievement made possible through collaborative working with key stakeholders. This includes close coordination with Landlord Services, Community Safety teams, and external partners such as Beam, St Mungo's, and other statutory healthcare and police services. Last year, seven lets were completed, representing a 128.57% increase in total lets from the previous year's objective. The commitment to Housing First continues into next year's objectives.	
		Work with housing associations and other partners to ensure there is a sufficient availability of suitable housing.	P4-38	Housing Services	This year, the ORAH (Oxford Register for Affordable Housing) partnership provided 90% nomination for housing associations in the city, resulting in 204 properties being let, which accounts for 35.60% of total lets. We are planning to do more work in 2025/26 on ensuring good access for homeless households to HA properties, and working to set up new forums to support the ORAH partnership.	

Priority 5 - Ending rough sleeping

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by	End of Year 2 comments	End of Year 2 RAG rating
						Green - on track Amber - minor issues and/or delays Red - significant issues and/or delays Blue - completed
Implement the Countywide Oxfordshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	Work with and support the Oxfordshire Homelessness Alliance and commissioning partners to ensure that service provision and access to accommodation is transformed in line with the Countywide strategy, including moving to a housing-led and more person-centred approach.	Agree a clear plan to deliver the transformation and work with the Alliance leadership team to support the further development and delivery of this transformation plan.	P5-1	Housing Services	A review of key work areas within the Alliance took place during summer 2024, setting out recommendation for work to progress to drive the transformation of services delivered through the Alliance. A transformation/action plan has now been established based on the recommendations. The plan sets out the key work areas for 2025/26 and 2026/27 and this action will be amended for year 3 to reflect current objective.	
		Begin negotiation work for Oxfordshire Homelessness Alliance 25-26 budget and contract.	P5-2	Housing Services	A review of key work areas within the Alliance took place during summer 2024, setting out recommendation for work to progress to drive the transformation of services delivered through the Alliance. This work has been used to inform the budget setting for the Alliance for 2025/26. There will be changes to the budget and allocation of funding to work areas within the Alliance in-year, as service change in line with the transformation plan and this	

					action point will be amended for year 3 to reflect current changes.	
	Aligned to the Countywide Strategy, together with partners, review commissioning and contract management of supported services ensuring choice and variety is maximised, both in terms of accommodation and support provision.	For all services commissioned by Oxford City Council outside of Alliance arrangements, services will be regularly reviewed to ensure they are aligned and deliver a housing-led approach.	P5-3	Housing Services	Regular monitoring of all commissioned services and projects take place, including quarterly meetings and in person visits to services. We are working on developing a framework for monitoring and quality control and moving to a more thematic approach. This process is subject to continuous review. Due to pressures, this has not progressed as expected in 2024/25 but is one of the main areas of focus for the team in 2025/26.	
		For all service commissioned under the Alliance, work with partners to set up and support contract management.	P5-4	Housing Services	Quarterly monitoring, including monitoring meetings are taking place with all services commissioned under the Alliance. This process is done in partnership between the County as lead commissioner and the city, with District also included and involved. A quarterly summary of all monitoring information is produced and shared with the Alliance leadership team and commissioners. This includes headline data from local authorities in relation to rough sleeping and single homelessness. Alliance leaders have recently started working with the Centre for Homelessness Impact to develop high level measures and KPIs, to further the work of the Alliance working to achieve and meet common goals.	

	Work with Oxfordshire District Councils and registered providers to ensure that the commitment to provide 1-bedroom properties for those moving on from supported accommodation is met across the County.	Continue to work across the Countywide structures to tackle the undersupply of one bedroom accommodation across Oxfordshire. Develop a package of measures all Councils and ICB can agree to increase the supply for accommodation for single people.	P5-5	Housing Services	Two Housing Summits focusing on increasing the supply of accommodation for singles took place in autumn/ winter 2024. Summit recommendations and actions on boosting supply are being considered by senior leaders. Work is on-going in this area to boost the supply of one bedroom accommodation.	
Maximise funding and raising profile	Continue to work closely with relevant government departments such as DLUHC to ensure that we have access to future funding opportunities and have good working relationships so that we can lobby for change if necessary.	Continue to engage with MHCLG to agree a new financial settlement from April 2025 onwards.	P5-6	Housing Services	On-going monthly or bi-monthly meetings with MHCLG, and these will continue. MHCLG funding awards for 2025/26 now settled. Funding from April 2026 is uncertain and subject to the spending review and government overall agenda, as well as changes to the Homelessness Prevention Grant. A new action has been created in the year 3 action plan related to the new supported housing regulatory arrangements which following the recent government consultation.	
		Where other funding becomes available, bids submitted to these as well.	P5-7	Housing Services	No further funding has been released and Officers are now reviewing opportunities as business as usual.	

	Work with commissioners of supported accommodation operating in the city to ensure that as much as possible is provided through registered providers, who are subject to more regulation and impose less costs on the Council through reduced housing benefit subsidy.	Continue to work across Council departments and organisations providing supported housing in the city to support this aim.	P5-8	Housing Services	Oxford City Council aims to lower subsidy loss for supported housing by moving away from low needs supported housing to housing-led accommodation. To enable this, the city worked with Alliance providers in 2024/25 to formulate an implementation plan for 2025/26. Talks to effect a plan with County and NHS are ongoing, and we are working to agree clear commissioning commitments with them.	
Provide the right service at the right time	Continue to deliver services based on the principles of Somewhere Safe to Stay in the city, to ensure that people do not have to sleep rough before they are offered assistance.	Review arrangements and services to ensure that the right level of provision is available in accommodation across the Alliance.	P5-9	Housing Services	A review of the supported accommodation offer in the City and County was carried out during summer 2024 and this work will inform the budget setting and transformation plan for services under the Alliance going forward. The review included mapping key information and details of supported accommodation for single homeless persons and those who are rough sleeping, and also included the accommodation provided under the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership. The information gathered included: number of units, types of housing, type of support, location across the County, funding body etc. This has informed the actions under the transformation plan for the Alliance and includes a move away from generic supported accommodation, provision of more specialist/high support accommodation, provision of more SStS (Somewhere Safe to Stay) provision, and enabling and establishing a housing-led approach to be delivered through the	

					Alliance, the latter partly enabled by additional funding released by the City Council.	
	Facilitate access to appropriate health and care services for those who are in need	Conduct regular reviews/contract monitoring of services commissioned as part of the Oxfordshire Homelessness Alliance to ensure that all persons using services are assisted and offered access to relevant services as needed, such as health, mental health, substance misuse and care services.	P5-10	Housing Services	Quarterly monitoring, including monitoring meetings takes place with all services commissioned under the Alliance. This process is done in partnership between County Council, City Council and lead representative for the District Council. Some changes to information provided by the Alliance are due to be made in 2025/26, focusing on interventions. The monitoring process highlights where individuals struggle to receive the service and assistance they need, which can then be used to demonstrate any gaps in services. We are continually receiving feedback that the support provided by substance misuse service, Turning Point, is very good, with established and well working partnerships in place across all services.	

160		Ensure that statutory and non-statutory services in Oxford develop a joint approach to support those experiencing rough sleeping, so people get access to statutory homelessness assistance, as well as other support as needed such as Care Act assessments and mental health support.	All persons experiencing rough sleeping are offered an assessment under the Homelessness Reduction Act.	P5-11	Housing Services	We now have a clear and consistent approach to ensure that anyone living in the Adult Homeless Pathway receives a statutory housing assessment. Due to the ever-changing nature of the customer base, we will continue to expand this work during 2025/26 as business as usual.	
			As part of an assessment, persons are also offered and linked in with other statutory services as relevant, as part of the Council's wider partnership work to prevent and relieve homelessness.	P5-12	Housing Services	This process is now embedded into the service offer for customers. We will continue this work through 2025/26 as we continue to bring statutory and commissioned services together.	
	Improve access to accommodation and provide a range of accommodation options for single persons and couples	Regularly monitor the number of single homeless people offered social housing as well as the number of single persons who have been excluded from the Housing Register, to ensure good access and inform service development.	Monitoring systems established and information used routinely to inform necessary changes to operational practices and policy direction.	P5-13	Housing Services	It is clear from data analysis that single applicants make up the highest emerging homelessness and housing need and this action is now part of the Housing Service data analysis function to inform targeted service delivery and increasing the supply for single people.	

	Carry out a review of the Council's Allocations Policy, including the exclusion criteria based on learnings from case reviews	Review of the Allocations Policy completed.	P5-14	Housing Services	An internal review of the Allocations Scheme has been completed – see the comment and action under Priority 4 for more details on next steps.	
		Case reviews completed and informing recommendations for any amendments to the Allocations Policy as part of its review.	P5-15	Housing Services	As above – case reviews are regularly completed to inform any future service development/improvements.	
	Work with our District Council partners and Registered Providers to pursue options and solutions for 'hard to let' properties across the County with the view to increasing available stock for single people.	Continue engagement with partners through Countywide Housing Supply group.	P5-16	Housing Services	The issue of 'hard to let' properties was taken forward in the Housing Summits. This is no longer a major issue as due to demand increases most properties are let and hard to let units in the districts can be opened up for homeless cases due to on-going partnership work	

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	Enhance our private rented sector offer to singles and couples, with no or low support needs, who are looking to move on from supported accommodation or rough sleeping.	Complete a review of the Council's private rented sector schemes.	P5-17	Housing Services	A review has been completed and monitoring takes place on an on-going basis to ensure their continued effectiveness meeting current and emerging challenges/opportunities. See Priority area 4 for further details.	
		Recommendations presented and considered for renewal of schemes to ensure Council offered schemes meet the needs of single persons and couples.	P5-18	Housing Services	Following a PRS review and the Spend-to-Save initiative, further incentives have been agreed upon for self-find opportunities. Additionally, the expansion of the Rental Guarantee Scheme has been implemented to improve access to PRS tenancies for single households. This year, the team has successfully completed 74 lets to single households.	
Ensure sufficient provision of supported accommodation to meet a range of needs	Together with our County and District partners and working towards the goals of the Countywide strategy, commission a range of flexible accommodation for singles and couples.	Commission new services as per successful funding bids	P5-19	Housing Services	No further funding has materialised in 2024/25. However, work is being done with Alliance partners to ensure that the supported accommodation provision in the City and County better meet needs (see P5-9).	

	Work with commissioning partners and providers to commission supported accommodation that is distributed and dispersed appropriately throughout the city, to ensure that persons living in supported accommodation feel supported and safe where they live.	Conduct and complete mapping of all existing supported accommodation provision in the city.	P5-20	Housing Services	See P5-9. In addition to the work that has been done in relation to the transformation of the supported accommodation offer through the Alliance, which has and will also inform the City's own commissioning intentions, we are now also visually mapping supported accommodation provision in the City, to enable us to use this to work with partners to ensure that the location and distribution of this is dispersed appropriately throughout the city.	
		Continuously update mapping and use this information to form part of decisions made when commissioning new provision.	P5-21	Housing Services	See P5-9. In addition to the work that has been done in relation to the transformation of the supported accommodation offer through the Alliance, which has and will also inform the city's own commissioning intentions, we are now also visually mapping supported accommodation provision in the City, to enable us to use this to work with partners to ensure that the location and distribution of this is dispersed appropriately throughout the city.	
	Support people experiencing rough sleeping in Oxford who do not have recourse to public funds to find appropriate solutions.	Ensure there is a provision of legal support and advice that people can access in order to assist with regularising immigration status for affected individuals.	P5-22	Housing Services	RSI (Rough Sleeping Initiative) funding has been used by outreach services, both in Districts and the City, to enable persons to get access legal assistance in relation to their immigration status, with funds also provided to local NRPF (No Recourse to Public Funds) projects. The funding has also been used to more broadly assist in engaging with individuals rough sleeping where there are language or cultural barriers to engaging with the support that is available.	
		Support a return to a home country where this is appropriate and wanted.	P5-23	Housing Services	Outreach services support individuals who are rough sleeping to return to a home country where this is appropriate and their choice. This work is on-going through the Council's outreach team as business as usual.	

	Work with services we commission to move to a strength-based approach to delivery of housing support services where a person's individual needs are at the centre of the service provision.	Implement and monitor the commissioning and contract management arrangements of services commissioned solely by Oxford City Council and as part of the Oxfordshire Alliance, ensuring choice and variety is maximised, including support not linked to a housing offer.	P5-24	Housing Services	Monitoring of all contracts for services and projects commissioned and funded by the City Council is in place. The commissioning team is setting up processes whereby information from contract management is collated in order for trends and developments across all services can be looked at and thus inform future commissioning needs.	
Introduce a housing-led approach to offer of accommodation	Increase our offer of Housing First accommodation and provide the support individuals may need in order to sustain the accommodation.	Continue our work to bring a further 17 properties into use for Housing First and support our existing Housing First clients to sustain their accommodation.	P5-25	Housing Services	Good progress has been made against our commitment to provide Housing First accommodation. Through a combination of acquisitions and releasing existing units from our and A2 Dominion's stock we have secured 17 lettings in 24/25 bringing a total of 47 units. By the end of March 2026 we expect to have 58 people in accommodation. No individuals have been evicted from their Housing First accommodation.	

		Work with MHCLG to explore future funding opportunities and bid where appropriate to further increase our Housing First offer.	P5-26	Housing Services	No further funding opportunities have emerged in 2024/25 but the Council will keep this under review for year 3 action plan.	
	Work with the Alliance to continue to transform our approach to the provision of accommodation to single homeless persons, including reviewing our current accommodation offers as we move to a housing-led model and helping facilitate changes agreed as part of the Countywide transformation.	Work with the Alliance to support the further development and delivery of their transformation plans	P5-27	Housing Services	See P5-9 comment.	

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by	End of Year 2 comments	End of Year 2 RAG rating
						Green - on track Amber - minor issues and/or delays Red - significant issues and/or delays Blue - completed
Deliver the Council's housing related commitments in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	Ensure that we understand and respond to issues that disproportionately impact specific groups in our community and lead to homelessness.	Improve homelessness data collection and data quality, including on protected characteristics.	EDI-1	Housing Services	<p>Good progress has been made on improving data collection methods and tools so far. On-going work is required to improve the quality of our data e.g. further reducing the incidences of missing data in our homeless dataset.</p> <p>There is evidence that data collection is improving. An analysis of H-CLIC data over the last three full financial years found that the proportion of homeless applicants who did not wish to provide information on sexuality had decreased.</p>	
		Analyse data regularly to determine if and when any groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness, use this to inform service development.	EDI-2	Housing Services	An analysis of the characteristics of households approaching OCC as homeless in 2024/25 has been completed. This focused-on trends in comparison with 2022/23 and 2023/24 data. Characteristics of OCC tenants and General Register applicants were also reviewed as part of the analysis. The insights are being used to inform service development planning in 2025/26.	

	<p>Work with communities to address any issues that disproportionately affects specific groups in order to better prevent homelessness.</p>	<p>Seek feedback from service users from different backgrounds to develop response.</p>	EDI-4	Housing Services	<p>OCC continues work on using feedback from services users to inform service development - including homeless prevention.</p> <p>Feedback from internal staff and external agencies notes that an in-person presence e.g. at community drop-ins, is well-used by citizens. An analysis of our face-to-face offer is currently underway, with a view to expanding this offer in 2025/26. An expanded face-to-face offer is likely to benefit service users from all backgrounds through improved communication.</p> <p>Guidelines around translation and interpretation services the Council uses have been communicated to colleagues and service improvements such as improving OCC website translation icon and tool have been put in place.</p>	
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	Review and improve how we engage with our tenants and leaseholders and ensure that inclusion is at the heart of this.	Ensure new Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy in place	EDI-5	Housing Services	<p>The Tenant Involvement roadshows reached out to 26 locations in the city. A new interim tenant engagement lead has been recruited to create the new strategy which will start with further consultations with tenants, leaseholders and shared owners. The aim is to have the strategy in place by end July 2025.</p> <p>An initial roadshow in February 2025 reached 400 residents with significant work in train for the coming year. Further there will be a need to recruit tenants, leaseholders and shared owners to these groups undertake a skills gap analysis on those members and provide relevant training. Further there will be a need to recruit tenants, leaseholders and shared owners to these groups, undertake a skills gap analysis on those members and provide relevant training.</p>	
Data and information	Seek to improve our data collection so that we can better understand how our homelessness services work for the community, with the aim to ensure that services are accessible to all. Ensuring we improve the data we have on protected characteristics where we currently have a limited picture,	Implement changes to our housing management systems to ensure accurate data collection and reporting.	EDI-6	Housing Services	<p>We have updated our internal data systems to ensure that relevant data can be entered.</p> <p>The procurement of a new Housing Needs system will improve data collection. The procurement process is currently underway with tenders from interested suppliers received.</p>	
		Provide training and upskilling to staff to ensure data on protected characteristics is collected and recorded.	EDI-7	Housing Services	<p>All staff members using systems receive training, and when any updates to systems are done, refresher training is done. The service has a dedicated training officer. Work to ensure data input is audited will inform further training needs.</p> <p>There is evidence that data collection is improving. An analysis of H-CLIC data over the last three full financial</p>	

	such as for LGBTQIA+ people.				years found that the proportion of homeless applicants who did not wish to provide information on sexuality had decreased.	
		Analyse data regularly to determine if and when any groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness.	EDI-8	Housing Services	The analysis of homeless households approaching OCC found that certain groups are over-represented in the data or are more affected by specific circumstances which lead to a higher risk of homelessness and services seeking to provide support to meet their housing needs, actions have been drafted for year 3 action plan to respond to this work.	
	Routinely report and use data to understand shifts in the profiles of people that we support in relation to homelessness, such as a recent decrease in the proportion of women presenting, in order to make sure that any changes are not due to inaccessibility.	Improve data collection and data quality.	EDI-9	Housing Services	All staff members using systems receive training, and when any updates to systems are done, refresher training is done. The service has a dedicated training officer. Work to ensure data input is audited will inform further training needs. The procurement of a new Housing Needs system will improve data collection. The procurement process is currently underway with tenders from interested suppliers received.	
		Analyse data regularly and develop actions to inform how we deliver our homelessness services.	EDI-10	Housing Services	The findings of the data review will be fed into service development actions that will support specific citizen groups in Year 3 of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.	

	Take further steps to better understand our tenants, including better capture and analysis of data so that we can ensure that services are delivered well to all.	Recruit Customer Experience Team to engage with tenants directly in their homes, capturing protected characteristics, reasonable adjustments, preferences to inform individual service delivery requirements. Introduction of mobile working forms solution to capture and record information directly into housing system.	EDI-11	Housing Services	The data capture is ongoing with a target completion date of July 2025. Mobile devices have now been provided to officers and mobile working form solution to support is in development. This action has been updated for the year 3 action plan.	
Partnership work	Continue to consider the needs of the travelling community, and seek to work in partnership with our neighbouring authorities to commission a new study of need for the period up to 2040	Work with colleagues in the County Council to contribute data and information.	EDI-12	Housing Services	OCC supported the County with an initial request for data to support a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment commissioned by the County and published in December 2024. OCC will continue to work with colleagues in planning and the County around this area taking into consideration the report conclusions.	
Accessibility and information	Ensure information and communication is accessible, through using a range of mediums and accessible language.	Complete review of information and advice given to customers by Housing Services.	EDI-13	Housing Services	Staff use a variety of methods to communicate with customers depending on their individual needs. The information available to customers is kept under review and further work is due to be completed during 2025/26 to check the Housing website content	

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					is accessible and on the face-to-face offer available to customers.	
Staff and staff training	Provide training for all of our staff to ensure they are all skilled and confident in delivering services and work with Human Resources partners to have a workforce that as a whole reflects Oxford's diverse population	Carry out training needs analysis. Deliver training to staff specific to their role.	EDI-14	Housing Services	Specialist EDI training for all Housing Services staff and managers has been completed in previous years. Feedback received from external Housing Services Training was positive, showing an overall increase in knowledge and confidence after completing the training. Training needs analysis will be part of Business as Usual for Housing Services each year going forward as part of Service Planning. Regular training is required to keep current and new staff knowledge up to date in this important area.	

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Year 3 Action Plan for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028

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Please note that any text that is highlighted in blue, represents either a new or amend action within the year 3 action plan

Priority 1 - Providing more affordable housing

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2025/26 (Y3)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by
Increase the rate of affordable housing development, including Council homes through the affordable housing supply programme.	Build over 1,600 affordable, high quality and energy efficient homes through OX Place, the Council and housing association partners.	Continue to make good progress towards the target of 1,600 by delivering high quality, energy efficient homes.	P1-1	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Deliver over 850 affordable homes available at a social rent, delivered by OX Place, the Council and housing association partners.	Continue to deliver affordable homes at social rent to meet target of 850 by March 2029	P1-2	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Ensure significant investment from the Council's Housing Revenues Account goes into the development of new affordable homes during the strategy period.	Ensure the investment of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funds are in line with the HRA Business Plan and contributes towards the number of affordable homes that become available in the city.	P1-3	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Take available steps to secure and deploy public investment where this is available to make further affordable housing development viable in Oxford and Oxfordshire, including Homes England funding and wider infrastructure funds.	Bid for relevant funding when available to support the delivery of more affordable housing	P1-4	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Offer support and partnership to developers, landowners, social landlords and community-led housing groups to encourage delivery of new affordable homes.	Enhance our partnerships with housing associations by establishing regular meetings to discuss feasibility of development.	P1-5	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Proactively engage with landowners about potential developments on sites.	P1-6	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Continue to review land supply for affordable housing development as part of the Local Plan	P1-7	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability

175	Explore options and feasibility of developing small and adjoining sites	Initial feasibility assessment carried out for a number of small sites across the city.	P1-8	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Develop an approach for the development of small and adjoining sites.	P1-9	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Work to ensure that new affordable homes delivered meet established and projected housing need	To ensure housing demand and the Council's priorities inform decisions on the supply of affordable housing delivered in the City by Ox Place, Registered Provider partners and spend of Housing Revenue Account funds through regular reviews and monitoring of housing needs data to influence the size, tenure, location and number of units etc which are built.	P1-11	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Ensure that steps are taken to meet high demand of certain affordable housing types, such as 1-bedroom properties	P1-14	Housing Services / Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Review outstanding actions from the Older Persons Review, and make progress to complete relevant actions.	P1-16	Housing Services
	Provide homes for those struggling in the Oxford housing market	Deliver shared ownership programme	P1-17	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Continue to bring empty homes back into occupancy	P1-18	Housing Services / Finance
		Review and refresh the Council's Tenancy Strategy	P1-21	Housing Services
		Use Right to Buy receipts and borrowing in the Housing Revenue Account to purchase properties for social rent for people on the Housing Register	P1-22	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Take appropriate action where a house has changed into short term let/holiday accommodation without the correct planning permission	P1-24	Planning and Regulation
			P1-25	Planning and Regulation

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Work better with our housing delivery partners and neighbouring Councils	Work with neighbouring councils to support the delivery of a number of developments in Oxfordshire.	Prepare to implement registration scheme for short-term lets, as per the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, work closely with owners in the city to support them to understand and operate within the new legislation.	P1-26	Planning and Regulation
		Agreements and arrangements for allocation of social housing in Districts made with Cherwell District Council.	P1-27	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Support and identify opportunities for community-led housing developments.	Establish effective monitoring to ensure that new developments are being allocated to Oxford residents in housing need.	P1-28	Housing Services
		Continue our engagement with community groups and community land trusts.	P1-29	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Progress community-led housing projects on small/ garage sites identified through the Small Sites Project	P1-30	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Through our work to develop an approach to develop small sites, identify suitable sites for community-led housing	P1-31	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Identify and secure suitable funding to progress feasibility stages for community-led housing on identified small sites.	P1-32	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability

Priority 2 - Great homes for all

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2025/26 (Y3)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by
Improve the quality of accommodation in the private rented sector	Continue to deliver the property licensing schemes (HMO & selective) across the private rented sector.	Ensure that the majority of applications for property licenses are processed and licenses issued.	P2-1	Planning and Regulation
		Continue the work of investigating unlicensed properties incorporating the property licensing schemes, including number charged higher application fees	P2-2	Planning and Regulation
		Progress the enforcement of non-compliance with the property licensing schemes.	P2-3	Planning and Regulation
	Reduce the number of privately rented homes that contain serious home hazards.	Continue inspections of properties where we have been notified of concerns with rented homes	P2-4	Planning and Regulation
		Continue with our proactive inspection programme of HMO properties and introduce proactive inspections for properties with a selective licence.	P2-5	Planning and Regulation
		Ensure compliance using education and enforcement of all appropriate legislation in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.	P2-6	Planning and Regulation
Continue to deliver investments into our Council homes	Commence delivery of the new HRA 5 Year Investment Programme to reflect asset needs, tenant priorities and HRA Asset Management Strategy 25-28.	Continue a programme of rolling stock condition surveys that incorporate Building Surveys, Structural/Concrete surveys, Energy & Sustainability (Energy Performance Certificate, EPC) and Building compliance & Safety (Fire, Water, Asbestos) to ensure all aspects of Property Management is included in investment programmes or major works projects.	P2-7	Property Services
		Use stock condition data to ensure a coordinated plan for maintenance, investment, regeneration and carbon reduction work.	P2-8	Housing Services
		Implementing the priority actions in the HRA Asset Management Strategy 25-28 to ensure the long- term maintenance of Council homes – with effective governance/decision making processes in place		
Provide quality, timely and responsive	Complete a transformation programme of our Landlord Services leading to improved services for our	Invest into Capital Programmes and Projects valued at up to £177M over the next 5 years.	P2-9	Property Services
		Complete transformation programme of Landlord Services, with a focus on the provision of quality service with high levels of tenant satisfaction and compliance with SHA and regulatory standards.	P2-10	Housing Services

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services to council tenants, with high level of tenants satisfaction	tenants, including ensuring all our tenant and leaseholder related activities are resourced sufficiently to comply with the Social Housing Act.	Finalise and implement the new staffing structure of landlord services to reflect findings and recommendations from transformation work, ensuring that teams are sufficiently resourced to meet new obligations under the Social Housing Act.	P2-11	Housing Services
	Deliver a new integrated and locality-based way of working to deliver services to our communities.	Continue to build our locality-based approach, including bringing in new council teams and working better across other statutory bodies, supported by the transformation of Landlord Services	P2-13	Housing Services
	Repair services delivered are excellent and informed by: - making repairs at our tenant's convenience; - make the fix first time; - staying fixed Provide effective and timely response to tenants impacted by anti-social behaviour.	Continue to embed and evaluate new ways of working – including completion of an end-to-end void and repairs review.	P2-14	Housing Services
		Ensure complaints in relation to anti-social behaviour are responded to within 5 working days.	P2-15	Community Safety
		Support complainants and perpetrators to resolve the anti-social behaviour.	P2-16	Community Safety
	Use a combination of annual tenant and leaseholder surveys, and transactional surveys to gain feedback on our services to inform service development and improvement.	Continue to improve our digital offer to tenants to deliver improved communications and engagement. Seeking feedback to make changes in how we deliver our services in real time.	P2-17	Housing Services
Launch and deliver the reset of Tenant engagement work, ensuring the Tenant voice is heard – specifically developing a new Tenant Involvement strategy to include formal governance structures that ensures tenants are able to engage and their views are	Establishment of a new tenant involvement structure and involvement activities that better meets SHR, consumer standards and peer review recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-set of tenant involvement activities ensuring full compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard • Establishment of a new tenant/OCC Involvement structure, working with tenants to co-produce this (new) • Development of a Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy (new) • Development and roll out of training and development for tenant groups (new) 	P2-19	Housing Services

taken into account.		
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Priority 3 - Housing for a net zero carbon future

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2025/26 (Y3)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by
Improve standards for new Council homes built in the city	New homes built by OX Place are net zero carbon for energy use in the properties (regulated operational energy) by 2030.	OX Place to produce a plan to meet this deadline date	P3-1	OX Place
	Homes built by OX Place have carbon emissions levels for new homes that are 40% below national standards (Building Regulations 2021).	OX Place designing and building homes to meet or exceed the level stated.	P3-2	OX Place
	Homes built by OX Place use electricity only and heated through low carbon means such as air source heat pumps.	OX Place designing and building homes to be electricity heated, usually with air source heat pumps.	P3-3	OX Place
	Build as far as possible using a 'fabric-first' approach (as per Zero Carbon Action Plan)	Design/ build homes with fabric first approach.	P3-4	OX Place
	Tackling the performance gap (the disparity between energy consumption predicted in design stage of a building and the energy use when in actual operation) and preventing any performance issues with new technologies by using an innovative energy quality assurance service. This provides checking, training and testing throughout the full design and construction phases of development.	Using Energy Quality Assurance service on all/ majority of dwellings.	P3-5	OX Place
Invest to decarbonise our Council homes	Ensure a consistent and updated asset management strategy is in place and provides a coordinated plan for maintenance, investment, regeneration and carbon reduction work for Council properties.	Continue to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures for council homes. Completion of 2024/25 Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) 2.1 project.	P3-7	Property Services
	Tie energy efficiency works into other planned maintenance	Develop and implement plan for how we will deliver works to properties, including programmes for alternative heating installation across the stock.	P3-8	Property Services

	programmes to ensure a co-ordinated and less disruptive approach to delivery, improving tenant experience.			
	Work with tenants to agree and implement a programme of energy efficiency measures that will see tenants' energy use reduced, with the aim of reducing the number of tenants refusing energy efficiency improvements.	For on-going works, a full handover and demonstration will be carried out with tenants on completion of works.	P3-10	Property Services
		Engagement Strategy in place.	P3-11	Housing Services
	Continue to bid for central government funding to fund our work to increase energy efficiency for our housing stock.	Bids for SHDF and other funding sources submitted where they complement planned work steams.	P3-12	Property Services
Work with other landlords, such as Registered Provides and private rented sector landlords to increase energy efficiency, both in existing buildings and new developments.	Continue to set high standards for energy efficiency/carbon reduction for new build homes through local plan policies including the new Local Plan 2042.	Progress work on new Local Plan 2042 including updated policies addressing carbon reduction in new and existing development.	P3-13	Planning and Regulation
	Work with partners to apply for funding and signpost homes owners, and tenants and landlords in the private rented sector to funding for energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures to increase efficiency standards for properties.	Bid for any other government funding made available to support landlords to fund energy efficiency measures.	P3-14	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Actively promote available funding and direct those eligible to apply for such funding.	P3-15	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Bring improvements to energy efficiency to the private rented sector by other means.	Lobby government for further funding to raise energy efficiency standards.	P3-16	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Continue to encourage landlords to be accredited landlords under the City Council's Landlord Accreditation Scheme, which includes promoting and encouraging landlords to let properties with good EPC ratings.	P3-17	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
		Work with landlords to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES).	P3-18	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
	Ensure residents in the city can access consistent and quality	Continue to fund the Better Housing, Better Health service to provide energy advice – supported by the work of the Energy Efficiency Officer.	P3-19	Economy, Regeneration

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energy advice in relation to both property improvements and energy usage.	Coordinate and support delivery of energy efficiency projects, support compliance on EPC, and support community engagement and outreach work.		and Sustainability
	Continue our outreach work via events and partnerships to promote advice and funding opportunities.	P3-21	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
Work in partnership with the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership to trial innovative approaches to different retrofit measures, scale delivery, share good practice.	Continue feasibility work in Oxford to scale retrofit approaches across different building and tenure types.	P3-22	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability

Priority 4 - Preventing homelessness and adopting a rapid rehousing response

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2025/26 (Y3)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by
Transform Council services to better prevent and relieve homelessness	Embed a corporate approach to the prevention of homelessness within Oxford City Council	Develop and implement training programme for staff across the organisation.	P4-3	Housing Services
		Review our corporate governance mechanism for homeless prevention.	P4-4	Housing Services
	Continue to improve and develop how households access homeless prevention services	Complete procurement and prepare for implementation of new Housing Needs Housing System which should improve self-service and on-line access.	P4-5	Housing Services
		Review our face-to-face services seeking to enhance and increase our face-to-face offer	P4-7	Housing Services
	Make better use of the council's data to inform the prevention and relief of homelessness	Regular review of Homeless Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) data and other internal key data with teams.	P4-8	Housing Services
		Using data and information, including reasons for rough sleeping, to better understand why households become homeless or threatened with homelessness and use this to focus and improve our service delivery.	P4-9	Housing Services
	Establish a dedicated provision to provide upstream homelessness prevention for the private rented sector, which will work with both tenants and landlords, providing mediation and working in close partnership with statutory and support services	Complete review of our private rented sector support function, to ensure that households are effectively supported to remain in their accommodation.		Housing Services
Focus on tackling the sources of homelessness	Complete a review of the Council's private rented sector access schemes, developing and implementing changes needed to ensure that the schemes remain effective and attractive to landlords.	Continue to expand our PRS procurement, including trialling new procurement approaches, and seeking to further expand our schemes, with a strong emphasis on single adults.	New	Housing Services
	Continue to express our support for the abolition of section 21 notices, and when and if the Government Bill is implemented, we will ensure that the Council supports the new rules, landlord obligations and tenants' rights.	When the Renters' Rights Act is introduced – we will put together an information campaign and work closely with landlords and agents in the city to support them to understand and operate within the new legislation and help prevent homelessness.	P4-13	Housing Services

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Work in partnership to prevent homelessness	Prevent homelessness for those being discharged from hospitals by progressing our joint work with health services.	Aligning Out of Hospital team to Statutory services, ensuring people get access to statutory homelessness assistance, as well as other support needed.	P4-14	Housing Services
		Work with health and social care colleagues to seek and secure long term funding.	P4-15	Housing Services
	Prevent homelessness for those being released from prison and probation services	Enhance partnership working with prison and probation services, including the provision of new temporary accommodation arrangements and access to accommodation in the private rented sector.	P4-16	Housing Services
	Support and deliver refugee schemes, review current schemes and be ready to implement changes with any future government schemes*	Delivery of Council of Sanctuary Framework and Action Plan 2025-2028	New	Housing Services
		Continue to support Countywide Homes for Ukraine service, with a focus on developing move-on options for individuals existing the scheme.		Housing Services
		Deliver our corporate commitment, to resettle 8 families per year for the next five years, to support the government's refugee resettlement schemes.	P4-19	Housing Services
		Continue to respond to Home Office evictions from the contingency hotels and dispersed units for singles and families across Oxford and work with partners to offer support whilst households are residing in Oxford.	New	Housing Services
	Work with partner organisations to create better customer journeys between Council services and non-statutory services	Continue to support and develop the new Countywide homelessness prevention prioritisation forum, of statutory and non-statutory services, to aid the co-ordination and prioritisation of prevention services across Oxfordshire.	P4-20	Housing Services
	Work with the County Council and providers to help those leaving the Young Persons Supported Accommodation Service to secure appropriate accommodation and make necessary changes to policy and processes to support care leavers	Continue to work in close partnership with the County Council and support providers to ensure young persons, including care leavers, have access to suitable supported accommodation services within the provision of Young Persons Supported Accommodation and that this continues in the future, and that there are good and sustainable move-on options when leaving supported accommodation.	P4-21	Housing Services
	Improve support to survivors of domestic abuse and deliver good housing outcomes by fully conforming to the requirements of the new Domestic Abuse Act.	Work towards the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation.	P4-22	Housing Services / Community Safety
		Continue to deliver the Sanctuary Scheme.	P4-24	Housing Services /

				Community Safety
	Reduce health, housing and care inequalities for people with multiple and complex needs through: • Hosting a Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coordinator who will facilitate and gather an evidence base, and embed recommendations and learning • Engage in shared training and reflective practise across services • Smart use of data to provide more targeted services.	Implement the findings of the Make Every Adult Matter report across Oxfordshire approach across services.	P4-25	Housing Services
		Collaborate with the County Council and health providers, reviewing the social care and health needs of people in Temporary Accommodation and their access to support.		Housing Services
		Contribute to a Countywide workforce development programme; develop an offer of training and reflective spaces.	P4-26	Housing Services
Adopt a rapid rehousing response to homelessness	Bring together within the Council structure, move-on from temporary and supported accommodation with placements into social and private rented accommodation to ensure a coordinated approach to rehousing homeless households.	Building on successful transformation, continue to ensure good levels of Temporary Accommodation move-on to both social and private accommodation, and continued service improvement.	P4-28	Housing Services
		Continue to ensure all households accommodated in temporary accommodation have a support and move-on plan.		Housing Services
		Review move-on processes from Supported Housing and Temporary Accommodation.	P4-31	Housing Services
	Review our use of temporary accommodation stock to make sure it is of good quality, and that the stock we have is the right amount and matches the need of households; and consider adopting a new temporary accommodation standard.	Continue to expand the Council's Temporary Stock in response to growing demand, in order to decrease the use of expensive and less suitable hotel and B&B accommodation; through PRS leasing, partnerships with HAs and charities, direct purchase and reuse of current low demand stock.	P4-33	Housing Services
		Continue to explore options for maximising TA stock through decommissioning of over 55 accommodation and capital investment schemes.	P4-34	Housing Services
	Complete review of our Allocations Schemes and update our Allocations Policy	To develop a new Allocations Scheme following a consultation on the options identified to further help with re-housing households in housing need.	P4-36	Housing Services
	Work in partnership with other commissioning bodies and registered providers to ensure there is sufficient suitable accommodation options available to meet the need for people moving on from supported accommodation	Continue to deliver Housing First units across Oxford.	P4-37	Housing Services
		Work with Housing Associations and other partners to ensure there is sufficient availability of suitable one bedroom housing – including any opportunities to acquire additional units through Retained Right to Buy Receipts, the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme and Local Authority Housing Fund, or similar, to help support delivery.	P4-38	Housing Services

Priority 5 - Ending rough sleeping

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2024/25 (Y2)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by
Implement the Countywide Oxfordshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	Work with and support the Oxfordshire Homelessness Alliance and commissioning partners to ensure that service provision and access to accommodation is transformed in line with the Countywide strategy, including moving to a housing-led and more person centered approach.	Deliver the recently developed Alliance transformation plan.	P5-1	Housing Services
		Deliver plans to gradually decommission supported accommodation units that aren't meeting current need, in order to invest in a new "housing led" support offer in the Alliance, that will support people to move out and sustain a long-term home.	P5-2	Housing Services
	Aligned to the Countywide Strategy, together with partners, review commissioning and contract management of supported services ensuring choice and variety is maximised, both in terms of accommodation and support provision.	For all services commissioned by Oxford City Council outside of Alliance arrangements, services will be regularly reviewed to ensure they are aligned and deliver a housing-led approach.	P5-3	Housing Services
		For all services commissioned under the Alliance, work with partners to set up and support contract management.	P5-4	Housing Services
	Work with Oxfordshire District Councils and registered providers to ensure that the commitment to provide 1-bed-room properties for those moving on from supported accommodation is met across the County.	Continue to work across the Countywide structures to tackle the undersupply of one bedroom accommodation across Oxfordshire. Develop a package of measures all Councils and ICB can agree to, to increase the supply for accommodation for single people.	P5-5	Housing Services
Maximise funding and raising profile	Continue to work closely with relevant government departments such as DLUHC to ensure that we have access to future funding opportunities and have good working relationships so that we can lobby for change if necessary.	Continue to engage with MHCLG to agree a new longer term financial settlement from April 2026 onwards.	P5-6	Housing Services
		Following the government's consultation on the supported accommodation regulatory oversight act, make full use of the new powers, once confirmed by government, to ensure well-regulated supported accommodation in the city that meets local need.	New	Housing Services

	Work with commissioners of supported accommodation operating in the city to ensure that as much as possible is provided through registered providers, who are subject to more regulation and impose less costs on the Council through reduced housing benefit subsidy.	Work with commissioners in the County Council and NHS to influence their commissioning of supported accommodation, including the YPSA and mental health pathway.	P5-8	Housing Services
Provide the right service at the right time	Continue to deliver services based on the principles of Somewhere Safe to Stay in the city, to ensure that people do not have to sleep rough before they are offered assistance.	Review arrangements and services to ensure that the right level of provision is available in accommodation across the Alliance, considering opportunities to grow the offer.	P5-9	Housing Services
	Facilitate access to appropriate health and care services for those who are in need	Conduct regular reviews/contract monitoring of services commissioned as part of the Oxfordshire Homelessness Alliance to ensure that all persons using services are assisted and offered access to relevant services as needed, such as health, mental health, substance misuse and care services.	P5-10	Housing Services
Improve access to accommodation and provide a range of accommodation options for single persons and couples				
	Enhance our private rented sector offer to singles and couples, with no or low support needs, who are looking to move on from supported accommodation or rough sleeping.	Following a successful expansion of our PRS schemes to single adults, continue this work to maximize private lets for singles.	P5-17	Housing Services
Ensure sufficient provision of supported accommodation to meet a range of needs	Together with our County and District partners and working towards the goals of the Countywide strategy, commission a range of flexible accommodation for singles and couples.	Review the current access panel arrangements, ensuring they are keeping up with changing homelessness patterns in the city, in order to ensure that homeless people get the right accommodation offer that meets their needs.	P5-19	Housing Services
	Work with commissioning partners and providers to commission supported accommodation that is distributed and dispersed appropriately throughout the city, to ensure that persons living in supported accommodation feel supported and safe where they live.	Continuously update mapping and use this information to form part of decisions made when commissioning new provision.	P5-21	Housing Services

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	Support people experiencing rough sleeping in Oxford who do not have recourse to public funds to find appropriate solutions.	Ensure there is a provision of legal support and advice that people can access in order to assist with regularising immigration status for affected individuals.	P5-22	Housing Services
	Work with services we commission to move to a strength-based approach to delivery of housing support services where a person's individual needs are at the centre of the service provision.	Implement and monitor the commissioning and contract management arrangements of services commissioned solely by Oxford City Council and as part of the Oxfordshire Alliance, ensuring choice and variety is maximised, including support not linked to a housing offer.	P5-24	Housing Services
Introduce a housing-led approach to offer of accommodation	Increase our offer of Housing First accommodation and provide the support individuals may need in order to sustain the accommodation.	Continue our work to bring a further 17 properties into use for Housing First and support our existing Housing First clients to sustain their accommodation.	P5-25	Housing Services
		Work with MHCLG to explore future funding opportunities and bid where appropriate to further increase our Housing First offer.	P5-26	Housing Services
	Work with the Alliance to continue to transform our approach to the provision of accommodation to single homeless persons, including reviewing our current accommodation offers as we move to a housing-led model and helping facilitate changes agreed as part of the Countywide transformation.	Work with the Alliance to support the further development and delivery of their transformation plans.	P5-27	Housing Services

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

What do we want to achieve?	What are we going to do to achieve this?	Actions in 2025/26 (year 3)	Action reference (no)	Action owned by
Deliver the Council's housing related commitments in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	Ensure that we understand and respond to issues that disproportionally impact specific groups in our community and lead to homelessness.	Improve homelessness data collection and data quality, including on protected characteristics.	EDI-1	Housing Services
		From the analysis completed in 24/25 for households approaching OCC as homeless, establish and agree targeted actions, aligning with existing Council strategies, policies and work streams.	EDI-2	Housing Services
	Work with communities to address any issues that disproportionally affects specific groups in order to better prevent homelessness.	Seek feedback from service users from different backgrounds to develop response.	EDI-4	Housing Services
	Review and improve how we engage with our tenants and leaseholders and ensure that inclusion is at the heart of this.	Ensure new Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy in place	EDI-5	Housing Services
Data and information	Seek to improve our data collection so that we can better understand how our homelessness services work for the community, with the aim to ensure that services are accessible to all. Ensuring we improve the data we have on protected characteristics where we currently have a limited picture, such as for LGBTQIA+ people.	Implement changes to our housing management systems to ensure accurate data collection and reporting.	EDI-6	Housing Services
		Provide training and upskilling to staff to ensure data on protected characteristics is collected and recorded.	EDI-7	Housing Services
		Analyse data regularly to determine if and when any groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness.	EDI-8	Housing Services
	Routinely report and use data to understand shifts in the profiles of people that we support in relation to homelessness, such as a recent decrease in the proportion of women presenting, in order to make sure that any changes is not due to inaccessibility.	Improve data collection and data quality.	EDI-9	Housing Services
		Analyse data regularly and develop actions to inform how we deliver our homelessness services.	EDI-10	Housing Services
	Take further steps to better understand our tenants, including better capture and analysis of data so that we can ensure that services are delivered well to all.	Continue to actively engage with tenants directly in their homes, capturing protected characteristics, reasonable adjustments, preferences to inform individual service delivery requirements.	EDI-11	Housing Services
Partnership work	Continue to consider the needs of the travelling community. and seek to work	Work with colleagues in the County Council to contribute data and information.	EDI-12	Housing Services

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	in partnership with our neighbouring authorities to commission a new study of need for the period up to 2040			
Accessibility and information	Ensure information and communication is accessible, through using a range of mediums and accessible language.	Complete review of information and advice given to customers by Housing Services.	EDI-13	Housing Services
Staff and staff training	Provide training for all of our staff to ensure they are all skilled and confident in delivering services and work with Human Resources partners to have a workforce that as a whole reflects Oxford's diverse population	Carry out training needs analysis. Deliver training to staff specific to their role.	EDI-14	Housing Services

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Annual Review of the Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28

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Appendix 4 Form to be used for the Full Equalities Impact Assessment

Service Area: Housing Services		Section:	Date of Initial assessment:	Key Person responsible for assessment:	Date assessment commenced:
Name of Policy to be assessed:			Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28		
1. In what area are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact			Race ✓	Disability ✓	Age ✓
			Gender reassignment ✓	Religion or Belief ✓	Sexual Orientation ✓
			Sex ✓	Pregnancy and Maternity ✓	Marriage & Civil Partnership ✓
Other strategic/ equalities considerations			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Financial Inclusion Strategy Zero Carbon Plan Partnership Action Plan Thriving Communities Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset Management Strategy People Strategy Oxford Local Plan Oxfordshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Oxford Economic Growth Strategy City Centre Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term Financial Plan HRA Business Plan Green Space Strategy Financial Inclusion Strategy Council of Sanctuary Framework

2. Background:

Give the background information to the policy and the perceived problems with the policy which are the reason for the Impact Assessment.

Homelessness strategies set out how a council and its partners are to prevent homelessness, ensure that sufficient accommodation and support is available for people who are or may become homeless, and seek to prevent them becoming homeless again. There is a legal duty for councils to publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of a homelessness review at least every five years. The national Rough Sleeping Strategy further requires local authorities to include rough sleeping in their homelessness strategies. A housing strategy sets out a council's vision for housing in the local area, in particular affordable housing, but also covers our role as a social landlord, and the private rented sector. There is no legal obligation for a council to have a housing strategy in place, but it is good practice to have one, and in particular for Oxford which faces significant housing challenges.

The development process for Oxford's new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy started in early 2021, when we started working on a review of homelessness in Oxford and the wider evidence base. A homelessness review is a comprehensive examination of homelessness in a local authority area, which is carried out to inform the creation of homelessness strategy for that area. The purpose of the review is 'to determine the extent to which the population in the district is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, assess the likely extent in the future, identify what is currently being done and by whom, and identify what resources are available to prevent and tackle homelessness' (Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities, Chapter 2, paragraph 2.15). Because our strategy covers housing and homelessness, the homelessness review has been joined with information on housing to ensure a full strategy evidence base is created.

The review and evidence base includes information about numbers of homeless people and families who are homeless, and how services have performed to support homeless people, as well as data on protected characteristics for the people we are providing services. It also includes wider housing issues, such as the Council's role as a social landlord, what's happening in the private rented sector, the plans to build more affordable housing in the future, and the need to tackle the role housing plays in carbon emissions.

The comprehensive review and evidence base has underpinned and informed the of Oxford's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy that sets out the Council's strategic response to prevent all forms of homelessness and tackle the housing challenges the city faces. Formulating a strategy affects all of the communities in Oxford and if we do not use enough or accurate data and information, or interpret this in the correct way, our strategy, and policies and procedures developed under it, may have unintended negative effects on people with protected characteristics.

	<p>As our strategy is based on research, data and information into the community needs for housing, including disability needs, gender, family housing needs and risk of homelessness, we have been able to use this understanding to ensure our housing strategy meets their needs.</p> <p>A 6 week public consultation on the draft strategy was launched in November 2022, to establish if we had set the right comments to achieve our priorities within the strategy. We also asked respondents if they had any feedback on the Equality Impact Assessment completed for the draft strategy. All feedback received from the consultation was carefully reviewed and amendments have been made to the Strategy where appropriate. Following the consultation, we have also developed an Action Plan which sets out how we will achieve our commitments and this document will be used to review our progress over the 5 year strategy period.</p> <p>This Equality Impact Assessment has been updated following the consultation and amendments to Strategy and accompanying action plan.</p>
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3. Methodology and Sources of Data:

The methods used to collect data and what sources of data

The review and evidence base, which has informed the strategy, was initially conducted over a period of 6 months, from early 2021 to summer 2021. It has since been updated to incorporate more recent data, national and local developments as well as feedback from consultation on the review and evidence base carried out during summer 2021.

We have used a large number of sources, including statutory homelessness statistics, internal data bases, Census data, data from the Office for National Statistics, research carried out by renowned national homelessness organisations and charities, and national policies to compile and then analyse the information.

We have compared the findings of this homelessness review with older sets of data for Oxford, such as the evidence base for previous Housing and Homelessness Strategy. We have done this so that we see local and national trends.

All our sources are referenced in the review and evidence base.

In 2024/25 Officers have continued to work on improving data collection and quality of data and have embarked on a project to analyse the characteristics of households approaching the Council as homeless, OCC tenants and General Housing Register applicants. Officers have developed comprehensive data sets and plan to use this data to inform service planning and targeted initiatives in 2025/26 alongside related service delivery and existing projects.

4. Consultation

This section should outline all the consultation that has taken place on the EIA. It should include the following.

- Why you carried out the consultation.
- Details about how you went about it.
- A summary of the replies you received from people you consulted.
- An assessment of your proposed policy (or policy options) in the light of the responses you received.

A statement of what you plan to do next

An important part of gathering additional information and making sure that we had not missed any vital data or information, or that we had interpreted information wrong, was to hold a public consultation on the review and evidence base.

How we consulted

Our approach to this statutory consultation was comprehensive and included:

- An online public survey
- Launched a social media campaign to promote the consultation, advertised the consultation on our choice-based lettings website and included a recording on our telephone lines.
- Held 3 in-person stakeholder events, focussing on different priorities within the draft Strategy
- Held an online stakeholder event, covering all 5 priorities
- We worked with colleagues across the communities' team and attended community events to discuss priorities within the draft strategy and encourage feedback from residents of Oxford.
- Held a session with individuals who have lived experience of homelessness
- Attended a meeting with Tenant Ambassadors
- Held a Member's briefing
- The Economic Development Team encouraged attendees of the Economic Growth Board to engage with the consultation
- Details of the consultation were included in newsletters that are circulated to businesses and partners operating in the City Centre.

In total, we had 103 responses to the online survey. Headlines from online survey responses:

- 75% of responses were made by members of the public¹. The majority – 73% whom were Oxford residents.
- 46% of respondents described themselves as female; 44% as male; 7% preferred not to say; 4% did not answer.
- 67% of those who responded to the survey were over the age of 45. The largest individual age group was 45-54, with 22% of respondents.

¹ Not all 103 respondents responded to all questions in the survey. The answer rate is therefore based on the total number of responses for the relevant question.

Respondents overwhelmingly identified themselves as being 'White British' – 67%. In total 81% of respondents stated that they 'white' best described their ethnic group.

- 24% of respondents stated that their day-to-day activities are limited because of a health problem or disability.
- Four stakeholder workshops took place in November and December 2023. A total of 60 individuals attended the workshops from 27 different statutory and non-statutory organisations. This included Housing Associations, County Council, community groups, third sector organisations, mental health services, supported accommodation providers and many more.

Overall, the response to the draft vision and emerging priorities was positive, both through the online consultation and feedback at the stakeholder events. With between 74% and 85% of online respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with what we want to do.

We also asked if respondents had any comments or feedback on the Equality Impact Assessment for the draft strategy. Only 27 individuals responded to this question. We had a mixture of responses with some respondents saying they thought it was good and others saying they didn't, and equally conflicting opinions on whether the data was useful.

Following a comprehensive review of all responses to the consultation, along with a reflection on the demographics of those individuals who responded to the consultation, we made amendments to our Strategy and developed our action plan. The Action Plan sets out what we will do to achieve our commitments and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

We have a dedicated section within our Action Plan, focusing on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This sets out our commitments and detailed in section 5.

Summary of key equalities related identified in the review and evidence base that we will introduce mitigations for include:

- Housing is unaffordable for many in the city
- We hold little data on people with certain characteristics, such as the LGBT community and we do therefore not know the full extent of how this group is affected by homelessness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Black community is overrepresented in homelessness cases compared to the overall share of the population in Oxford• Males are over represented in rough sleeping instances compared to the overall share of the population• A large proportion of those we owe a duty towards as well as rough sleepers, have physical and/or mental health disabilities.• A large proportion of those we owe a homelessness duty towards are in reception of benefits in relation to disability.
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5. Assessment of Impact:


Provide details of the assessment of the policy on the six primary equality strands. There may have been other groups or individuals that you considered. Please also consider whether the policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and / or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults

Race	Disability	Age
Positive	Positive	Positive
Gender reassignment	Religion or Belief	Sexual Orientation
Positive	Positive	Positive
Sex	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage & Civil Partnership
Positive	Positive	Positive
<p>Following the consultation into our draft strategy and accompanying EIA we have developed the work streams detailed below. These will enhance our services and inform future service development, the strategy will therefore have a positive effect on the community as a whole including those persons with protected characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleagues across the Council throughout the life of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to deliver the Council's commitments set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensuring that we understand issues that disproportionately affect specific groups and may lead to homelessness; ○ work with communities to address such issues to better prevent homelessness; ○ review and improve how we engage with our tenants and leaseholders and ensure that inclusion is at the heart of this; ○ use our programme of capital investment to set an example of high standards and inclusive design and planning for social housing. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct comprehensive equality impact assessment for new key policies and working practises, such as the Tenancy Strategy and the Allocation Policy, to ensure truly fair access to our services for those with protected characteristics • Engage better with key community groups to address issues that disproportionately impact specific groups in our community and lead to homelessness. We will also help them provide feedback and help shape our services. • Improve our data collection so that we can better understand the impact of homelessness on people with certain characteristics, such as the LGBT community; use this data to inform service development • Seek to understand better why black people and their families living in Oxford are disproportionately made homeless, and engage with service users, in order to improve our services to combat this trend. • Routinely report and use data to understand shifts in the profiles of persons that we support in relation to homelessness in order to make sure that any significant changes are not due to inaccessibility • Ensure that we understand and respond to issues that disproportionately impact specific groups in our community and lead to homelessness, by improving the data that we collected and using this data to inform service delivery. • Review and improve how we engage with our tenants and leaseholder, ensuring that inclusion is at the heart of this engagement. • Consider the needs of the travelling community, and work in partnership with our neighbouring authorities to commission a new study of need for the period up to 2040. • Complete a review of all current information and advice given to customers. To ensure that information and communication is accessible, through using a range of mediums and accessible language. • Provide training for all Housing Services staff to ensure to ensure they are all skilled and confident in delivering services. • Work with Human Resources partners to have a workforce that as a whole reflects Oxford's diverse population.
<p>6. Consideration of Measures:</p> <p>This section should explain in detail all the consideration of alternative approaches/mitigation of adverse impact of the policy</p>	<p>There are no known adverse equality impacts of the strategy or work streams coming out of this. The measures and work streams under the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will have positive impacts on all groups of the community and therefore no mitigation measures have been put into place.</p>

6a. Monitoring Arrangements: Outline systems which will be put in place to monitor for adverse impact in the future and this should include all relevant timetables. In addition it could include a summary and assessment of your monitoring, making clear whether you found any evidence of discrimination.		Progress against the action plan will be monitored quarterly, including qualitative commentary. The action plan will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure that it is still relevant, there is focus on yearly actions and progress, and actions can be amended if necessary. To help inform the annual review of the action plan, key sets of data will also be monitored throughout the year. We will keep monitoring the main homelessness data sets, and as stated above, introduce others where we do not have sufficient information at present, to see trends and put in place mitigations if we discover that any measures introduced under this strategy is adversely affecting certain groups in Oxford's communities. A number of actions related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion were set out in the Year 2 (24/25) action plan and progress can be found in Appendix 1. Building on these actions and responding to emerging need, the Year 3 (25/26) action plan contains further actions to progress our equalities aims and these can be found in Appendix 3			
7. Date reported and signed off by Cabinet:					
8. Conclusions: What are your conclusions drawn from the results in terms of the policy impact		That we adopt and deliver the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in order to address the inequality gaps that are created due to the unaffordability of housing in the city.			
9. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	NO	10. Date the Service Plans will be updated	Spring 2026	11. Date copy sent to Equalities Lead Officer	

.13. Date reported to Scrutiny and Executive Board:		14. Date reported to Cabinet:	9 July 2025	12. The date the report on EqlA will be published	

Signed (completing officer) 

Signed (Lead Officer) STEPHEN COHEN

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To: Cabinet
Date: 9 July 2025
Report of: Liz Jones, ASBIT Manager and Domestic Abuse Lead
Title of Report: Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	The Cabinet to approve the Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Lubna Arshad, Safer Communities
Corporate Priority:	Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	No

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Domestic Abuse Policy for Service users (Appendix 1) 2. Delegate authority to the Domestic Abuse Lead, to make minor changes in the future to reflect any relevant changes in legislation, guidance or practice.

Introduction and background

1. The Council is working towards achieving the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, which is a set of standards and process that helps housing providers respond to domestic abuse. It is the UK's benchmark for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse.
2. The purpose of the DAHA accreditation is to improve the response to domestic abuse by spotting the signs and intervening early to keep survivors safe and hold reported abusers to account.
3. The main benefit of achieving DAHA accreditation is enabling housing providers to deliver safe and effective responses to domestic abuse and reduce the human, social and economic costs of domestic abuse.
4. A requirement to achieve accreditation is for the Council to have two separate domestic abuse policies; one for service users and one for staff. The People Team are reviewing the staff policy.

Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users

5. The Domestic Abuse Policy for Service users sets out the Council's objectives to ensure anyone impacted by domestic abuse will receive appropriate client-led support from trained staff and be signposted or referred to specialist services to prevent further harm.
6. The policy objectives are:
 - Improve the quality of the Council's workforce by providing training, and a raised understanding of the dynamics and impact of domestic abuse.
 - Maintain a pool of domestic abuse specialists who can provide guidance, listening support and risk identification.
 - Early identification of domestic abuse to ensure survivors receive a trauma-informed, client-led response.
 - Provide a sanctuary for any survivor fleeing domestic abuse.
 - Employees will know how to sign-post reported abusers for support to change their behaviours.
7. The policy has been developed with input from:
 - Survivors of domestic abuse
 - Domestic Abuse Champions
 - Unison
 - Oxford City Council's Policy Officers Group
 - Public Consultation

Communication and training

8. The policy will be available to citizens on the Oxford City Council website in both the Domestic Abuse section and within the Housing advice for victims of domestic abuse section. This will provide information to survivors so they can feel confident that they will be supported and be believed if they contact the Council.
9. The policy will be shared with relevant staff and managers and training undertaken.
10. The policy is owned by the Domestic Abuse Lead for the Council.

Other policy implications

11. The policy does not replace any other policy.
12. Disclosures requiring a safeguarding response will be dealt with under the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

Alternative Options Considered

13. No policy adopted. The Council would be unable to fulfil its DAHA and legal obligations listed below.

Financial implications

14. There are no financial implications.

Legal issues

15. This policy is in response to the Council's obligations under the:
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
 - Part VI and Part VII Housing Act 1996
 - Social Housing Regulation Act 2021
 - Domestic Abuse Act 2021
16. Specifically, following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Oxford City Council has a statutory duty to provide safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse and their children. The policy reflects the Council's commitment to providing a holistic approach to service users who are fleeing domestic abuse and require a place of safety. It gives confidence to victims/survivors to come forward and seek help knowing that their disclosure will be taken seriously and that they have choices.
17. Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) were established on a statutory basis by the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) is responsible for commissioning DHRs following a domestic abuse related homicide or suicide. The OSCP is Chaired and managed by the Community Safety Service within the Council. The policy outlines the commitment of the Council to ensure their service users are kept safe from further harm.

Level of risk

18. If the policy is not approved the Council will not achieve DAHA accreditation.
19. Un-trained staff dealing with domestic abuse disclosures which will impact on the victim, and any children, as well as the staff.

Equalities impact

20. Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix 2)

Report author	Liz Jones
Job title	ASBIT Manager and DA Lead
Service area or department	Community Safety Service
Telephone	01865 252754
e-mail	Ljones3@oxford.gov.uk

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Appendix 1. Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users.

Domestic Abuse Policy for Service Users



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Oxford City Council (Council) Council) understands that 1 in 4 women will be affected by domestic abuse at one point in their lives. Men may also be victims; however, women are disproportionately affected.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that domestic abuse occurs in every social class and across all ages, regardless of gender, sexuality, disability, race, or religion.
- 1.3 Socio-economic factors are also highly relevant to domestic abuse. Research consistently shows that factors such as financial stress, poverty, and low educational attainment can significantly increase the risk of domestic violence.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Council considers domestic abuse as unacceptable whenever and however it occurs.
- 2.2 The Council is committed to a survivor-led approach. This means the survivor's views and experiences will inform the service they receive, and they will be able to exercise choice and control.

The Council will adopt this approach by:

- Communicating with, or about survivors using a non-judgemental and believing approach.
 - Giving clear and accurate advice to survivors about their options and signposting them to appropriate support services to help them work through these decisions.
 - Information will only be shared where it is lawful, necessary and appropriate to do so in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy.
 - Consent to share information is not always required if the level of risk to the service user is high, but in every circumstance the survivor will be informed of what is being shared, with whom and why. Where appropriate, necessary, and safe to do so, consent will be sought.
 - Accurate records will be kept of all information sharing activities in a secure place.
- 2.3 The Council commits to working closely with agencies who specialise in supporting survivors **and their children**. Relevant staff will consult with partners when safety planning and will participate in the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk

Assessment Conference), MATAC (Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination) and Drive Programme processes, as well as local and regional Domestic Abuse forums.

- 2.4 The Council will be mindful that service users may have experienced domestic abuse in their childhood or past. Staff will listen, believe, and support service users to access support when required.
- 2.5 The Council will be mindful that service users may be or may have been reported abusers of domestic abuse. The Council believe it is their role to hold reported abusers to account for their behaviour and understand it is the Council's responsibility to sign-post reported abusers to specialist agencies who can provide them with appropriate support.
- 2.6 The Council commits to providing or making available training for staff on how to collaborate effectively with survivors and reported abusers of domestic abuse.
- 2.7 The Council will consider all disclosures of domestic abuse as a safeguarding concern and will refer to the organisational Safeguarding Policy to ensure disclosures are made at the right time, with the relevant agencies and recorded appropriately.

3. Diversity Implications

- 3.1 The Council recognise that domestic abuse can occur to anybody regardless of their demographic make-up. However, the research shows that most abuse is perpetrated by men against women. Women are more likely than men to suffer repeat incidents of domestic abuse, and serious physical or mental injury or death.
- 3.2 Children under 18 years are recognised directly and indirectly as prevalent victims of domestic abuse which has a significant impact on experiences across their life span.
- 3.3 People with disabilities can face disproportionately high-risk levels of domestic abuse. In some cases, the primary perpetrator of domestic abuse may be a carer.
- 3.4 Minority groups are also more likely to be affected by domestic abuse. This may include black minority ethnic, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender and those with vulnerable immigration status who may face further barriers to disclosure

and reporting.

Some of these barriers might include:

- Increased stigma or isolation.
- Language barrier.
- Lack of familiarity/understanding around the statutory support systems.
- Previous experiences of discrimination.

4. Policy Objectives

- 4.1 Improve the quality of the Council's workforce by providing training, and a raised understanding of the dynamics and impact of domestic abuse.
- 4.2 Maintain a pool of domestic abuse specialists who can provide guidance, listening support and risk identification, if necessary, to staff who have received a disclosure of domestic abuse from a service user.
- 4.3 Early identification of domestic abuse to ensure survivors receive a trauma-informed, client-led response.
- 4.4 Provide sanctuary for any survivor **and their children** fleeing domestic abuse through well-trained staff and the Sanctuary Scheme.
- 4.5 Employees will know how to sign-post reported abusers for support to change their behaviours.

5. Legal Obligations and/or responsibility

5.1 The Council recognise its legal responsibilities in line with:

- Serious Crime Act 2015.
- Human Rights Act 2000.
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Equality Act 2010

- Part VI and Part VII Housing Act 1996
- Homeless Reduction Act 2017
- Social Housing Regulation Act 2021

6. **Definition**

6.1 The Council has adopted the statutory definition of Domestic Abuse, from the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021 which identifies domestic abuse as:

“Domestic abuse is any single incident, course of conduct or pattern of abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected to each other as a result of being, or having been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either of the parties are also considered victims of domestic abuse.”

6.2 Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse.
- Violent or threatening behaviour.
- Controlling or coercive behaviour.
- Economic abuse; or
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

This includes incidences where the abusive party directs their behaviour at another person (e.g. a child).

6.3 **Economic** abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on someone’s ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services.

6.4 **Controlling behaviour** is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their

resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

6.5 **Coercive behaviour** is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

6.6 This definition incorporates harmful traditional practices including, but not limited to, so called 'honour' based violence, 'honour' killings, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

6.7 The Council recognise 'honour'-based abuse as an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion, or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.

6.8 **Personally connected means two people who:**

- Are, or have been, married to each other.
- Are, or have been, civil partners of each other.
- Have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been ended).
- Have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been ended).
- Are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- Have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child.
- Are relatives.

6.9 **Children as victims of domestic abuse:**

- Sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse and is related to either person.
- The person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child.
- The child and person are related.
- Child means person under the age of 18 years.
- Psychological.
- Physical.

- Sexual.
- Financial.
- Emotional.

7. Policy Scope

7.1 This policy applies to survivors and/or reported abusers of domestic abuse, as well as their families. This policy must be applied in conjunction with the following Council documents:

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- Lone Worker Procedure/Health & Safety Policy.
- Modern Slavery Statement.
- Employee Domestic Abuse Policy.

and;

- Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy.
- Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- Out of Hours Standby Procedures.
- Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Pathway.
- Oxfordshire Young People's Domestic Abuse Pathway.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Council's Chief Executive:

- Has overall responsibility for the implementation and application of this Policy.
- Is responsible for ensuring that all Council Members and staff are made aware of their obligations, and that they carry them out in a safe and proper manners as detailed in the Policy or other related documents.

Members of the Council's senior leadership team have a responsibility to ensure that the Policy is understood and implemented.

Managers in the Council:

- Are required to ensure that the Policy is understood and implemented by their staff.
- Are required to have an awareness of domestic abuse and trauma informed approaches.
- Are responsible for the well-being of their staff.
- Can mitigate vicarious trauma by providing regular case supervision, signposting to additional support and de-briefing when required with their frontline staff to mitigate against vicarious trauma.
- Line Managers who have a Domestic Abuse Champion within their team should give them the flexibility and time to conduct their role effectively.

The Council's Domestic Abuse Lead is responsible for providing advice and guidance on the policy and related procedures to managers and employees.

Domestic Abuse Champions

- Are frontline staff who have an enhanced and specialist knowledge of domestic abuse.
- Are responsible for ensuring survivor's voices are considered on a regular basis and that this feedback shapes service initiatives and improvements.
- Are responsible for providing vital advice to staff, stakeholders and members of the public who may approach with concerns about domestic abuse. Their contact details can be found on the staff intranet.
- Should ensure they are up to date with new legislation with regards to domestic abuse and have regular refresher training.

All employees and workers are responsible for understanding and adhering to this policy.

9. Confidentiality

In accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy, any disclosure of domestic abuse will be treated as sensitive personal information and therefore in the strictest of confidence, unless the Council have a duty to disclose information to:

- Protect the person experiencing abuse
- Prevent harm to someone else, or
- Prevent or detect a crime.

10. Related documents

This policy must be applied in conjunction with the following documents:

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Lone Worker Procedure/Health and Safety Policy.
- Modern Slavery Statement.
- Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees.
- Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy.
- Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- Out of Hours Standby Procedures.
- Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Pathway.
- Oxfordshire Young People's Domestic Abuse Pathway.
- Data Protection Policy

11. Policy Owner

11.1 The Council's Domestic Abuse Lead.

12 Monitoring and Review

12.1 The policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Domestic Abuse Lead.
And if there are any changes in legislation/law.

12.2

13 Version Control

13.1 **Review Period:** Every two years.

Version	Status	Date	Author	Comments	Next Review
1	Draft	26.11.2024	Liz Jones		
2	Draft	26.11.2024	Liz Jones	Shared with Policy Group	
3	Draft	28.01.2025	Liz Jones	Policy Group feedback	
4	Draft	02.01.2025	Liz jones	Shared with Unison for feedback	
5	Draft	30.01.2025	Liz Jones	Shared with Ali Daly (Legal)	
7	Draft	31.01.2025	Liz Jones	Shared with Richard Adams Head of Community Safety Services	

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Separate document attached.

Why do an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

1. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is part of Oxford City Council's **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010)**.

The General PSED enables Oxford City Council to:

- a. **identify and remove discrimination,**
 - b. **identify ways to advance equality of opportunity,**
 - c. **foster good relations.**
2. **An EqIA must be done before making any decision(s)** that may have an impact on people and/or services that people use and depend on.
 3. An **EqIA form is one of many tools** that can simplify and structure your equalities assessment.
 4. We are passionate about equalities, and we highly recommend that **Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports and all projects must attach an EqIA.**

For questions, queries, and a chat about how to do your EqIA, please email your EDI officers:

1. Sobia Afridi- safриди@oxford.gov.uk

Please do refer to our [SharePoint Page](#) for support such as FAQs and Examples, etc.

A good EqIA has the following attributes:

1. **Comprehensively considers the 9 protected characteristics.**

1. Age	6. Race & Ethnicity
2. Disability	7. Religion or Belief
3. Gender Reassignment	8. Sex
4. Marriage & Civil Partnership	9. Sexual Orientation
5. Pregnancy & Maternity	

2. It has **considered equality of treatment** towards service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
3. Sufficiently considered **potential and real impact** of proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members.
4. **Systematically recorded and reported** any potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
5. **Collected, recorded, & reported sufficient information and data** on how your policy or proposal will have an impact.
6. Offers **mitigations or adjustments** if a PSED has been impacted.
7. Provides clear **justifications** for your decisions.
8. It is written in **plain English** with simple short sentence structures.


Section 1: General overview of the activity under consideration

1.	Name of activity being assessed. For example: -New policy, -Review of existing policy, -Changes in service(s), -New project(s), etc.	Insert: New policy	2.	The implementation date of the activity under consideration:	
3.	Directorate/Department(s):	Community Safety	4.	Service Area(s):	All
5.	Who is (are) the assessment lead(s): Please provide: -Name -Email address	Liz Jones DA Lead Dawn Thompson DAHA Project Manager	6.	Contact details, in case there are queries: Please provide: -Name -Email address	Liz Jones LJones3@oxford.gov.uk Dawn Thompson dathompson@oxford.gov.uk
7.	Is this a new or ongoing EqlA?	New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extension to existing EqlA <input type="checkbox"/>	8.	If this is an extension of a previous EqlA, please indicate where the previous EqlA is located and share the link to the said EqlA.	
9.	Date this EqlA started:	02/12/2024	11.	Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CMT.	
10.	Will this EqlA be attached to Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports/updates, which will be published online?				

Section 2: About the activity, change, or policy that is being assessed.

12.	Type of activity being considered: Check the most appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change to an existing activity.	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Others. Please			
13.	Which priority area(s) within <u>Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good, affordable homes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, fair economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thriving Communities	<input type="checkbox"/> Zero Carbon Oxford	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well run council
14.	Which priority area(s) within <u>Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responsive services and customer care.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diverse and engaged workforce.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership & organisational commitment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understanding and working with our communities.	
15.	Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.	Aims: The Council has obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of employees. In addition to		Objectives: Improve the quality of the workforce by providing training, and a raised understanding of the		Priorities To ensure all staff across all service areas understand the impact of domestic abuse.

<p>reducing physical risks, this means operating in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health.</p> <p>The Council is committed to ensuring the health, wellbeing and safety of its employees. Any employee or worker who has been impacted by domestic abuse should be able to raise the issue at work, without fear of stigmatisation or victimisation. Employees and workers should be appropriately supported within the workplace and have access to advice and specialist services. For some employees and workers, the workplace will be a safe haven and may be the only place that offers routes to safety.</p> <p>The Council's commitment extends to employees and workers who may be providing support to a family member, close friend or colleague who is experiencing domestic abuse.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges that all forms of domestic abuse are unacceptable.</p>	<p>dynamics and impact of domestic abuse</p> <p>Have a pool of domestic abuse specialists who can provide guidance and listening support</p> <p>Provide a safe haven for employees and workers who have been impacted by domestic abuse by ensuring they have access to appropriate specialist support and risk management</p> <p>Provide confidence to employees and workers who ask for support that they will be taken seriously and receive a believing response.</p> <p>Ensure all line managers have access to training and guidance on how to effectively support staff who chose to disclose abuse and staff who may recognise they are being abusive to their partner or family member.</p>	<p>All managers will receive training to recognise the signs of DA, and how they can support staff.</p> <p>To ensure all staff experiencing DA will know where and how to seek support internally and externally.</p> <p>DA victims will feel assured confidentiality will be maintained, and for domestic abuse victims/survivors their employment status will not be compromised.</p>
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	<p>This policy represents a commitment to take all reasonable steps possible to combat the reality and impact of domestic abuse on those being abused and to challenge the behaviour of those causing harm.</p> <p>This policy ensures that both victims/survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse are aware of the support that is available within the Council and externally. It is important to note however that domestic abuse is not condoned under any circumstances.</p>		
16.	<p>Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.</p> <p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Existing activity does not fulfillCorporate Objectives,-existing activity is discriminatoryand not fulfilling Council's PSED,... to name a few.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Policy sets out how domestic abuse will be responded to when staff disclose. Without this policy staff may not feel safe or confident to disclose as they do not know whether they will be believed or supported, and if their disclosure will be confidential.• Line managers may not feel confident to support a member of staff who has disclosed they are affected by domestic abuse or where to access more specialist support. The policy informs them of the Council's expectation on how to respond and what will be in place to assist the line managers	

Section 3: Understanding service users, residents, staff and any other impacted parties.

17.	<p>Have you undertaken any consultations in the form of surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups?</p> <p>Please provide details— -when, -how many, and -the approach taken.</p>	<p>The policy was shared with internal Domestic Abuse Champions who are members of staff, service users and those with lived experience to provide feedback. It has also been shared with the Unison Representatives.</p>
18.	<p>List information and data used to understand who your residents or staff are and how they will be impacted.</p> <p>These could be- -third-party research, -census data, -legislation, -articles, -reports, -briefs.</p>	<p>All data used for this Equality Impact assessment has been taken from the Workforce Equalities Report 2021-2023, which is currently the latest data on staff.</p> <p>This report is internally focused on the City Council as an employer, providing a picture of our workforce profile, data trend analysis for a three-year period (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023) for some of the key protected characteristics under the Equality Act.</p> <p>Not every employee chooses to share their personal data, so reporting is based on that data that has been reported.</p> <p>https://www.oxford.gov.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion/annual-workforce-equalities-report</p>
19.	<p>If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?</p> <p>Please list the details – -when,</p>	<p>N/A</p>

-with whom, and
-how long will you collect the
relevant data.

Section 4: Impact analysis.


20. Who does the activity impact? Check as needed. The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.	Service Users	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	Members of staff	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	General public	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	Partner / Community Organisation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	City Councillors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	Council suppliers and contractors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>


21.

Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?

Check as needed and provide evidence-driven conclusions.

Good Practice is to keep it simple and list your, evidence, insights, and mitigations.

229				www.oxford.gov.uk		<p>impact of domestic abuse in terms of disabilities. Continued events Lunch and Learn Disability Confident.</p> <p>Home > Events > Disability and Neurodiversity Staff Network</p> <p>All managers/staff have access to our Peoples department for advice on adaptations including Listening Ear, for those hard of hearing. Dragon for those with dyslexia. These solutions will ensure all staff with a disability will be able to access and digest the DA Policy.</p> <p>All managers have been offered Domestic abuse briefings to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and know how to respond to staff disclosures including were to signpost.</p> <p>ODAS service is open to everyone regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability</p> <p>Domestic abuse services A2Dominion</p>
Gender re-assignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Evidence</p> <p>This data is not collected</p>	<p>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</p> <p>No data available</p>

						How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?
Marriage & Civil Partnership	x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence This data is not collected	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)? Domestic abuse services A2Dominion
230 Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> www.oxford.gov.uk	Evidence  OXFORD CITY COUNCIL	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)? OCC Workforce Equalities Plan Developing this strategy Oxford Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy Oxford City Council Workforce Equalities Plan covers all protected characteristic. Ensuring all employees have the same rights. This is included in the proposed Domestic Abuse Policy ODAS service is open to everyone regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability

<div>231</div>					<p>Pregnancy & Maternity</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Evidence</p> <p>Pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse, and existing abuse may get worse during pregnancy or after giving birth</p> <p>Domestic abuse in pregnancy - NHS</p>	<p>Domestic abuse services A2Dominion</p> <p>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</p> <p>Employment data is not collected for this group.</p> <p>How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?</p> <p>Safeguarding procedures will be followed.</p>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Religion or Belief</p> <p>Evidence</p> <p>Honour based abuse, including forced marriage.</p>	<p>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</p> <p>35.4% of the workforce have declared as Christian 3.7% of the workforce is 'other', 1.9% is Muslim and 0.4% Sikh</p> <p>How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?</p> <p>Encouraging all staff and managers to undertake specific training in terms of Honour based abuse and traditional harmful practices.</p>

						<p>Karma Nirvana provide specialist support for victims/survivors of Honour based abuse, and a phone line for professionals seeking advice and support. Sundial info@sundialcentre.org</p> <p>Get Help For Safeguarding Professionals – Karma Nirvana</p> <p>ODAS service is open to everyone regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability</p> <p>Domestic abuse services A2Dominion</p>
<p>2023 Sex</p>	<p>x <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Evidence Women statistically are more likely to experience domestic abuse than men.</p> <p>In the year ending March 2023, 1.4 million women and 751,000 men aged 16 and over experienced domestic abuse. This is a prevalence rate of 5.7% for women and 3.2% for men</p> <p>domestic abuse statistics male vs female - Google Search</p>	<p>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</p> <p>Over half of the workforce are women (59.7%)</p> <p>How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?</p> <p>The below strategy also recognises the gender equality pay gap, and is taking steps to address this.</p> <p>Developing this strategy Oxford Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy Oxford City Council</p> <p>ODAS service is open to everyone regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability</p>

						Domestic abuse services A2Dominion
233	Sexual Orientation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div> <div>Evidence</div> <div> <p>In 2018, Galop's national research showed that 11% of LGBT people had faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. This increased to 17% of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people.</p> <p>LGBTQIA+ Domestic Abuse - Reducing the Risk</p> </div> </div>	<div> <div>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</div> <div>4.0% of the Council workforce identifies as bisexual, lesbian or gay.</div> <div>How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?</div> <div> <div>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and procedure</div> <div>Safeguarding Policy</div> <div>Health and Wellbeing Policy</div> </div> <div>Early identification via internal mandatory domestic abuse training</div> </div>
	Other (voluntary consideration) For example: Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div> <div>Evidence</div> <div> <p>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</p> <p>How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?</p> <p>Oxford City Council has applied, for City of Sanctuary status, specifically trained workers support this group alongside Asylum Welcome</p> </div> </div>

						<p>OCC have a specific team specialising in Exploitation.</p> <p>Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service provides support to DA victims/survivors irrelevant of status this includes working with DA victims with No Recourse to public funds</p> <p>Domestic abuse services A2Dominion</p>
<p>Other (voluntary consideration)</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Socio-economic status (income, wealth, etc.)</p> <p>234</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Evidence</p>  <p>www.oxford.gov.uk</p>	<p>What is the data telling us about impact on this group?</p> <p>There is a fairly good representation of women in roles up to Grade 9. There are significantly more women than men in grades 5 to 7, which account for 64% of all females. 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost quarter of the Council's workforce is part time – the majority working part time are women with only 27 men working less than full time hours. <p>How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)?</p> <p>Domestic abuse victims/survivors' employment status will not be compromised following a disclosure. Every effort will be taken to ensure the victim/survivor can work flexibly to access appropriate support and guidance to meet their needs, ensuring their paid income from OCC is not affected. Domestic Abuse is identified/recognised on OCC flexible working policy and Leave policy and procedure.</p>

235	Other For example: - Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population -Council suppliers & contractors -Cabinet Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	List the other groups Homeless applications Evidence HCLiC data suggests a significant increase in domestic abuse victims/survivors and their families fleeing and applying to OCC for housing, this does include OCC staff who have fled domestic abuse.	What is the data telling us about impact on this group? How will you mitigate disproportionate impact (positive or negative)? The DA Policy will provide reassurance for staff to disclose, with confidence they will be believed and supported. Early identification Risk assessment and referral/signposting to specialist service by identified pool of experienced DA Champions All staff who disclose DA and are wanting to flee will be able to access safe emergency accommodation, alternatively Sanctuary scheme in confidence with support from, specialist DA champions, DA lead for OCC, and senior managers, who have all undertaken training on Domestic Abuse.

Section 5: Conclusion(s) of your Full Impact Assessment

22.	Conclusions. Check as needed.						
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stop and reconsider the activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust activity before beginning the activity and continue to monitor.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No major change(s) or adjustments	<input type="checkbox"/>

					and continue with activity but continue to monitor.	continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
23.	Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.	<p>This policy has been written regarding national best practice. Our commitment to work towards accreditation through the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and work completed so far, shows that the Oxford City Council is working to improve our services for all staff, who are victims/survivors of domestic abuse. We regularly consider how we can work and adapt our response appropriately to meet the needs of staff with protected characteristics. In carrying out this assessment we have found no evidence that any group will be adversely affected by the introduction of the new policy.</p> <p>In Oxford City Council, we do not tolerate domestic abuse and we will strive to ensure all staff can live free from abuse and harm. We will work to create an environment where healthy relationships are the norm and where victims/survivors and their children have access to the right support at the right time. Domestic abuse is everybody's business, we will work collaboratively to create lasting change across all our departments.</p>				

Section 6: Monitoring and review plan.

The responsibility for maintaining a monitoring arrangement of the EqlA action plan lies with the service/team completing the EqlA. These arrangements must be built into the performance management framework such as KPIs or Risk Registers.

24.	Who or which team or service area will be responsible for monitoring equalities impact?			
	For example- - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.			
25.	Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqlA review?			
26.	How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity? For example- -quarterly, -yearly, etc.		27. Date when the EqlA will be reviewed again.	

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Liz Jones

Job Title: ASBIT Manager & DA Lead

Signature:



Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Sobia Afridi

Job Title: EDI Lead

Signature: SA

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Dawn Thompson

Job Title: DAHA Project Manager

Signature: DT

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Suggested list of people to include are:

- 1) Project lead/manager.
- 2) Head of service area or team.
- 3) Person who completed the EqIA.
- 4) EDI Lead.
- 5) EDI Specialist.
- 6) For joint projects, please consider the following:
 1. Other project leads
 2. Other service area and/or team lead/managers.

This is not an exhaustive list.

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You have now reached the end of the assessment.

⚠ Please appended this to any reports and project files for reference.

To: Cabinet
Date: 9th July 2025
Report of: Director of Housing
Title of Report: National Homelessness Property Fund One

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	Decision on the future of the Council's investment in NHPF1.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities; Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	Good, Affordable Homes
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:	
1.	Approve the principle of Oxford City Council moving its current £10m investment in National Homelessness Property Fund One, into a new “evergreen” property fund, in order to preserve nomination rights to 69 homes in Oxfordshire alleviating homelessness.
2.	Delegate to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Deputy Leader (statutory) for Finance and Asset Management, the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) and Group Finance Director (S151) the authority to enter in to such agreements as necessary to make the reinvestment in to the new “evergreen” property fund subject to reassurance from the fund that all or majority of the homes owned in Oxfordshire are retained through the reinvestment and satisfactory approval of the terms of the investment agreement.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Risk Register	No

Introduction and background

1. The Council's investment of £10m in the National Homelessness Property Fund 1 (NHPF1) is coming to an end, as the fund matures and closes. The Council first invested in the fund in 2015, and through this investment and the investment of others, 69 homes have been purchased in Oxfordshire to offer affordable tenancies to homeless families.
2. As set out in the financial implications, over the investment period the Council has received periodic returns on its investment of £10m and, in addition, benefitted from the nomination rights on the properties held within the fund so as to reduce the need to use BnB and hotel accommodation to address homelessness, which would be more costly than using the nomination rights to the 69 units the investment secures for the Council.
3. This paper considers the options the Council has for its investment and recommends that the Council keeps its investment in the properties, moving it to a new fund to preserve the nomination rights for the properties.

NHPF1

4. Resonance is a social enterprise and fund manager focused on social impact investment. It manages a series of homelessness housing funds across the UK. Since 2013 Resonance has raised investment from different sources, including Councils, the government and private investors.
1. Resonance owned homes allow Local Authorities to discharge their homelessness duty by housing households who are currently living in Temporary Accommodation (TA), or who are at risk of homelessness. This is achieved via an Assured Shorthold tenancy being let to tenants meeting the eligibility criteria.
2. The Council invested £10m into Resonance's National Homelessness Property Fund 1 (NHPF1) (£5m in 2016/17 and £5m in 2018/19) and Resonance matched this investment (through raising capital from other investors) in order to create a portfolio of 69 homes across the Oxford (City and surrounding Districts) area which continue to be used by us to house households in a settled home via our nomination rights secured through our investment, removing them from TA, and therefore reducing TA costs for OCC.
3. All homes are 2+ bed, so support us in our statutory duty to avoid hotel and Bed and Breakfast (BnB) use for 6 weeks or more for households with children.
4. Through NHPF1 approximately £44m has been invested to acquire a total of 229 homes across Bristol, Oxford and Milton Keynes. The fund is due to mature in December 2025 (ie the date at which the fund is currently due to return investment capital to all investors). Resonance has its housing funds valued by an independent valuer every 6 months, and the current value for NHPF1 is c£44m (as of September 2024).
5. NHPF1 is now approaching the current end date, and there are decisions to be taken in order to preserve the financial investment of the Council in this asset, and

to seek to ensure the ongoing value of the nomination rights for the 69 homes is retained. The other LA and private investors are also considering their positions.

5. It should also be noted that the Council is also invested into a separate Resonance Fund (NHPF2), however, given this fund matures at the end of 2035 there is currently no requirement for the Council to make any decisions regarding their capital invested into this fund.

Future of the investment

6. It has long been the aim that over the 10 year investment that Resonance would raise enough capital to create the option for the LA investors to take back their investment and be replaced with others, such as the Local Government Pension Schemes or private investment, while still allowing us nomination rights to the properties. While they have had some success in doing this in some schemes to date, they have informed us that they are not currently able replace the Council funding or that of any of the larger LA investors in NHPF1 with new investments from elsewhere. Therefore, if we were to withdraw our investment the fund would need to sell most or all of the 69 homes in Oxfordshire, which should be sufficient to cover our initial investment, but we would lose nomination rights.
7. Resonance have reassured the Council that they are focused on raising substantial amounts of capital from institutional investors over the next few years in order to give us the option of withdrawing in the future, with retained nomination rights (subject to agreement). However, in the meantime Resonance are proposing to existing investors in NHPF1 to reinvest, or “roll” their existing position into the new fund, providing a number of significant benefits for its investors:
 - Improved options for future exits / allocating more capital to the Oxford region
 - Receipt of continued investment returns (although not guaranteed at the same level)
 - An ongoing positive solution to the TA crisis, by continuing to receive nomination rights to properties
 - Avoid the potentially negative consequences of selling properties with high numbers of evictions.
8. Resonance is structuring a new housing fund that will be larger and longer-term than its previous funds, which they aim will be attractive for Local Authorities and institutional investors, allowing significant scaling of this initiative throughout the UK. Resonance currently has a focus on raising capital from LAs and UK Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) having already attracted 4 LGPS investors into its previous fund.
9. The new fund will be classed as an “Evergreen/Open Ended” fund and will therefore not have a maturity date. This fund will also have more flexible options for investors to exit, with Resonance expecting this to involve an initial “hold” period of 5 years, followed by options for investors to exit with defined notice periods.
10. Resonance is targeting to launch this new fund by 30th Sept 2025 looking to raise £250m, Resonance would then look to raise capital at a rate of £100-150m per annum thereafter, which could be used for either new investment into additional homes, or exits for some investors (if this was required).

11. Although Resonance has done well in attracting institutional capital into their model (4 LGPS accounts for c£80m of the c£175m projected raise in their latest fund NHPF2) the fundraising landscape is still challenging and volatile. The launch of this new fund is more likely to be successful if it incorporates the existing portfolios established through previous funds, preserving their use for this purpose and providing a significant initial asset base that will help attract further investment into this initiative.

Homelessness – Impact and Risk

12. The Council's investment in NHPF1 makes a considerable ongoing contribution to helping the Council meet its statutory duty to rehouse eligible homeless households with children. While all 69 properties are currently tenanted (or undergoing void work ahead of being relet) we have had good levels of churn in recent years so we continue to discharge homeless duty into them every year. Families placed in the units over the past 10 years are largely moving on positively, moving to new private homes, and good numbers where their homes are located in the Oxfordshire Districts are moving into social housing in those areas (due to these Districts having lower demand on their housing registers).
13. In 23/24 the Council achieved 21 new lets, and in 24/25 achieved 17 lets. If we were to disinvest and lose nomination rights for the units, there would be a knock-on financial impact on BnB / hotel costs as we have to house more families in hotels for longer, and a legal impact as we would be more likely to breach our duty to keep households with children out of BnB.
14. Costs of losing nomination rights can be hard to forecast, but to take the average of the last two years, 19 fewer lets per year could result in an increase in hotel / BnB cost of approximately £400,000 on the council annually, for the foreseeable future until when homelessness demand drops. The Council has experienced rapid increases in demand for homelessness services and temporary accommodation over the last two years, and the fund properties are a significant tool the Council uses to meet this high demand, along with other housing options.
15. If we were to withdraw our investment and the properties were sold, there's a considerable risk that either Resonance as the seller, or the new owner/s would evict the current tenants (in particular because their rents are at LHA, below market rates). Tenants accommodated in the properties have the industry standard tenancy for private housing, assured shorthold tenancies, and can be evicted via a "no fault" section 21, at least until the government changes the law later this year via the Renters Rights Bill. We would likely have to rehouse anyone evicted from these units. Rehousing 69 families would have a significant impact on the authority. Unable to deal with that level of surge in demand we would breach the 6 week BnB rule by significant levels, and the extra cost on hotel accommodation is projected at £1.4m, as a one off.

Options

16. **Option 1 (recommendation) - Rollover into the new fund in September 2025**
The Council rolls the existing investment in NHPF1 (currently valued at c£10m) into the new "Evergreen/Open Ended" fund for an initial 5-year period, which will have the following benefits:

- Improved options for future exits / allocating more capital to the Oxford region - a larger and longer term fund will improve the likelihood of attracting institutional capital to allow (i) a refinancing of the Council's investment, and The Council's eventual exit from the project on a more sustainable basis in due course (if this is what the Council decides in the future, noting that the current intention would be to retain the investment to secure the nominations; any future withdrawal would be subject to a future Cabinet decision) and / or (ii) attracting more capital to acquire more homes with the intention that some of these would be within the Oxford area.
- Receipt of continued investment returns - the Council would be invested for a longer time period on similar terms, which will (i) continue to provide a stable investment income to the Council and (ii) provide an improved position regarding the geographical diversity of the Council's investment (as part of a wider, more diverse fund). We have earned from the investment £280,000 annually in recent years, there is no guarantee this will continue, as its subject to market conditions.
- An ongoing positive solution to the TA Accommodation crisis, by continuing to receive nomination rights to most or all properties – Resonance can continue to provide nominations for the Council into homes to allow The Council to benefit from discharge of duty and to make material savings on TA costs with fewer households in TA. Nomination rights will continue unchanged, unless some of the properties are sold due to other investors withdrawing.
- Significantly mitigate the potentially negative consequences of selling properties in the area - Resonance would not need to sell most or any homes and displace the households they are currently housing to allow for the Council to withdraw its investment (with consequent follow-on implications for re-housing which would not be in the interests of those households or the Council). This will be confirmed ahead of officers making the reinvestment, with the reinvestment subject to us keeping all or the majority of the properties.

Resonance have confirmed to the Council rolling its current investment in NHPF1 into the new fund would secure a minimum of 2/3 of the current Oxford portfolio for us to nominate into the future, so does not guarantee us retaining all 69 homes due to us not knowing at present on the intentions of other investors. It will increase the likelihood of Resonance being able to raise additional investment to secure sufficient capital to refinance all homes within the current Oxford portfolio.

The recommendation makes the delegation to officers conditional on a majority (at least 2/3 of the properties currently owned in Oxfordshire) of the units in Oxfordshire being secured by reinvesting into the new fund, so that we secure the ongoing nomination rights to the majority of homes which we benefit from at present. Taking this approach the Council can avoid a situation where it makes its new investment and still loses all or a majority of the properties but recognises that we may want to continue to remain in the fund in the event other investors withdraw.

If Milton Keynes and Bristol were to withdraw their investments this in itself would not mean we would have to do the same, as the units in those geographical areas could be used to refinance their investment, but officers need the ability to withhold our investment if such moves resulted in a number of the Oxfordshire units being sold.

It would be the intention of officers to revisit the decision through the right governance routes if the prospect of losing a large number of the units is due to occur, and allow for further consideration of our investment if it didn't secure the majority of properties.

It is also the case, if the terms of the investment agreement were not acceptable to the Council, we may have to withhold our investment, and/ or revisit the decision as described above. This is secure by ensuring consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy in the exercise of the delegation.

17. **Option 2 - Rollover into the new fund plus increased investment in September 2025** - this option could secure the Oxford portfolio in its entirety, due to our increased investment replacing smaller investors pulling their investment out, and with the option of using further capital to acquire additional homes across the Oxford area for the Council to nominate into. This is currently not the recommended option, due to ongoing work the Council is undertaking where we are reviewing different investment options in light of ongoing TA pressure. Once this work is completed, the Council should be in a place of clearly understanding which investment options offer best value for money and deliver the most units, allowing future recommendations to Cabinet and Council to be informed by this work.
18. **Option 3 - Oxford City Council to seek to exit NHPF1 by the current fund end date of December 2025** - Officers consider this would be a higher risk strategy for the Council in terms of both financial and impact outcomes, since it cannot be guaranteed at this point in time that the new fund will have enough capital at its first close to fully refinance the Council before NHPF1 matures. If the Council does require an exit immediately by the December 2025 fund end date, Resonance as fund manager would likely need to sell homes to facilitate this. In this scenario Resonance have told the Council that they would likely need to initiate that sale process in mid 2025 at the latest. Resonance may be able to explore selling the homes as occupied (which may have negative consequences for valuation, depending on the lease in place at the time) but if that is not possible Resonance may need to sell as vacant possession (which they can do as Assured Shorthold Tenancies using “no fault” section 21, this is obviously a negative outcome for the households, and could potentially lead to some of these households being forced to present to the Council as homeless with associated social and financial costs to the Council). Therefore, this is not the optimum point to sell, and a forced sale of properties at this point could have negative outcomes in terms of impact (for households and Council) and value (for Council)

Financial implications

19. The Council's investment in the fund is classified as capital expenditure. Some of the capital expenditure was financed from capital resources but some remained as unfinanced. The unfinanced element did not attract a Minimum Revenue Provision charge since the assumption was that the investment was repayable and the unfinanced element would be financed from the returned funds at the end of the investment. Transferring the investment into an evergreen fund would change this assumption; the assumption going forward would be that the investment was in perpetuity (for the purposes of assessing the requirement to make a Minimum Revenue Provision charge to revenue).

20. The unfinanced element of the investment is £1.5 million. The Minimum Revenue Provision charge on this should be based on a 50-year life since the underlying asset is property; this is in line with the Council's agreed Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and with the Government's statutory guidance. This would result in an annual charge to revenue of £30,000. If the Council were to make a Minimum Revenue Provision charge for each of the years the Council has held the investment to date; this would result in an additional one-off charge to revenue of £210,000. The current intention is to alter the Minimum Revenue Provision treatment prospectively in line with the change in the underlying assumptions on the investment (i.e. being held in perpetuity rather than temporarily with repayment on maturity).
21. The Council currently receives a quarterly payment from the fund of between £70,000 and £80,000 (£280,000 annually). The expectation from the follow-on fund is that the payments would be on a par therefore the return from the investment should more than cover the Minimum Revenue Provision charge in the first year even were the Council to make the additional one-off charge to revenue. This assumption is based on current market conditions and could change. As is always the case with investments there is a risk that the payments to the Council will not continue at this level, however the payment levels have been consistently at this level for the last few years, and no known policy or economic factors anticipated that would cause us to expect a sustained and significant reduction in the payments.
22. Additionally, as identified earlier in the report, not continuing with the investment would result in additional temporary accommodation costs which have been estimated at around £400,000, as well as a risk of a £1.4m one-off cost if the properties were sold by the fund, the current tenants evicted and they presented as homeless to the Council.
23. Financial Services assessment of the financial risk is that on balance withdrawing the Council's investment into the fund and properties is riskier, than keeping the investment in place, despite risk of potential declines in the assets value and reductions in the investment payment. This is because of the considerable risk to the Council of escalating homelessness costs and providing temporary accommodation, with a cost to the Council of approximately £1.9m for hotel and BnB in 24/25, which this investment helps mitigate.

Legal issues

24. A copy of the existing or proposed investment agreement has not been provided or reviewed and, prior to any final officer decision under the proposed delegation, both would need to be in order to ensure that an informed decision can be made on entering into / existing the funds.
25. As the tenancies are let on an assured shorthold basis (as opposed to either a secured tenancy or via our homeless powers under the Housing Act 1996) it is possible for the properties to be sold subject to the tenancy agreement, though this would potentially effect the value the fund can achieve. As outlined in the report there remains the ability for a no fault eviction at present also.
26. What seems implicit in the report is that the properties to which we have nomination rights can sold should we remain in the fund but other partners pull out. This would devalue the basis on which the investment is proposed in this paper and therefore

the exercise of the delegated powers would need to be satisfied and demonstrate that the investment still remains prudent and sound at the time they seek to enter into the new fund.

27. In governance terms the budget and prudential borrowing for this investment is already approved and in place and therefore there is no requirement for Council to allocate a budget to invest in the new fund as Cabinet is empowered to make such decisions provided it is within the overall budget envelope as approved by Council at budget setting.

Level of risk

28. Please see Risk Register in appendix 1
29. Considered within the risk register, Resonance are aiming to secure the continued investment of all three main Local Authority investors and replace any smaller investors withdrawing from the fund with new investment. If they do this successfully all 69 units will be retained, but if they raise insufficient new investment to replace any smaller investors leaving the fund, they will have to sell some units across the three Local Authority portfolios funded via match funding outside of our investment, which would impact us in terms of homelessness and ongoing nominations. Resonance themselves are expressing a level of confidence that this scenario can be avoided.

Equalities impact

30. There are no detrimental equality impacts anticipated from the recommended approach in this report. The continued investment in providing homes for homeless households will have significant positive impacts on all households who have protected characteristics that are disproportionality impacted by homelessness, including women, ethnic minorities, those with disabilities, women who are pregnant, LGBTQ+ people, people who have had their gender reassigned, due to homeless households having greater affordable housing options as a result of this continued investment. The option to end the Councils investment, would have detrimental impacts, due the reverse of the positive impacts, with homeless households detrimentally impacted by reduced affordable housing options for them to be accommodated in, which will disproportionately fall on the above mentioned grouse of people with protected characteristics who are more likely to become homeless than the general population.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

21. No carbon or environmental considerations are anticipated, all the homes are already purchased and renovated, this report is extending this investment.

Report author	Richard Wood
Job title	Housing Strategy and Needs Manager
Service area or department	Housing Services

Telephone

01865 252002

e-mail

Rwood@oxford.gov.uk

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Proposal for continued investment in Resonance homelessness fund

As at: 21/05/2025

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To: Cabinet
Date: 9 July 2025
Report of: Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
Title of Report: Making Oxford a Truly Walkable City

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To respond to Council motion of 25 November 2024, which requested (subject to a Cabinet decision) a plan for making Oxford a truly walkable city.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Anna Railton, Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford
Corporate Priority:	Zero Carbon Oxford, Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Zero Carbon Plan, Air Quality Plan, Net Zero Oxford Action Plan, Green Spaces Strategy
Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the Council motion of 25 November 2024 and note those elements which do not rely on additional resources beyond those in the Council's budget which are currently being implemented. Not to support the production of a new plan for walking or a walking map for Oxford as these are County Council responsibilities and would duplicate what is currently available through online and retail outlets. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Walkable Oxford Existing resources

Introduction and background

1. On 25 November 2024, Council passed a [“Making Oxford Truly Walkable” motion](#)
 - A. *Council resolves to request the Cabinet Member for Healthy Oxford (Noting that there could be financial and resourcing implications, meaning that implementation would be subject to a cabinet report setting out those implications):*
 - i. *discuss with officers the designing of a plan for improving walking in Oxford, based on local knowledge and existing research.*
 - ii. *Works with the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon and the Cabinet Member for Culture and officers to create a walkable map of Oxford for tourists and locals alike.*
 - iii. *Writes to the new Transport Minister on behalf of Oxford City Council, urging rapid release of the 2020 pavement parking consultation*
 - iv. *Proposes the idea of a “Kerbside Strategy for Oxford” to the County Council.*
 - B. *To request the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management reviews opportunities to invest in public infrastructure to improve the city’s walkability to enable bids in the budget process.*
 - C. *To request the Cabinet Member for Planning reviews mandating Dutch entry kerbs for residential drop kerb conversions planning conditions and considers this through the Equality Act 2010.*
2. All of the motion conforms with existing Council policy (see the next two paragraphs). Council officers have investigated all parts of the motion. A Cabinet decision is required to resolve the right approach for the Council, in light of the resource implications of parts Ai. and ii. The Council’s 2025-26 budget does not include any allocated resource to pursue i. and ii. The other parts of motion are addressed briefly in the paper, as they are to note, because no decision is required.
3. Oxford Local Plan 2036 [Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 | Oxford City Council](#) “prioritises walking, cycling and public transport to help tackle congestion and pollution on our streets”. At paragraph 1.56, it lists Objectives:
 - To ensure growth in the proportion of people walking and cycling to access jobs and facilities.
 - To provide enhanced facilities for walking and cycling, ensuring they are the primary modes for travel around the city.
 - To ensure walking and cycling routes are complemented with well managed and attractive public transport routes, and that car use is minimised.
4. The City Centre Action Plan 2022 [city-centre-action-plan-volume-2-action-plan-and-implementation](#) (includes two work streams which support improving the pedestrian experience of Oxford. On “Connectivity & Access”, objective 1.4 is to “deliver better walking and cycling infrastructure, capitalising on the city centre’s human scale and accessibility, and responding to the existential threat of (climate emergency.” On “Public Realm & Animation”, objective 2.2 is “re-prioritise road space to create

opportunities for different uses, and to create new civic spaces where people can meet, relax, celebrate and be creative.”

A plan for improving walking in Oxford

5. There are a number of existing plans that promote, encourage and support improving the walking environment in Oxford. The Oxfordshire County Council's Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP) [Active travel | Oxfordshire County Council](#) which was approved in March 2020. The LCWIP will analyse the current network and identify opportunities for improvements, contain a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core routes for further development, and prioritise programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment. The County Council has also completed a draft framework Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework (COMPF), that sets out a high-level vision for improving public spaces and reimaging Oxford's public realm with an ambitious vision for how the street space will be reclaimed for people with improvements to pavements, seating, play space and greenery.
6. The City Council is a stakeholder in the County Council's work in this area and will continue to discuss these plans at an officer and member level, internally and with the County Council.

A walkable map of Oxford for tourists and locals alike

Existing walking maps/ information

7. Oxford has several existing walking guides and maps available online and through retail outlets covering the city centre which are provided by various organisations free of charge. (See Appendix 1) Some of the maps such as the Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership and City Sightseeing Oxford have linked active travel information and recommended routes to explore the city centre and beyond.
8. The City Council's website has several resources promoting walking and a description of recommended walks around the city centre. The Council's website also has links to the Oxford Pedestrian Association's online map which was launched in 2023, a dedicated online walking map with information of types of surfaces, location of seats and toilets.
9. Oxfordshire County Council has a dedicated active travel web page with [Active travel | Oxfordshire County Council](#) information on LCWIPs (local cycling walking infrastructure plans) for Oxford and other towns in Oxfordshire. It also has walking design standards for infrastructure and related policies e.g LTCP (Local transport connectivity plan) and a COMPF (Central Oxford Movement Place Framework) draft.
10. The maps are of varying degrees of quality, accuracy, and usability and some would require pre- purchase or access to the internet.
11. City and County officers have discussed the proposal of creating a city centre walking map and the consensus view was that there isn't an obvious gap to be filled by the City Council, given the range that is already available.

Options

Option 1 - Design and produce a walking map in-house. This would require internal resource to co-ordinate a number of disciplines e.g. graphic design / web design /

cartography etc. Any walking map would also require editing and updating regularly to maintain its accuracy and would require additional ongoing funding / resource. Officers estimate a one-off cost of £30,000 to create the map, as well as approximately £5,000 per year ongoing.

Option 2 - Commission an external design consultant to design and produce walking map. This would still require an internal resource to manage the commission process and project manage the consultant. Any walking map produced would also require editing and updating to maintain its accuracy and would require in-house expertise or additional external commission. Officers estimate a one-off cost of £35-40,000 (including consultant fees and internal project management costs) and then £5-£10,000 per year ongoing.

Option 3 – Do nothing. This option notes that walking maps are currently available through online and retail outlets. Cost - £0

Recommendation

Option 3 is recommended on the basis that any walking map for Oxford would be a County Council responsibility and would duplicate what is currently available through online and retail outlets.

Other elements of the motion, to note

Pavement parking consultation letter to Secretary of State

12. The City Council's Inclusive Transport & Movement Focus Group contributed towards the County Council's response to the Government's national pavement parking consultation in November 2020. The group endorsed the 'option 3' which would allow pavement parking only in exceptional circumstances. Pavement parking particularly causes issues for more vulnerable footway users (including people with visual or mobility impairments, learning difficulties, and people with buggies or mobility scooters), for whom many journeys in Oxford are currently difficult or impossible due to blocked pavements.

13. In March 2025 the Cabinet Member for Planning wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport, asking for the 2020 consultation results to be released.

Proposing a Kerbside Strategy to the County Council

14. A kerbside strategy considers how to better balance the different kerbside uses. The County Council has already set aside a budget in the 25-26 financial year to consider developing a Kerbside Strategy for Oxford.

Investing in public infrastructure to improve the city's walkability

15. The City Council invests in making Oxford a more pedestrian-friendly city and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management continues to welcome further proposals as part of the budget-setting process. Investments in recent years include:

- £33,000 towards Oxford Greenways Project, a collaboration with the University of Oxford and the County Council to progress designs for active travel routes into Oxford from nearby settlements.
- £500,000 towards the Infrastructure Place Study commission within the wider Cowley Branch Line project – this piece of work ensured that designs were progressed for active travel connections to the two proposed stations in south-east Oxford.
- £120,000 on “Broad Meadow” the temporary pedestrian-friendly scheme on Broad Street in 2021.
- £248,000 on the improvement of Market Street, which has delivered more seating and a less vehicle-dominated environment as part of a trial scheme.
- £397,000 on the permanent improvement of the road surface on part of St Michael’s Street, which is largely funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund, so that the street remains fully accessible for all, while enabling outdoor seating for hospitality businesses.
- Delivery of walking and cycling improvements at Marsh Park, St George’s Field and Boundary Brook, funded through the Growth Deal.
- Work with the Oxfordshire Pedestrian Association to install benches in the city centre.
- Council agreed in the 2025/26 budget to provide funds for pavement works and street furniture for which proposals are currently being worked up

16. In addition to these investments, we also undertake a number of activities to promote walking in Oxford. Our City Health Walks are co-ordinated by the Physical Activity and Wellbeing Team and delivered by a group of volunteer Walk Leaders. We promote access to walking maps and walking opportunities through social media and align resources such as these with initiatives such as National Walking Week. We are a partner in the Countywide Cycling, Walking Activation Plan working group which has a focus on supporting more people to walk and wheel around the city.

Mandating “Dutch” Style entry kerbs

17. Currently to convert a footway to a vehicular access there is a requirement for the City Council to assess whether planning permission is required (only on classified roads). The County Council are responsible for granting permission to construct the vehicular access and for providing the specification. The current specification for the type of kerb is a tapered dropped kerb which when installed reduces the height of the footway and provides vehicular access on a slopping footway that should be no greater than 1:12. The proposal for replacing the current specified tapered kerb with a ‘dutch’ style entry kerb provides safe vehicular access over the footway whilst maintaining a relatively flat footway making it easier access for wheelchair users.
18. As the city council only grants planning permission (if required) and not the specification for constructing the vehicular access it is not therefore possible to make ‘dutch’ style entry kerbs a planning condition.

19. City Council officers will liaise with Oxfordshire County Council on whether 'dutch' style entry kerbs could be an optional alternative specification for the construction of vehicular access across a footway both for retrofits and in new developments.

Financial implications

20. There are no financial implications if the recommendations are approved. However, choosing option 1 or 2 would have a financial implication which there is no allocation for within the council budget for 2025/26 financial year.

<u>Option</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Initial Cost</u>	<u>On-Going Annual Cost</u>
Option 1	Design and produce a walking map in-house	£30,000	£5,000
Option 2	Commission an external design consultant to design and produce walking map	£35,000 - £40,000	£5,000 - £10,000
Option 3 (Recommended)	Do nothing	£nil	£nil

Legal issues

21. There are no legal implications if the recommendations are approved.

Level of risk

22. There is minimal risk to this recommendation, however there is a risk that not taking the initiative and relying on others (County Council) to improve conditions for walking could have a negative impact on the council's reputation. There is clear evidence however that the council is committed to investing and improving the quality of the walking environment in the city as set out above.

Equalities impact

23. The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to consider the how the decisions and functions affect people with different protected characteristics. The recommendations set out in this paper do not support the production of a new plan for walking or a walking map for Oxford as they are properly County Council responsibilities or would only duplicate what is currently available through online and retail outlets. The council does however, support improvements and has invested in the pedestrian environment making the city more accessible for all especially those who have restricted mobility and encourages participation in public life.

Report author	Clive Tritton
Job title	Interim Director, Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability
Service area or department	Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability
Telephone	07483 010 300

e-mail	ctritton@oxford.gov.uk
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Background Papers: None
1
2
3
4

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Name of organisation	Description	Availability web/retail	Published dates
www.oxfordwalks.org.uk	A dedicated website produced in partnership with Oxford Civic Society, Oxford Pedestrian Association, Ramblers. The site provides links to maps and information for walks from 1-10miles.	web	Launched 2023
Oxford City Council website	Links to various organisations including the Oxford Pedestrian Society which launched in 2023 a dedicated online walking map with information of types of surface, location of seats and toilets.	web	Current
Oxfordvisit.com	link to a free self-guided walking map and tour	web	Current
Touristwalks.co.uk	walking map app of Oxford and other cities	Web/app	Current
Citysightseeingoxford.com	an active travel map with information linking with sightseeing tour bus.	web	Current
Alltrails and Kamoot	Online route mapping resource with several walking routes plotted in city centre	web	Current
City walk guides	Publication by OS	retail	Aug 2018
Oxford City of Spires Map Guide	Publication	retail	Jan 2023
Oxford Popout Maps	Oxford city walks in 3D map	retail	Mar 2019
Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership	Produced a free Access and Active travel Map for stations on network showcasing onward travel options (incl. buses, taxis and community transport) walking and cycling routes and other useful support information for travellers.	web	March 2025
Oxford County Council active travel website	Information on LCWIPs (local cycling walking infrastructure plans) for Oxford and other towns in Oxfordshire. Also has walking design standards for infrastructure and related policies e.g LTCP (Local transport	web	Current

	connectivity plan). COMPF (Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework) Draft		
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To: Cabinet
Date: 9 July 2025
Report of: Director of Communities and Citizen Services
Title of Report: **Project Approval and Delegated Authority to award a Hybrid Print and Post Contract**

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To commence procurement of a contract for postage and printing of council correspondence, and to delegate approval to award the contract to Deputy Chief Executive, Citizen & City Services
Key decision:	Yes. Issue details - Post/Print Contract Re-Tender Oxford City Council
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman, Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies.
Corporate Priority:	None.
Policy Framework:	None.

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Give project approval for the procurement of a hybrid print and post contract for a term of four years to replace the existing contract, which expires on 31st October 2025; and Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive of City and Citizen Services to take any decisions and actions required to award a contract for the supply of a hybrid print and post solution for the Council.

Information Exempt From Publication	
State in here what information is to be exempt from publication – where it is, attach it as an appendix and name the	None

appendix as you describe it here

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Hybrid print and post risk register	No
Appendix 2	Equalities impact assessment	No
Appendix 3	Data protection impact assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. The Council has an existing contract for outbound hybrid postal services with PSL Print Management Ltd (PSL). The contract was awarded in 2020 and is due to expire on 31st of October 2025.
2. A hybrid mail contract reduces the burden on the Council for the preparation, management, delivery, and cost associated with outgoing mail. The Council can send electronic files of mail, which are then printed onto agreed templates. Council Tax bills are one such example. Individual users can send files using standard functionality within software such as Microsoft Word. Hybrid mail providers benefit from economies of scale. They can provide automated printing, packaging and distribution, whilst attracting the cheapest mail distribution prices.
3. Since the move to hybrid working for council staff, many council officers now work remotely, resulting in the need to consider alternative methods of processing mail. Remote working will remain a key feature of how the Council operates and so a solution to enable staff access to mail documents is crucial to business operations moving forward.
4. Where paper correspondence is unable to be delivered via the PSL contract, the Council maintains a reduced, but traditional in-house postal service for outbound mail. The reasons for this continued service are where the supplier may have a system outage or an urgent postal despatch is required and the time to transmit, prepare and deliver via the contract would take too long.
5. In addition, the Council must maintain a mail solution for items such as the issue of reminder notices and summonses where the Council holds an unconfirmed email address as these are not able to be sent electronically. This is a requirement for both our Financial and Regulatory Services. In addition, citizens may require physical post through reasons of accessibility or preference.

6. Inbound correspondence enters the Council's operating systems both physically and electronically. There is complexity and risk in the processing of inbound post. When considering the external market, there are limited suppliers. For these reasons, inbound post will be excluded from this procurement. This procurement will focus on outbound mail.
7. Consideration has been given to ascertain if the Council can bring this contract in-house to deliver the same standard of operation, at a reduced cost compared to the current contract. This has proved not to be a viable option as it would require investment in both new resource and machinery infrastructure to service and deliver the required volumes of post on a daily, quarterly, and annual basis. Additionally, the Council is unable to provide the Royal Mail with post of a 'sorted' status and would therefore attract a higher postage price per item.
8. The allocated budget for post and print services (for 2025/2026) is £216,040 of which a budget of £63,440 specifically relates to contract (bulk) printing.

Contract Requirements

9. A new contract will need to address the following business needs:
 - Remote and hybrid working: allowing staff to generate ad-hoc correspondence via Hybrid mail. The correspondence must be securely transferred to the mailing company for postage.
 - Daily posting of all Council Tax, Benefit letters and Business Rates bills. This is approximately 1,000 items per day.
 - Quarterly postage of circa 10,000 Rent Statements for Housing tenancies, garages, and leaseholders.
 - Bulk postings, such as a specific Notice that needs to be delivered by post; an example being Summonses for the Magistrates Court due to non-payment of Council Tax and Business Rates.
 - Annual Billing process of 63,500 Council Tax demands, 4,500 Business Rates demands, 10,000 Benefit award letters, 10,000 rent increase letters. In addition to these numbers are both Business Rates and Council Tax reminders.
 - The above paper correspondence equates to 300,000 letters on average per annum.
10. Subject to legal advice, the contract may also be made available to ODS Ltd and Oxford City Housing Ltd if required. The ability of these companies to benefit from the contract will depend on the legal structure of the procurement and contract.

Channel shift

11. The Council is seeking to reduce costs though channel shift to digital methods wherever possible and appropriate to citizen needs. The Council has invested in two citizen-facing portals (one for Revenues & Benefits enquiries, and one for our tenants), where the aim is to make correspondence available to view directly from the individual's account. Further to this, hybrid mail providers offer digital distribution solutions using either or both SMS messaging and email.

12. The procurement and award of a contract must include additional digital options such as those set out below:

- An SMS message is sent to the recipient, asking for evidence to be provided, make a payment or to contact a council officer.
- An SMS text, which provides a secure link to the Council website and publications. These texts allow graphics to be held, so that Council branding could be applied to reassure the public that this is an authentic text being sent to them.
- An email where letters can be attached and still provide data security with secondary passwords required to open the attachment (as used by the NHS).
- A digital email, which provides a secure link to the Council website and publications. These emails allow graphics to be held, so that Council branding could be applied to reassure the public that this is an authentic email being sent to them.

13. These digital methods maintain a time-based control where should the document not be collected digitally, it will be printed and distributed through hardcopy post. Utilising these distribution methods would further reduce expenditure.

14. All digital methods considered would be used where the citizen had expressed a preference for this method, and it constitutes legal service to do so. Traditional postal methods would be used to address legal requirement, citizen preference or accessibility needs.

Procurement process

15. The previous contract was awarded via the Crown Commercial Services framework RM6017, Lot 7. This framework has a maximum award period of four years which has now expired.

16. Working with Procurement Services, the project has determined that a standalone tender process rather than a framework award is the appropriate route to market for the following reasons:

- The Crown Commercial Services framework RM6017, Lot 7 contains sixteen suppliers of Hybrid Mail solutions. The majority of these did not bid on the Council's previous tender process in 2020.
- The framework does not include several of the eight suppliers who attended the soft market testing exercise conducted in April 2025. The purpose of the market testing was to understand what outbound postal service offers are currently available and to understand how digital functionality has progressed and could be leveraged by the Council.
- A tender process would ensure visibility to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), supporting the government's aspiration for £1 in every £3 to be spent with SMEs.

17. A high-level timetable for the project is shown below:

Stage	Milestone Date
Market Engagement	April 2025
Cabinet Sign Off	9 th July 2025
Publish Tender	16 th July 2025
Agree preferred supplier	31 st Aug 2025
Request authority to award	7 th Sep 2025
Contract award	14 th Sep 2025
Implementation by	1 st Nov 2025
Contract term – 4 years	31 Oct 2029

Financial implications

18. The allocated budget for post and print services (for 2025/2026) distributed across all service areas is £216,040 of which a budget of £63,440 specifically relates to contract (bulk) printing.

Legal issues

19. Under Parts 18.12 and 4.5 (10) of the Constitution, Cabinet is responsible for giving Project Approval for programmes and projects which are valued at £750,000 and over.
20. Under Part 4.5 (11) of the Constitution Cabinet is responsible for the decision to award contracts over £750,000 and under section 9E (3) (c) of the Local Government Act 2000 can delegate its functions to officers.
21. Due to the contract's anticipated value its procurement and award are subject to the Procurement Act 2023. The procurement must also comply with the Council's Constitution. Any decision to award a contract of £750,000 or greater will be a Key Decision and will need to comply with the procedure for taking Key Decision set out in the Council's Constitution.
22. Due to the value and complexity of the contract officers need to instruct legal services to advise on the procurement and draft a suitable form of contract.

Level of risk

23. A Risk Register is attached at Appendix 1. Add any detailed discussion here.

Equalities impact

24. An Equalities impact assessment has been completed for this project. The key areas for consideration relate to both paper and digital correspondence as follows:
- The tender specification will ensure visual impairments are considered and provide hardcopy options for large print and braille.
 - The tender specification will ensure citizen correspondence preferences are accounted for to avoid any form of digital exclusion.

Data Protection impact

25. A Data protection impact assessment has been drafted for this project and is based on the existing (and concluding) contractual arrangement. A definitive version will be produced once the tender process has been completed and the preferred supplier's capabilities are understood.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

26. The choice to use a hybrid mail provider, to promote the use of online portals, and to work towards the digital distribution of correspondence, whenever possible and appropriate is expected to reduce our carbon footprint and environmental impact. By exploring the use of digital correspondence through this project and any contract awarded, the Council will minimise the need for paper, printing, and physical delivery, thereby conserving natural resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with traditional mail services. Continued use of this facility and increase of digital communication channels aligns with the Council's commitment to sustainability and supports its broader environmental goals.

Report author	Mark Chandler
Job title	Customer Services Manager
Service area or department	Customer Service, Communities and Citizen
Telephone	01865 252747
e-mail	Mchandler@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:	
1	None
2	
3	
4	

Date Raised	Risk Category	Risk Description	Gross Risk - Probability
15-May-25	Economic, financial & Market	Not approving the project and letting a contract for hybrid print and post results in the Council being exposed to the full cost of Royal Mail 1st and 2nd Class postal costs and a significant increase in budget requirement.	3
15-May-25	Organisational, human & management	Not approving the project and letting a contract for hybrid print and post results in the Council having to manage the print and post function. The Council would need to invest in additional resource to meet this need.	3
15-May-25	Technical, operational & infrastructure	Not approving the project and letting a contract for hybrid print and post results in the Council having to manage the print and post function. The Council would need to invest in additional technology to meet this need.	3
15-May-25	Economic, financial & Market	Mail delivery or processing price increases result in an insufficient budget to cover the council's need.	3
15-May-25	Technical, operational & infrastructure	Insufficient channel shift from print to digital distribution will result in the highest per item price being applied.	3

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Mitigating Actions	Action Due Date	Risk Owner	Risk Actionee	Target Risk - Probability
Seek approval from Cabinet to Delegate the decision to progress the project and award the contract to a supplier by 31st October 2025	09-Jul-25	Helen Bishop	Mark Chandler	1
Seek approval from Cabinet to Delegate the decision to progress the project and award the contract to a supplier by 31st October 2025	09-Jul-25	Helen Bishop	Mark Chandler	1
Seek approval from Cabinet to Delegate the decision to progress the project and award the contract to a supplier by 31st October 2025	09-Jul-25	Helen Bishop	Mark Chandler	1
Establish the likely cost of the solution through the tender process. Raise a budget bid if required.		Helen Bishop	Mark Chandler	3
Ensure citizen digital contact information is correct and promote the digital distribution methods. This approach is subject to a Data Cleansing feasibility study that is to conclude in June 2025.		Helen Bishop	Mark Chandler	3

Target Risk - Impact	Target Risk - Score	Risk Status
2	2	Open
2	2	Open
2	2	Open
3	9	Open
3	9	Open
	0	
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Why do an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

1. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is part of Oxford City Council's **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010)**.

The General PSED enables Oxford City Council to:

- a. **identify and remove discrimination,**
 - b. **identify ways to advance equality of opportunity,**
 - c. **foster good relations.**
2. **An EqIA must be done before making any decision(s)** that may have an impact on people and/or services that people use and depend on.
 3. An **EqIA form is one of many tools** that can simplify and structure your equalities assessment.
 4. We are passionate about equalities, and we highly recommend that **Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports and all projects must attach an EqIA.**

A good EqIA has the following attributes:

1. **Comprehensively considers the 9 protected characteristics.**

1. Age	6. Race & Ethnicity
2. Disability	7. Religion or Belief
3. Gender Reassignment	8. Sex
4. Marriage & Civil Partnership	9. Sexual Orientation
5. Pregnancy & Maternity	NEW- Socio-economic inequalities (voluntary adoption)

2. It has **considered equality of treatment** towards service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
3. Sufficiently considered **potential and real impact** of proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members.
4. **Systematically recorded and reported** any potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
5. **Collected, recorded, & reported sufficient information and data** on how your policy or proposal will have an impact.
6. Offers **mitigations or adjustments** if a PSED has been impacted.
7. Provides clear **justifications** for your decisions.
8. It is written in **plain English** with simple short sentence structures.

Section 1: General overview of the activity under consideration

1.	Name of activity being assessed. New Positive Action Policy	Post and Print contract	2.	The implementation date of the activity under consideration:	1 st November 2025
3.	Directorate/Department(s):	Communities and Citizen Services	4.	Service Area(s):	Communities and Citizen Services
5.	Who is (are) the assessment lead(s): Please provide: -Name -Email address	Mark Chandler mchandler@oxofrd.gov.uk	6.	Contact details, in case there are queries: Please provide: -Name -Email address	Mark Chandler mchandler@oxford.gov.uk
7.	Is this a new or ongoing EqlA?	New as it is a new contract for an existing service	8.	If this is an extension of a previous EqlA, please indicate where the previous EqlA is located and share the link to the said EqlA.	N/A
9.	Date this EqlA started:	16/05/25			
10.	Will this EqlA be attached to Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports/updates, which will be published online?	Will be attached to the cabinet report can be published if required.	11.	Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CMT.	Cabinet Date is 09/07/2025

Section 2: About the activity, change, or policy that is being assessed.

12.	Type of activity being considered: Check the most appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change to an existing activity.
		<input type="checkbox"/> New Activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Others. Please specify:		
13.	Which priority area(s) <u>within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good, affordable homes N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong, fair economy N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Thriving Communities N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Zero Carbon Oxford N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well run council Yes
14.	Which priority area(s) within <u>Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsive services and customer care. N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Diverse and engaged workforce. Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership & organisational commitment. N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding and working with our communities. N/A
15.	Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.	<p>The Council must provide correspondence with our citizens. The Council is seeking to award a contract for the provision of hybrid mail activities. These enable the Council to issue electronic files to a third party who will then print, sort and despatch the correspondence at a reduced price.</p> <p>The project to secure such a service will ensure any provider has the ability to enable facilities to ensure accessibility. These include areas such as large print and braille.</p>			

		Hybrid mail providers enable the use of digital transmission of correspondence through secure email and SMS. The project will ensure these capabilities are available but will also ensure citizen correspondence and accessibility preferences are considered when the functionality is in use.
16.	Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity. For example, -Existing activity does not fulfill Corporate Objectives, -existing activity is discriminatory and not fulfilling Council's PSED, ... to name a few.	Inequality: Citizens may receive correspondence they are either unable to access (digital exclusion) or unable to read (discrimination against the visually impaired). Poor Reputation: Failing to provide vital correspondence in an appropriate format for the citizen to review and understand risks reputational damage.

Section 3: Understanding service users, residents, staff and any other impacted parties.

17.	Have you undertaken any consultations in the form of surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups? Please provide details— -when, -how many, and -the approach taken.	None.
18.	List information and data used to understand who your residents or staff are and how they will be impacted. These could be- -third-party research, -census data, -legislation,	None.

	-articles, -reports, -briefs.	
19.	<p>If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?</p> <p>Please list the details – -when, -with whom, and -how long will you collect the relevant data.</p>	No

Section 4: Impact analysis.

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20.	Who does the activity impact?	Service Users	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	Check as needed.	Members of staff	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.	General public	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		City Councillors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>

21.	<p>Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?</p> <p>The incorrect use of hybrid mail may impact on citizens with visual impairment or those at an economic disadvantage through digital exclusion.</p>					
Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
Age		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs
Disability (Visible and invisible)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed solution must consider visual impairment and provide services for large print and braille.	Part of the tender specification Monitor via 3Cs
Gender re-assignment		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs

Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs

Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council currently issues correspondence to appropriate age groups	Monitor via 3Cs
Socio-economic inequalities such as: - Income and factors that impact income. - access to jobs This was voluntarily adopted by Oxford City Council on the 13th of March 2024.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed solution must consider digital exclusion and maintain the ability to provide traditional printed correspondence	Part of the tender specification Monitor via 3Cs
Other (voluntary consideration) For example:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers.						
Other For example: - Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population - Council suppliers & contractors - Cabinet Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Section 5: Conclusion(s) of your Full Impact Assessment

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22.

Conclusions. Implementation of a positive action policy is crucial for fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equitable work environment. A positive action policy will help to address inequity, promote innovation, and improve the Council’s reputation as an inclusive employer. By setting clear aims, objectives, and priorities, and addressing potential barriers, we can create a more supportive and dynamic environment that benefits everyone.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Stop and reconsider the activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust activity before beginning the activity and continue to monitor.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with activity but	<input type="checkbox"/>	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
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						continue to monitor.		
23.	Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.		We have reached this conclusion by analysing the potential benefits of implementing a hybrid mail solution and balancing this with the cost of managing the solution in house. The ability to provide correspondence through digital means will be a citizen preference rather than a Council directive.					

Section 6: Monitoring and review plan.

The responsibility for maintaining a monitoring arrangement of the EqlA action plan lies with the service/team completing the EqlA.
These arrangements must be built into the performance management framework such as KPIs or Risk Registers.

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24.	Who or which team or service area will be responsible for monitoring equalities impact? For example- - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.		Communities and Citizen Services
25.	Who (individual, team, or service area) will be		Customer Services / Corporate Support

26.	responsible for carrying out the EqlA review?		
	How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity? For example- -quarterly, -yearly, etc.	Yearly	27. Date when the EqlA will be reviewed again. November 2026

Section 7: Sign-off

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Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

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Job Title: Type here

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Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Suggested list of people to include are:

- 1) Project lead/manager.
- 2) Head of service area or team.
- 3) Person who completed the EqlA.
- 4) EDI Lead.
- 5) EDI Specialist.
- 6) For joint projects, please consider the following:

1. Other project leads
2. Other service area and/or team lead/manager

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

You have now reached the end of the assessment.

⚠ Please appended this to any reports and project files for reference.

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Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

Project/Procedure/Contract Title: Postal Services - Hybrid mail Solution

Lead Officer: Helen Bishop

DPIA Completion Date: 19/05/2025

DPIA Completed by: Tim Martin

Relevant Documents: [Please include a hyperlink here]

Approvals: This Document must be approved by the Data Protection Team.

“Where a type of processing in particular using new technologies, and taking into account the nature, scope, context and purposes of the processing, is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of natural persons, the controller shall, prior to the processing, carry out an assessment of the impact of the envisaged processing operations on the protection of personal data”

General Data Protection Regulation Article 35 (1)

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

1 Background

The Council produces in the region of 300,000 bills and statements for Council Tax, Business Rates, Rents, Garages, Leaseholders and Benefits per annum. In addition to this sum, the Council produces the Tenants in Touch newsletter which is circulated to circa 8,000 tenants on a quarterly basis; some 30,000+ items per annum. There is an unknown volume of other materials which need to be produced and posted. These are delivered, through traditional means, via the Council's Corporate Support team (postal services).

In 2021, a contract for a hybrid print and post solution was awarded to PSL Print Management Ltd. This contract managed the aforementioned documents and enabled the distribution of ad hoc mail.

The hybrid print and post contract expires 30th November 2025, and a new contract is being tendered.

A market engagement exercise was completed in April 2025 and has informed the development of a tender specification for a future, replacement solution.

2 Project/procedure/Contract Benefits

This project seeks to tender for a replacement contract for the equivalent services. In addition, any tender exercise will seek to take advantage of digital distribution that will support the Council's agenda for channel shift and cost reduction.

The project produced a business case for the sourcing and letting of a contract for the printing and onward distribution of key documentation to tenants and residents through a hybrid mail provider.

Contracting with a hybrid mail provider releases the Council from having to print, prepare and stuff envelopes, and then directly post the printed matter. Using a hybrid mail provider reduces the costs of Council resource, print and post machinery, and consumables.

The Council has an existing contract, for outbound, hybrid postal services, with PSL Print Management Ltd (PSL). The contract was awarded in 2020 and is due to conclude on the 31st of October 2025.

Where paper correspondence is unable to be delivered via the PSL contract, the Council maintains a reduced, but traditional postal service for outbound mail. Reasons for this continued service are where the supplier may have a system outage or where an urgent postal despatch is required and the time to transmit, prepare and deliver via the contract would take too long.

The allocated budget for post and print services (for 2025/2026) is £216,040 of which a budget of £63,440 specifically relates to contract (bulk) printing.

Consideration has been given to ascertain if the Council can bring this contract in-house to deliver the same standard of operation, and a reduced cost as currently paid within the PSL contract. This is not a viable option as to do so would require investment in both new resource and machinery infrastructure to service and deliver the required volumes of post on a daily, quarterly, and annual basis. Additionally, the Council is unable to provide the Royal Mail with post of a 'sorted' status, and for this reason, will continue to attract a higher per item price.

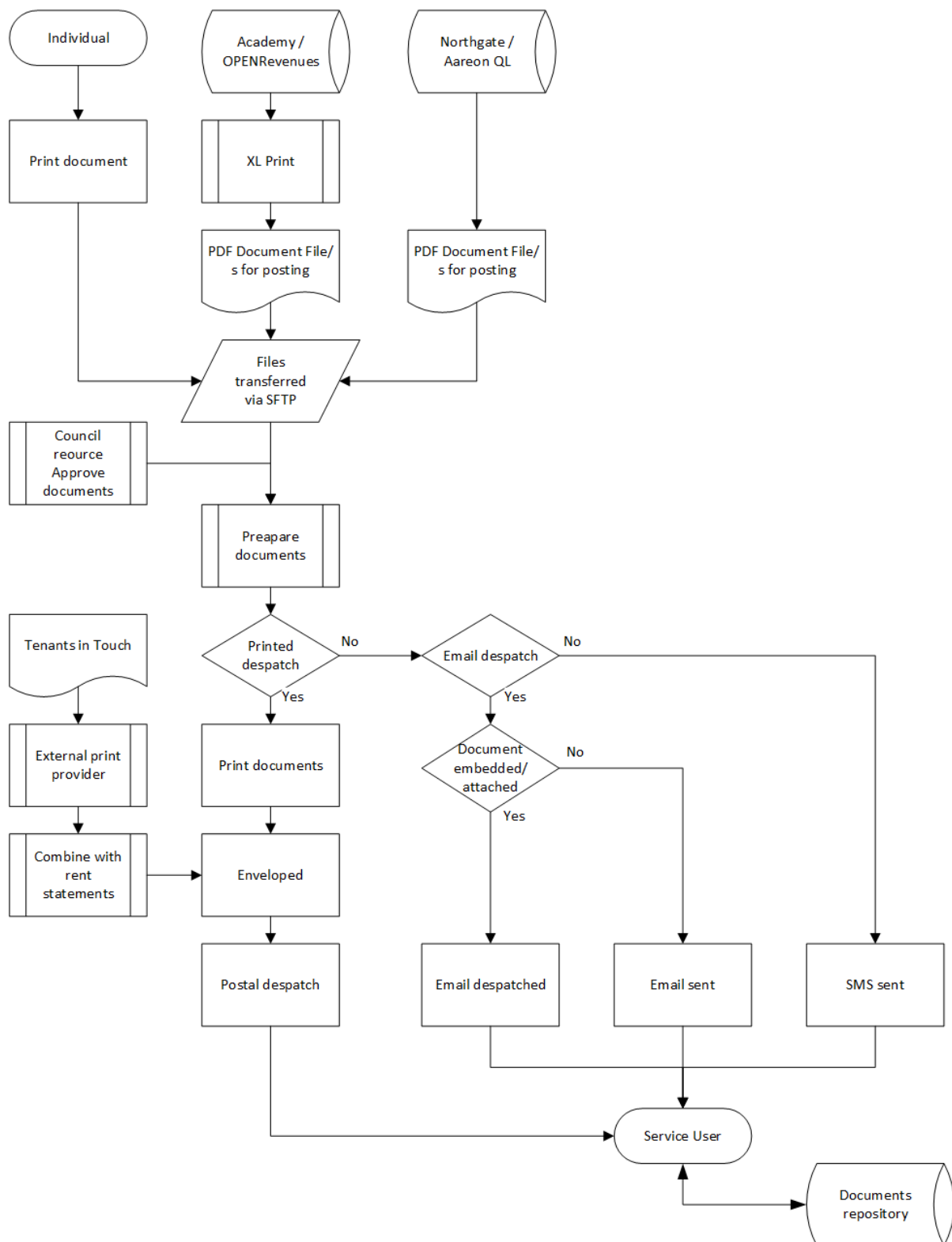
Letting a contract of this nature will ensure the Council distributes key documents to its tenants and residents whilst internally, keeping costs at a minimum.

3 Data Flow

For the current contract, the diagram below shows how relevant information is extracted from our key systems and formatted as PDF versions of the documents for printing and despatching.

The new contract will enable additional functionality, including the ability for individuals to submit information for despatch. Alternative methods include the emailing of documents and electronic notification (email and SMS) which enables a service user to access a secure document repository from which they will be able to retrieve their document/s.

The following image will be reviewed once the project progresses with a preferred supplier and further information is understood on the process.



4 Data collected for Project/Procedure/Contract

“Personal data means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental,

economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person” (General Data Protection Regulation Article 4 (1))

Please select from the below options which types of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) you will be collecting during the project/procedure/contract. (Click the box to select)

The project will not specifically collect data, however, the project will provide a postal function that will be available to Service Areas and their Teams and individual staff members. The project will enable the transmission of data recorded or extracted from our systems and ad hoc communication. Given this position, all bar one of items below have been checked.

- ☒ Name
- ☒ Contact Details (i.e phone number, email address)
- ☒ Account/Membership number
- ☒ Date of Birth
- ☒ Location information (i.e. Postal Addresses, IP Addresses)
- ☒ *Sex/Gender/Sexual Orientation
- ☒ *Race/Ethnic origin
- ☒ *Health information (i.e. Disabilities)
- ☒ *Financial information (i.e. Bank account details, income)
- ☒ *Political Affiliations/Trade union membership
- ☐ *Biometric Data (i.e. fingerprint, facial recognition)
- ☒ *Criminal Convictions or Offences
- ☐ Other

Article 5 under GDPR states that “Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed”

*For each box ticked please explain why this category of PII is **essential** to the project/procedure/contract.*

Information captured is determined through the operational processes related to both processes across the Council where we write to the service user. This project does not determine any of the information, it is simply taking extracted information directly (or via XL Print) in Microsoft Word or PDF format and transferring it to a hybrid mail provider for printing and onward despatch.

Categories with the (*) are deemed as ‘special personal data’ under GDPR and require increased security (Article 9). If collecting any of this PII please explain below what additional measures you have put in place to secure this data.

Information is provided as Microsoft Word (converted to PDF format) or provided in PDF format. The files are transmitted to the hybrid mail provider via a secure file transfer protocol (sftp).

5 Lawfulness of processing

Please select from the below options which basis you will be using to collect the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) during the project/procedure/contract. (Click the box to select)

- ☐ Consent gained from Data Subject to process their PII*
- ☒ Processing the PII is essential to fulfil a Contract with the Data Subject
- ☐ There is a Legal Obligation to process the PII (please explain below)
- ☐ Processing the PII will protect the vital interests of a Data Subject (please explain below)
- ☐ Processing the PII is in the public interest (please explain below)

**If you are gathering and processing PII on the basis of consent please explain where evidence of this consent is stored?*

Consent for the processing of PII Data lies with those responsible for communicating with service users.

This project is concerned with the transmittal of documents to a hybrid mail provider for printing and/or onward distribution to service users.

**Do you have a mechanism to stop processing an individual's PII if they withdraw their consent?*

This project has no ability to stop processing an individual's PII data if they withdraw their consent. This project has no control over the collection of PII data.

If you are gathering and processing PII on the basis of vital or public interests, or as a legal obligation please explain this in more detail.

This project has no influence over the gathering and processing of an individual's PII data.

N.B. Regardless of the basis for processing PII the Data Subject must be informed of what data you are processing, for what purpose, and under what basis. For more information please refer to GDPR Article 6 & 12

6 GDPR Compliance – Questions to consider

1. *Will the Councils privacy notices need to be amended to reflect this new project/procedure/contract?*

NO. This project is seeking to award a contract (to a new or existing provider) for an existing arrangement.

2. *How will you monitor whether the information you hold is accurate?*

Data is extracted from the Council's line of business applications. Once transmitted to the hybrid mail provider, there is a process whereby the Council reviews and confirms the data. Once confirmed, the data is committed to print.

It should be noted, if an ad hoc hybrid mail solution is sought, some documents will be produced locally, by Council Officers and Staff. The content of the documents is at the discretion of the individual

3. *Do you have the capability to amend or delete information if necessary?*

Yes. Files produced via line-of-business systems are transferred to the hybrid mail provider. Once prepared, Council Officers and Staff are asked to confirm the contents prior to printing. If errors are identified, they can be corrected.

For Ad hoc files, the content is produced by individuals, but the same principle is applied.

4. *Do you have a mandated retention period for this data? If so what is it?*

Internally, data is retained in line-of-business systems and by Service Areas, Teams and individual in accordance with the Data Retention Policy (to be adopted).

Market engagement has indicated suppliers retain information for circa 60 days, however this will be fully established through the tender process.

5. *What are the means of communicating with the data subjects?*

This project enables the print and distribution of key documents to service users. Suppliers also have the ability to provide information via email and SMS. The tender process will examine suppliers ability to support the Council in seeking opt-in/opt-out confirmation for electronic means of communication..

6. *Is the scope or purpose for processing information collected likely to change in the future? (i.e. the information required to set up a new system may differ from information required to continue business as usual)*

Existing line of business systems are being replaced. Data extracted will need to be formatted in new templates for onward distribution.

An ad hoc document, hybrid mail solution will be sought.

7. *Are any of the data subjects under 13? If so do you have a mechanism for regaining consent or informing them of the purposes for processing their data once they turn 13?*

There are no data subjects under the age of subjects under the age of 13.

8. *Will you be transferring data outside of the EU? If so, where?*

The secure ftp site location will be taken into consideration in the tender assessment and award process. Data located in the European Union has been included as a requirement in the specification.

9. *Where a third party is processing the PII have you confirmed they are GDPR compliant? Do you have a contract in place, explaining your expectations regarding the security of your data?*

GDPR compliance forms part of the requirements specification documentation. GDPR compliance will be taken into consideration in the tender assessment and award process.

7 Risks & Mitigating Actions

“Taking into account the state of the art, the costs of implementation and the nature, scope, context and purposes of processing as well as the risk of varying likelihood and severity for the rights and freedoms of natural persons, the controller and the processor shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure a level of security appropriate to the risk” (General Data Protection Regulation Article 31 (1))

Data Breach: A data breach constitutes any unauthorised loss, destruction, alteration, disclosure of, or access to, personal data, whether accidental or malicious.

Risk	Impact	Mitigating Action	Owner
<i>What is the scenario in which data might be lost, unlawfully accessed etc.</i>	<i>When deciding impact take into consideration the number of individuals involved and the sensitivity of the data.</i>	<i>Any actions taken to reduce the likelihood of this risk occurring.</i>	<i>Who is responsible for completing the mitigating action (N.B this is not who is accountable for ensuring that it is done)</i>
Files of tenant and resident financial information are intercepted	Tenant and resident financial information is obtained	Files are transferred via a secure ftp site for the hybrid mail provider to collect.	E.g. IT – for encryption software Managers - for updating procedure Officers – for following new procedure
Files of tenant and resident information are passed on to a 3 rd Party	Tenant and resident information is exposed/lost	Data security/data protection agreement must be in place with the hybrid mail provider	Contract Owner
Breach of Data Protection occurs at the hybrid mail provider	PII and Special Category Data is lost	The Council are informed immediately. Breach reported to Regulator. Investigate and attempt to recover data	Process Owner within the Council and hybrid mail provider
Cyber-attack on data in transit	PII and Special Category Data is lost	Provider to have secure encryption in place for transfer of data	Contract owner/Supplier

Common risks to consider:

- Risk that the security of the data is compromised
- Risk of unauthorised access to the data whilst held by the Council
- Risk that the individuals would object to the processing when informed
- Risk that the accuracy of the data is not maintained
- Risk that personal data is retained for longer than is necessary.

For all mitigating actions identified, have you assigned a budget for fulfilling them?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Not Yet
- ☒ Budget not required.

The risks will be part of the tender assessment and award recommendation process.

8 Sign Off

The Council's Data Protection Team must be consulted on the completion of the Data Protection Impact Assessment, and approval must be gathered before the project or contract is signed off.

Project Manager sign off

Project Manager Name:	Signature:	Date:

Data Protection Team Sign off

Data Protection Officer Name:	Signature:	Date:

9 Appendices

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To: Cabinet
Date: 9th July
Report of: Melissa Hope – Organisational Development Manager
Title of Report: Direct Award for Apprenticeship Training

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To award a contract without competition for apprenticeship training to the current training provider, Multiverse Group Ltd.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman – Council Member for Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	Well-Run Council
Policy Framework:	N/A

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:	
1.	Approve the award of a contract without a competitive procurement process for training in AI, Data and Business Transformation to Multiverse Group Ltd with an approximate value of £600k for cohort 2 (2025/2026/2027). This is a Cabinet and key decision due to the aggregated value of income to Multiverse, following previous appointment of them by the Council for apprenticeship training, being more than £750K (across years 2025/2026/2027). The current spend is approximately £495K (2024/2025)
2.	Delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizen's Services authority to award further contracts if required, in accordance with Councils procurement processes.

Information Exempt From Publication
N/A

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Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Equalities Impact Assessment	No
Appendix 2	Risk Assessment	No
Appendix 3	Case Studies from Cohort 1 of Apprenticeship delivery	Yes – this contains information about Officers in the organisation

Introduction and background

1. As part of the Council's Fit for the Future Programme, the Council identified a need to upskill staff in Data for making better and more informed decisions, AI and Business Transformation/change.
2. Historically, as with most organisations the Council has struggled to spend its apprenticeship levy. The Council therefore partnered with Multiverse and have spent approximately £135K of the Council's Levy, along with £360K from Cisco International Ltd (levy transfer arranged by Multiverse Group Ltd). Levy paying employers that have exhausted their apprenticeship levy, or non-levy paying employers, can gain transfers from other levy paying employers that have surplus funds. Multiverse Group Ltd, due to their nature of work, have a large number of large employer connections, willing to transfer to support training initiatives.
3. Thirty-three Council staff are currently being trained. Feedback and case studies from the first cohort of apprentices has been excellent, and officers now wish to progress to cohort 2, but that requires Cabinet agreement as it will take the aggregated value of services to be provided by Multiverse Group Ltd above £750,000.
4. Training consists of a mix of expert led workshops, self-paced/remote learning, peer support groups, group coaching and 1:1 coaching. The commitment is around 6 hours per week, 3 hours of learning and 3 hours applying skills with roles, and the duration is 13 months plus an end point assessment. Officers end with an accredited standard.
5. Under the contract with Multiverse Group Ltd they are currently delivering apprenticeships to 33 officers across a suite of tailored AI, Data and Business Transformation apprenticeships at Oxford City Council. This training commenced in December 2024.

6. These apprenticeships are upskilling Officers in skills to:
 7. Reduce repetitive and manual tasks
 8. Streamline systems and processes
 9. Work in agile ways
 10. Use AI effectively and safely – using Microsoft Co-Pilot
 11. Collect, analyse and use data better to make informed decisions
 12. Work in collaboration, using skills to support problem solving
13. There are a further 85 employees who have expressed an interest to take part in the AI, Data and Business Transformation apprenticeship. It is anticipated between 40-50 of these Officers will start cohort 2 in September 2025. It is also likely there will be further cohorts of apprentices in 2026.
14. In order to facilitate cohort 2 the Council wants to further contract with Multiverse Group Ltd and the combined value of the current contract and that required for Cohort 2 will be in excess of £750,000.

Rationale for award to Multiverse Group Ltd without competition

15. The Council wants to contract with Multiverse Group Ltd without running a competitive procurement process for the following reasons:
 16. There are measurable examples of impact that the apprenticeships are making within the Council. See Annex 3 for case studies of initial impact being made from Council Officers taking part in cohort 1.
 17. Multiverse Group Ltd are the only provider to receive Ofsted Outstanding in all areas of delivery, meaning that they are provider of the highest educational quality.
 18. The only AI apprenticeship available via the Institute of Apprenticeships, which other providers deliver, is a Level 7 AI Data Specialist but this is not at a level that suits the needs of the Council. The officers the Council needs to train are in lower to middle tier roles and therefore below Level 7, which is the equivalent to a master's degree.
 19. The level 7 AI apprenticeship, that other providers deliver, is aimed at:
 20. Machine learning engineers
 21. Artificial intelligence engineers
 22. AI Directors
 23. AI strategy managers
 24. Artificial intelligence specialists
 25. Machine learning specialists
 26. This level is too specialist and advanced and not fit for the Council's needs.
 27. Multiverse Group Ltd are the only apprenticeship provider who offer a lower-level apprenticeship in AI, Data and Business Transformation that covers the subjects appropriate to the Council's need. They offer this for level 3 and 4 which is the level the Council needs.

28. Multiverse Group Ltd has demonstrated reliability in delivering high-quality training and support, ensuring that Officers receive a uniform learning experience including free training to managers (outside of apprenticeships). By continuing to partner with Multiverse Group Ltd for the same suite of learning, the Council can maintain the stability and excellence that are critical to the development of our future workforce

Funding

29. Oxford City Council have exhausted their apprenticeship levy. Multiverse Group Ltd have connections to source funding for us to be able to deliver these apprenticeships via their network of partners such as Cisco International Ltd, Microsoft and Deloitte. Multiverse sourced £360K for cohort 1 and will source the full amount for cohort 2. Without this funding, we are not able to proceed.

Alternative Options Considered

30. There are 2 providers of similar programmes, but the differences are such that they do not address the Council's strategy or business needs.
31. One alternative provider uses Chat-GPT and other AI tools which are superfluous to Council requirements as officers are only to use Microsoft Co-Pilot for security and GDPR reasons.
15. The other alternative provider includes AI technology that the Council does not use such as SaaS Applications.

Financial implications

32. Oxford City Council have exhausted their apprenticeship levy. Multiverse Group Ltd source full funding for us to be able to deliver these apprenticeships via their network of partners such as Cisco international Ltd, Microsoft and Deloitte. Multiverse sourced £360K for cohort 1 and will source the full amount for cohort 2. Without this funding, we are not able to proceed.
33. There will be no commercial cost for the training to Oxford City Council.
34. Those who complete the AI apprentice routes will need access to a Microsoft Co-Pilot business Licence. We have budget approved for 100 licences in 25/26.

Legal issues

35. As the aggregate value of the current and proposed contracts are over £750,000 the decision to award the proposed contract is a cabinet function under part 4.5 and 19.17 of the constitution.
36. Due to the aggregated value of the current and proposed contracts any contract award must comply with the Procurement Act 2023. Under the Act authorities can only award contracts without competitive procurement in a limited number of circumstances. The circumstance relevant to the recommendation in this report

being *there is an absence of competition for technical reasons and only a particular supplier can supply the services and there are no reasonable alternatives to those services*. Cabinet needs to be confident a clear case has been made for a contract award without competition.

37. Whilst Cabinet can take the decision to award the contract in principle, before any such decision can be actioned it must comply with the transparency and publication requirements under the Procurement Act 2023. These requirements mandate publication of notices informing the market of the proposed contract award and a standstill period before entering into any contract.
38. Under section 9E (3) (c) of the Local Government Act 2000 Cabinet is empowered to delegate its functions to officers.

Level of risk

39. Please see Annex 2: Risk Assessment

Equalities impact

23. Please see Annex 1: Equalities Impact Assessment

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

24. N/A

Report author	Melissa Hope
Job title	Organisational Development Manager
Service area or department	People Services
Telephone	07485 311348
e-mail	mhope@oxford.gov.uk

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Why do an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

1. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is part of Oxford City Council's **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010)**.

The General PSED enables Oxford City Council to:

- a. **identify and remove discrimination,**
 - b. **identify ways to advance equality of opportunity,**
 - c. **foster good relations.**
2. **An EqIA must be done before making any decision(s)** that may have an impact on people and/or services that people use and depend on.
 3. An **EqIA form is one of many tools** that can simplify and structure your equalities assessment.
 4. We are passionate about equalities, and we highly recommend that **Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports and all projects must attach an EqIA.**

A good EqIA has the following attributes:

1. **Comprehensively considers the 9 protected characteristics.**

1. Age	6. Race & Ethnicity
2. Disability	7. Religion or Belief
3. Gender Reassignment	8. Sex
4. Marriage & Civil Partnership	9. Sexual Orientation
5. Pregnancy & Maternity	NEW- Socio-economic inequalities (voluntary adoption)

2. It has **considered equality of treatment** towards service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
3. Sufficiently considered **potential and real impact** of proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members.
4. **Systematically recorded and reported** any potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
5. **Collected, recorded, & reported sufficient information and data** on how your policy or proposal will have an impact.
6. Offers **mitigations or adjustments** if a PSED has been impacted.
7. Provides clear **justifications** for your decisions.
8. It is written in **plain English** with simple short sentence structures.

Section 1: General overview of the activity under consideration

1.	Name of activity being assessed:	Direct Award of Apprenticeship Delivery to Multiverse	2.	The implementation date of the activity under consideration:	September 2025
3.	Directorate/Department(s):	Corporate Resources Directorate	4.	Service Area(s):	People Services
5.	Who is (are) the assessment lead(s): Please provide: -Name -Email address	Melissa Hope mhope@oxford.gov.uk	6.	Contact details, in case there are queries: Please provide: -Name -Email address	Melissa Hope mhope@oxford.gov.uk
7.	Is this a new or ongoing EqlA?	New	8.	If this is an extension of a previous EqlA, please indicate where the previous EqlA is located and share the link to the said EqlA.	N/A
9.	Date this EqlA started:	21 st May 2025			
10.	Will this EqlA be attached to reports/updates, which will be published online?	This report will accompany a Cabinet report, going to Cabinet on 9 th July 2025	11.	Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CMT.	N/A Tom Hook is the Executive Sponsor of this work

Section 2: About the activity, change, or policy that is being assessed.

12.	Type of activity being considered: Check the most appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Change to an existing activity.	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Activity		<input type="checkbox"/> Others. Please specify:		
13.	Which priority area(s) <u>within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good, affordable homes	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong, fair economy	<input type="checkbox"/> Thriving Communities	<input type="checkbox"/> Zero Carbon Oxford	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well run council
14.	Which priority area(s) within <u>Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsive services and customer care.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diverse and engaged workforce.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership & organisational commitment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding and working with our communities.	
15.	Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered. We are seeking approval at Cabinet level to issue a direct award to Multiverse, to enable them to continue to deliver future cohorts of apprenticeships at the Council. Multiverse Solve your skills gaps are currently delivering apprenticeships to 33 Officers across a suite of tailored AI, Data and Business Transformation apprenticeships at Oxford City Council. This training commenced in December 2024.					

		<p>These apprenticeships are upskilling Officers in skills to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce repetitive and manual tasks Streamline systems and processes Work in agile ways Use AI effectively and safely – using Microsoft Co-Pilot Collect, analyse and use data better to make informed decisions Work in collaboration, using skills to support problem solving <p>We now have a further 85 employees who have expressed an interest to take part in a Multiverse apprenticeship. We anticipate starting between 40-50 of these Officers for cohort 2 in September 2025. We also anticipate there will be further cohorts in 2026.</p> <p>This future delivery will take us over the 750K threshold.</p> <p>We have measurable examples of impact that the apprenticeships are making within the Council. Please see Annex 3 for case studies of initial impact being made from our Officers taking part in cohort 1.</p>
16.	<p>Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.</p> <p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Existing activity does not fulfill Corporate Objectives, -existing activity is discriminatory and not fulfilling Council's PSED, ... to name a few. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1, We will not be able to continue to upskill our workforce in these key areas at volume. This is since we do not have any remaining apprenticeship funds available. Multiverse, due to their status and relationships, can agree levy transfer funds from their large partners such as Microsoft, Cisco and Deloitte. 2, If we were to use other providers, we are at risk of not offering consistency in our training. 3, We do not have enough evidence of the experience and success from other similar providers.

Section 3: Understanding service users, residents, staff and any other impacted parties.

17.	<p>Have you undertaken any consultations in the form of</p>	<p>Both internal Officers and Multiverse have been in consultation with Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive of City and Citizen services who is the executive sponsor of this project. As executive</p>
-----	--	--

<p>surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups?</p> <p>Please provide details— -when, -how many, and -the approach taken.</p>	<p>sponsor, Tom has been heavily involved in the launch and monitoring of initial impact of this project. Multiverse has presented examples of impact from Cohort 1.</p> <p>We have sought advice from Joanna Williams, Contact Lawyer within our Legal Team.</p> <p>We have sought advice from Annette Osborne, Strategic Procurement Manager.</p>
<p>18. List information and data used to understand who your residents or staff are and how they will be impacted.</p> <p>These could be— -third-party research, -census data, -legislation, -articles, -reports, -briefs.</p>	<p>Positive Impacts</p> <p>Consistency in Training Quality: A single provider ensures that all apprentices receive the same high-quality training, which can help maintain a consistent standard across the Council</p> <p>Focused Support: The provider can tailor their support to meet the specific needs of the Council, ensuring that all apprentices, regardless of their background, receive the necessary assistance to succeed.</p> <p>Streamlined Processes: Having one provider simplifies administrative processes, making it easier to manage and support Officers, which can lead to being more efficient and equitable.</p> <p>Potential Challenges</p> <p>Limited Diversity of Perspectives: Relying on one provider might limit the diversity of training approaches and perspectives, which could impact the inclusivity of the training programme.</p> <p>Risk of Bias: If the provider's training methods or materials are not inclusive, it could inadvertently reinforce existing biases or inequalities within the Council.</p> <p>Mitigating Challenges</p> <p>Regular Reviews: We will continue to conduct regular reviews of the provider's training materials and methods to ensure they are inclusive and meet the diverse needs of our Officers.</p> <p>Feedback Mechanisms: We will continue to gather feedback and input from Officers about their experiences and use this feedback to make necessary adjustments.</p>

		Diversity and Inclusion Training: We will ensure that the provider includes diversity and inclusion training as part of their programme to promote an inclusive learning environment.
19.	<p>If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?</p> <p>Please list the details – -when, -with whom, and -how long will you collect the relevant data.</p>	N/A

Section 4: Impact analysis.

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20.	Who does the activity impact?	Service Users	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Check as needed.</p> <p>The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.</p>	Members of staff	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		General public	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		City Councillors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/>

21.	<p>Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?</p> <p>As mentioned above in point 18 we have done are research into workforce data. This policy is to encourage protected characteristics to apply to the council.</p>					
Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
<p>Age</p> <p>309</p>			X	www.oxford.gov.uk	<p>Apprenticeship programmes are available to Officers at all ages of our workforce.</p> <p>They aim to upskill any individual that has a skills need in Data, AI or Business Transformation.</p> <p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p> <p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	<p>We will monitor reasons for any declined applications and challenge any potential biases if applicable.</p> <p>We will collect data on those who expressed interest, those who were accepted and those who achieve.</p>

<p>310</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>(Visible and invisible)</p>			X		<p>The programmes are suitable for any ability.</p> <p>There are no physical aspects to the apprenticeship training and Multiverse has provision to provide additional support and additional funding.</p> <p>Learning Support Funding is provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to support apprentices with identified learning difficulties or disabilities.</p> <p>This funding helps training providers make reasonable adjustments to support these apprentices, ensuring they can fully participate and benefit from their training.</p>	<p>As part of the application and onboarding process, Multiverse encourage disclosing any additional learning support needs, to enable them to offer an individual learning plan that supports and removed learning barriers.</p> <p>If Officers do not disclose, but Multiverse trainers or coaches identify possible additional support needs, they would discuss this with Officers.</p> <p>We will collect data on those who expressed interest, those who were accepted and those who achieve.</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment</p>			X		<p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p>	<p>We will collect data on those who expressed interest, those who were accepted and those who achieve.</p>

					If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.	
311	Marriage & Civil Partnership		X		<p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p> <p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	N/A
	Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship		X		<p>There are funding rules to access this training whereby Officers need to have lived in the UK/EESA for the last 3 years.</p> <p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p>	We will collect data on those who expressed interest, those who were accepted and those who achieve.

					<p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	
Pregnancy & Maternity			X		<p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p> <p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	N/A
Religion or Belief			X		<p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p> <p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	N/A

Sex			X		<p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p> <p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	<p>We will collect data on those who expressed interest, those who were accepted and those who achieve.</p>
Sexual Orientation			X		<p>Any individual that expresses an interest in a programme, will be assessed by both their manager and their director.</p> <p>If any Officers are declined a place, we need clear justification as to why they are not approved. Reasons may be contractual, not meeting the business need, time.</p>	N/A

<p>Socio-economic inequalities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - income and factors that impact income. -access to jobs <p>This was voluntarily adopted by Oxford City Council on the 13th of March 2024.</p> <p>314</p>	X				<p>Officers are receiving fully funded accredited training to a value ranging from £12,000 to £18,000 per person. This is at no cost to them.</p> <p>They have to complete the training in business hours, so this is a commitment to their learning and development of around 6 hours per week for the duration of the apprenticeship.</p> <p>Officers who complete will receive a level 3 or 4 qualification in their chosen subject area. This will help to improve their chances of pay rises, promotion and experiencing additional responsibilities.</p>	We will monitor achievements and track progression data.
<p>Other (voluntary consideration)</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers.</p>						

Other For example: - Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population -Council suppliers & contractors -Cabinet Members						

Section 5: Conclusion(s) of your Full Impact Assessment

22.	Conclusions:					
	Stop and reconsider the activity.		Adjust activity before beginning the activity and continue to monitor.	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with activity but continue to monitor.	X	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
23.	Please explain how you have	1. Positive Impacts Identified				

reached your conclusions above.

Within the EQIA we have highlighted several positive impacts of using Multiverse as the apprenticeship provider:

Consistency in Training Quality: Ensuring all apprentices receive the same high-quality training.

Focused Support: Tailoring support to meet the specific needs of the Council, ensuring all apprentices, regardless of background, receive necessary assistance.

Streamlined Processes: Simplifying administrative processes, making it easier to manage and support Officers, leading to more efficient and equitable handling of apprenticeships.

2. Potential Challenges Acknowledged

Within the EQI, we also considered potential challenges:

Limited Diversity of Perspectives: Relying on one provider might limit the diversity of training approaches and perspectives.

Risk of Bias: If the provider's training methods or materials are not inclusive, it could reinforce existing biases or inequalities within the Council.

3. Mitigation Strategies Outlined

To address these challenges, we propose several mitigation strategies:

Regular Reviews: Conducting regular reviews of the provider's training materials and methods to ensure they are inclusive and meet the diverse needs of Officers.

Feedback Mechanisms: Implementing feedback mechanisms to gather input from Officers about their experiences and using this feedback to make necessary adjustments.

Diversity and Inclusion Training: Ensuring the provider includes diversity and inclusion training as part of their program to promote an inclusive learning environment.

4. Comprehensive Consideration of Protected Characteristics

Within the EQIA we have comprehensively considered the impact on various protected characteristics, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, and more. It found that the apprenticeship programmes are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all individuals, with specific measures in place to support those with additional needs.

5. Conclusion Based on Analysis

Based on the analysis of positive impacts, potential challenges, and mitigation strategies, we have concluded that there were no major changes or adjustments needed. The activity could continue as planned, with ongoing monitoring to ensure the training remains inclusive and effective.

6. Monitoring and Review Plan

Within the EQIA, we include a plan for monitoring and reviewing the equality impact, ensuring that any issues are identified and addressed promptly. This ongoing review process helps maintain the positive impacts and address any emerging challenges.

Section 6: Monitoring and review plan.

The responsibility for maintaining a monitoring arrangement of the EqlA action plan lies with the service/team completing the EqlA.

These arrangements must be built into the performance management framework such as KPIs or Risk Registers.

24.	<p>Who or which team or service area will be responsible for monitoring equalities impact?</p> <p>For example- - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.</p>	Melissa Hope – People Services Sobia Afridi – People Services		
25.	<p>Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqlA review?</p>	Melissa Hope – People Services		
26.	<p>How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?</p> <p>For example- -quarterly, -yearly, etc.</p>	Yearly	27. Date when the EqlA will be reviewed again.	May 2026

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Melissa Hope

Job Title: Organisational
Development Manager

Signature: MAHope

Name:

Job Title:

Signature:

Name: Full Name

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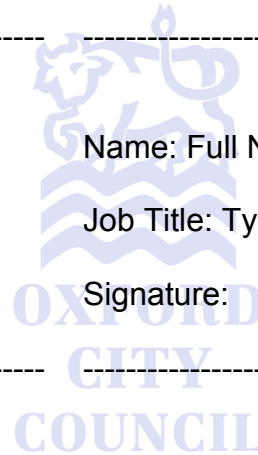
Name: Full Name

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You have now reached the end of the assessment.

⚠ Please appended this to any reports and project files for reference.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 18 June 2025



Committee members present:

Councillor Brown

Councillor Chapman

Councillor Munkonge

Councillor Linda Smith

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Railton

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive – Citizen and City Services

Tom Bridgman, Deputy Chief Executive – Place

Emma Jackman, Director of Law, Governance, and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)

Bill Lewis, Financial Accounting Manager

Mish Tullar, Director of Corporate Strategy

Dr Brenda McCollum, Committee and Member Services Officer

Emma Gubbins, Corporate Assets Lead

Melissa Hope, Organisational Development Manager

James Baughan, Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager

Hagan Lewisman, Active Communities Manager

Sarah Harrison, Team Leader (Planning Policy)

Kat Mayes, Customer Care & Complaints Manager

Bill Graves, Landlord Services Manager

Alex Miller, Transactions Manager - Corporate Property

Lorraine Freeman, Team Leader - CIL, Data Analysis and Reporting

Sobia Afridi, the Diversity and Inclusion Specialist

Rachel Williams, Planning Policy and Place Manager

Also present:

Councillor Alex Powell, Chair of Scrutiny

Apologies:

Councillor Turner sent apologies for being unable to attend the meeting in person. He joined the meeting virtually.

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public

None received.

3. Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda

None received.

4. Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None received.

5. Scrutiny Reports

Councillor Alex Powell presented the reports from Scrutiny Committee.

The Scrutiny Committee met on 10 June 2025 to consider the Leisure Investment Programme Update and More Leisure Service Annual Plan, the Oxford Local Plan 2042 Regulation 18 Consultation Document, and the Annual Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions and recommendations relating to the Leisure Investment Programme Update and More Leisure Service Annual Plan.

- **Recommendation 1:** That the accuracy of the data presented within the Annual Service Plan, particularly regarding baseline usage figures and the 3% growth KPI's, be improved by utilising best estimates for the quantity of missing visits; and that the revised data be included in the update report to be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee in six months' time
- **Recommendation 2:** That the Council seek confirmation as to whether there is an ongoing contract between Serco and Lynxight and, if so, examine the nature of Lynxight's engagements. This should include providing further details on how human rights and ethical procurement policies are applied within the leisure

service contracts, ensuring this information is published to reassure residents that these commitments are being upheld

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions and recommendations relating to the Oxford Local Plan 2042 Regulation 18 Consultation Document.

- **Recommendation 1:** That the Cabinet review the cycle parking standards proposed in the draft Local Plan 2042 to ensure Consultation materials encourage more specific public feedback on this issue in alignment with the Council's wider transport policy commitments, particularly the goal to increase cycling trips within the city.
- **Recommendation 2:** That the Cabinet review and consider strengthening the wording of policies HD8 and HD9 in the draft Local Plan 2042 to better support appropriate densification in order to meet Oxford's housing needs whilst respecting the scale and character of different parts of the city.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions and recommendation relating to the Annual Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report.

- That future complaints handling reports include benchmarking data from other housing providers, particularly those operating at a local level, to help assess the Council's performance in context and support continuous improvement

Councillor Munkonge responded to the recommendations from Scrutiny regarding the Leisure Investment Programme Update and More Leisure Service Annual Plan. He said that Cabinet had agreed the first recommendation in part and that this was due to the regular reviews which would be taken with the plan. Councillor Munkonge said that Cabinet had fully agreed the second recommendation.

Councillor Hollingsworth responded to the recommendations from Scrutiny regarding the Oxford Local Plan 2042 Regulation 18 Consultation Document. He noted the technical difficulties which had impacted the Scrutiny Committee's meeting. With cycle parking, he noted that the policies came from county, but they would be reviewing this to see what they can do and that they would consider this alongside comments from the public. Regarding the second recommendation, Councillor Hollingsworth read the policy and said that it was difficult to change this to make it clearer that density was the issue. He said they can make their language sharper and more clearcut and that they would work to do so. Councillor Hollingsworth commended Scrutiny for their focus on maximising densification and their positive conversations on this report.

Councillor Linda Smith responded to the recommendations from Scrutiny regarding the Annual Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report. She said that Cabinet had accepted the recommendation from Scrutiny on this paper.

Councillor Brown thanked Councillor Alex Powell for his report and presentation.

6. Leisure Investment Programme Update

The Director of Communities and Citizens Services had submitted a report to update Cabinet on the highlights of the first year of the new leisure contract and approve the Annual Service Plan 2025-26, which is an annual requirement of the operator, aiming to align outcomes to the Council's priorities and to address health inequalities.

Councillor Munkonge presented the report. He said that there was a lot of good work being done in the plan and that they had seen a number of improvements, including an increase in numbers in swimming lessons. Despite these improvements, he recognised that they can always make improvements and do more. Councillor Munkonge apologised that the report did not have information regarding the creche. He noted that conversations were still underway between More Leisure and the Council on this topic and the outcome would be in the next plan for 26/27.

James Baughan, Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager, said that there had been a lot of success in the last year and they had seen several improvements from their previous operator. Overall, he said that they were confident that everything was now running as it should. With transformation work in the centres, he noted that there was still work to do. Following up from Councillor Munkonge, the Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager said that their community fund was now open for applications.

Hagan Lewisman, Active Communities Manager, said that there had been great successes with the contracts. He noted the positive developments with Hinksey pool and the Leys soft play area. He noted the good attendance that they had seen and discussed the governance they'd put in place to provide assurance moving forward.

Councillor Linda Smith noted her disappointment that no one from Serco had been able to attend the meeting. Councillor Smith emphasised the importance of having creches in their leisure facilities and discussed how this would make the leisure facilities. She noted that multiple creches had closed during COVID and had not reopened. She said that she was disappointed that the plan did not include the reopening of creches in their leisure facilities.

Councillor Munkonge responded and said that they should focus on the bigger picture. He noted that some of the creches had closed because they were not viable. Councillor Munkonge agreed that the inclusion of a creche was important and apologised that their discussions about the creches had not been included in the agenda pack. He said that he had assured Councillor Smith that he would address this matter. He said that they were working with More Leisure to include creches in their plan for 26/27.

The Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager added that there was a commitment from Council Officers and More Leisure to explore the viability of the creche for the 26/27 plan. He said that the current contract sought to look at things differently and make the centres more accessible. He noted the small childcare provision which was in place at the moment in one of their locations. He said that they were looking at different options and were looking to work with people in the community to find a good solution.

Councillor Chapman said that there was a lot to be proud of in the plan and in the improvements they'd seen. He noted his concern regarding their resilience with lifeguard staff and the issues that had been seen with catering at several of the centres.

Councillor Arshad said that she was grateful for the report, and she appreciated the work the team had done to get this far. She agreed with Councillor Smith and emphasised the importance of having creches in their facilities so that they were more accessible. She said that she was happy with the Leys soft play area and noted that she was looking forward to the Leys Youth Hub. She asked about the discrepancy in equipment between the different facilities in the city.

The Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager responded and said that the resiliency of lifeguard staff was an industry issue. He said that they had been working with a national organisation to make leisure a career option for young people. He added that they were also working with a specialised lifeguard recruitment agency. Regarding the catering

issues, he said that ongoing work was being done to address these problems at the Hinksey and Ferry centres. He agreed with Councillor Arshad about the importance of the creche and agreed that they needed to align a creche service with the hours of their women only classes in their centres. The Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager said that they were still making improvements to the soft play area, to make it more attractive to families during the daytime. He explained that the difference in gym equipment was due to the different age demographics in each area and that some equipment was more suitable for the older demographics in some areas of the city.

Councillor Munkonge added that they were considering undertaking a benchmarking exercise, to compare their approach to leisure centres with neighbouring areas.

The Active Communities Manager said that in addition to their work to recruit more lifeguards, they were also working locally with schools to promote drowning prevention training. He added that they were working to improve the catering in the centres and were striving to make the food healthier. He recognised that there was still work to do in this area.

Councillor Turner concurred with fellow Councillors that there had been significant improvements over the past year. He acknowledged some of the frustration that had been voiced but said that they also needed to take accountability as they had a hand in deciding what was in the contract. He said that it would be useful for More Leisure to aid the visibility of the transport consultation being undertaken by the County Council. Councillor Turner said that he would advise the provider to work with user groups to consider opportunities to further their ambition for improvements.

Councillor Brown thanked the officers for their work. She said they all recognised the significant improvement in their leisure centres that had been seen over the past year. She said that she was excited to see the soft play opening and she noted the work underway to reinstate creches at their centres.

Cabinet resolved to:

Approve the Leisure Annual Service Plan 2025-26.

7. Oxford Local Plan 2042 Regulation 18 Consultation Document

The Director of Planning and Regulation had submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve the First Draft Oxford Local Plan 2042 (Regulation 18 consultation) Document for consultation. The Plan looked to accelerate the move to zero carbon building standards and continues to see housing delivery as a priority whilst ensuring the Council deliver a mixed and inclusive economy.

Councillor Hollingsworth presented the report. He emphasised that although Oxford was a successful and thriving city, that they do not have enough affordable housing. He noted that this was a country wide problem in England, as the country was about 4 million short of the number of houses they need. In this local plan, he said that they would be consulting on their policies to protect and enhance the environment, to protect and enhance their heritage, and to ensure jobs, opportunities, careers, businesses could do well in the city. He said that they would also work on the furtherance of access to affordable housing. Altogether, he said that the plan sought to create equal opportunities across the board for the city and its residents.

Sarah Harrison, Team Leader (Planning Policy), said that the plan before Cabinet was the regulation 18 consultation and that this was the first statutory stage in the local plan process. She said that they had done early consultation and were in a good position to

know what is needed and what people want to see. For this regulation 18 stage, she said that they had presented draft policies to people, they had been clear that there were options behind the draft policies, and they explained why they had selected what they had. She added that they needed to look at green belt work, after direction from national government, and that this work would come in the regulation 19 stage. She said that the regulation 19 stage work was due towards the end of the year. That work would be on the draft plan which they will submit for independent examination. She said that they hoped to be able to submit the plan to government in April 2026 and that from then the timing would be out of their hands, but their goal was to have it adopted by March 2027.

Councillor Arshad asked when the consultation for this would come up.

The Team Leader (Planning Policy) said that the consultation would take place between the 27th of June and the 8th of August.

Councillor Arshad asked what kind of things they were expecting from residents and if they had any expectations on changes that could come from the consultation.

Team Leader (Planning Policy) said that they did not yet know. She said that they had different ways of reaching different people. This included leaflets to be taken door to door, online resources, and events where they would talk with people face to face.

Councillor Brown thanked the Team Leader (Planning Policy) for her responses and for the work that the officers had put into the report. She said that they were very supportive of the plan and she agreed with colleagues that housing remained as one of the biggest crises in the city.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the First Draft Oxford Local Plan 2042 (Regulation 18 Consultation) document for public consultation;
2. **Authorise** the Director of Planning and Regulation to make any necessary minor editorial corrections to the documents and the supporting evidence base prior to going out to consultation.

8. Annual Housing Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report

The Director of Housing had submitted a report to seek the approval of the Annual Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report (Landlord Services) 2024/25.

Kat Mayes, the Customer Care & Complaints Manager, presented the report. She said that this was a report that they produce annually, as a requirement from the housing ombudsman. It is required that they publish this report and that they have a response from Cabinet. She highlighted the challenges they had faced in the previous year and discussed the measures they had taken to correct the causes of these issues.

Bill Graves, the Landlord Services Manager, highlighted the exceptional work that the Customer Care & Complaints Manager had done to cover when they'd had a shortage of staff and the work they had done since to improve the situation. He said that they expected to be fully up to speed with responses to complaints by the beginning of July.

Councillor Smith presented the Cabinet's response to the report, also published in the agenda pack.

As a Cabinet, she said that they once again welcomed the publication of this report as part of their commitment to transparency and their determination to ensure the views of citizens help shape their services.

The Customer Care & Complaints team within Landlord Services had faced capacity problems in 2024/25, resulting in the published figures around response times for complaints. She said that they were pleased to note that action had already been taken to increase staff in this area and work was being closely monitored, they expect to see a marked improvement in this area as they progress into 2025/26, alongside an increase in customer satisfaction with their handling of complaints.

Cabinet also noted the service improvements that had been made throughout the Council and by their contractor, ODS, and will be interested to see the longer-term impact of these on the complaints figures for 2025/26.

The Housing Ombudsman determinations are an interesting addition to this year's report, as there were none for last year other than the Complaints Handling Failure Order that the Council regrettably received. Whilst they would like to see a mutually agreed resolution to complaints as early as possible within the process without Ombudsman intervention, these determinations provide a valuable external review of their complaints service and inform them as to whether the Council is meeting the Housing Ombudsman's expectations.

This year's report includes some of the further insight into the types of complaint received and the root causes that they requested last year. Cabinet expected this to continue and for opportunities for deeper analysis to be explored.

Their residents are at the heart of their services, and the plans to expand their involvement in the complaints service and seek their feedback will be a welcome step towards greater transparency, accountability, and co-regulation.

Although parts of this report were not positive, such as the percentage of complaints responded to within target and the findings of maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman, there had also been positive progress in several areas. Cabinet accepted the assurances given that steps have been taken to address issues, and they expected to see evidence that these had succeeded by the time the next annual report is produced.

Cabinet said that they would like to thank all of those within the Council who assisted with the investigation and resolution of complaints, as well as all of the citizens who had taken the time to raise issues and provide their views.

Councillor Brown thanked the complaints team and the Customer Care & Complaints Manager for their work in the difficult year. She thanked them for the improvements that already had been made. Councillor Brown said that they welcome these reports as it is important for them to learn from the feedback they receive, as that is how they can improve the services.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Agree** the content of the Annual Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report (Landlord Services) 2024/25 in Appendix 1.
2. **Provide** a formal response to the Annual Complaint Performance & Service Improvement Report 2024/25.

9. Disposal of City Centre Commercial Property

The Director Property & Assets had submitted a report to seek approval for the long leasehold disposal of 9, 10, 16a & 16b Ship Street and 10 St Michaels, properties owned by the City Council.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He said that these disposals would allow them to make best use of their commercial portfolio. He noted that these properties had not been in use recently and there were restrictions in what the Council could do with them. Councillor Turner said that the appropriate processes had been followed and that this decision would be financially beneficial for the Council.

Alex Miller, Transactions Manager - Corporate Property, clarified that they would retain the freehold title of these properties with the current decision.

Councillor Hollingsworth said he was pleased to see this report. He emphasised the properties had been sitting unused for too long and that it was good to see the effort to bring them back into use. He said that this would be a good outcome for the buildings and the Council.

Councillor Brown concurred with Councillor Hollingsworth and thanked the officers for their work on the report.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the long leasehold disposal of 9, 10, 16a & 16b Ship Street and 10 St Michaels these properties as set out in the report.
2. **Delegate** authority to the Director Property & Assets in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Asset Management, the Director of Law, Governance & Strategy and the Group Finance Director the agreement of the detailed terms for the disposal and to enter into all necessary documentation to effect the disposal on the basis that the terms comply with s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972, where powers are not already delegated within the constitution.

10. Adopt the revised Community Infrastructure Levy

The Director of Planning and Regulation had submitted a report to ask Cabinet to recommend to Council the approval of the Partial Review of the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

Councillor Hollingsworth presented the report. He said that this was a proposed change to our CIL charging schedule and that it had been through the appropriate processes. He said that they were not proposing changes to shops and housing but were proposing a change to the office and research and development businesses. He said that the report reflects the demand for those businesses in Oxford and the return those businesses were able to make in the city. He noted that the proposed change would provide a greater source of revenue to be invested in infrastructure and repair in the city.

Lorraine Freeman, the Team Leader - CIL, Data Analysis and Reporting, said that if approved, the decision would go into effect on the 15th of August.

Councillor Brown welcomed the report and thanked the officers for their work on the report.

Cabinet resolved to recommend to Council that they resolve to:

1. **Adopt** the CIL Charging Schedule in line with the recommendation of the independent examiner as set out in Appendix 1; and

2. **Approve** the date on which the amended tariffs will come into effect.
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Planning and Regulatory to make any necessary further minor changes to the documents or any minor change to the implementation date for the new CIL rates.

11. Positive Action Policy

The Diversity and Inclusion Specialist had submitted a report to request that Cabinet agree to the proposed Positive Action Policy.

Councillor Chapman presented the report and noted that it would also be going to Council in July. He said that this policy was a subset of their approach to EDI. He emphasised that the policy was focused on tackling underrepresentation in the Council's workforce. He said that the effective use of this policy would cover actions in recruitment, retention, training, mentoring, and development. Councillor Chapman emphasised the differences between positive action and positive discrimination and said that they were only implementing positive action. Applied well, he highlighted how helpful this policy can be.

Sobia Afridi, the Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, said that they believe the policy will help to improve the diversity of the Council. She noted that they want to improve their diversity figures to better represent the people of the city that they serve.

Melissa Hope, the Organisational Development Manager, said that a lot of the work in the policy was already underway, but that the policy would give them a central point to refer to. She said that this would be useful for hiring managers to help them understand how to put the policy into action. She said that they had benchmarked against what other councils do and considered their specific needs when they were making the policy.

Councillor Hollingsworth asked for clarification on how the consultation with the trade unions had worked and asked what the feedback from trade unions had been.

The Diversity and Inclusion Specialist said that the unions had received the policy positively and were keen for it to be implemented. She said that the unions liked that the policy was simple and easy to understand. She said that the unions had flagged the issue of monitoring, and they had agreed. She said they were working to consider how they would monitor the policy, to ensure that it is effectively implemented.

Councillor Arshad said that she was grateful for the policy. She asked if any feedback in this area had been received from exit interviews. She also noted that they had flagged that more work could always be done, she asked what that work could be.

Councillor Chapman responded and said that they do hold exit interviews. He said that most of the reasons given for leaving from individuals from underrepresented groups were related to pursuing other opportunities or higher pay. He said that there was no trend of people leaving because of how they were being treated or due to discrimination. He said that the staff survey had also demonstrated a strong sense of belonging amongst staff. Regarding further work, he said that they just have to continue persistently and patiently doing work in this area. With the more work they do and the more improvements they make, he said they would consistently become a good place to work.

Councillor Arshad thanked the officers for their work on the policy.

Councillor Munkonge highlighted that the politics on EDI were changing and that other places were looking to back off of this work. He emphasised how positive it was that as a Council, they were choosing to not only retain but strengthen their approach to this work.

Councillor Chapman said that when he is presented with arguments made by critics of EDI work, it makes him more determined to fight for these efforts. He emphasised that it was fundamental for the Council to pursue the furtherance of equality and opportunity, because that is how they get a workforce which is representative of the city.

Councillor Brown agreed that it was crucial that they ensure that the Council's workforce represents the people of the city. She concurred that this work is a long process, but that she had also been reassured by the recent staff survey. She welcomed this policy and the ongoing work to make the Council more diverse and representative of the residents of Oxford. She thanked the officers for their work on the policy.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** this policy to go forward to Council for approval, publication and use.

12. Minutes

Cabinet resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on **09 April 2025** as a true and accurate record.

13. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

14. Dates of Future Meetings

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings.

Matters Exempt from Publication

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

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

The meeting started at 18:00 and ended at 19:15.

Chair

Date: Wednesday 9 July 2025

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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